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Church Growth Through Education By Extension in the Evangelical Church of North America: a Prospectus

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CHURCH GROWTH THROUGH EDUCATION BY EXTENSION IN
THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA:
A PROSPECTUS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Religion

by
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June 1979

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Evangelical Church of North America was officially organized in 1968 at Lents Evangelical Church in Portland, Oregon. In 1978, the tenth anniversary year, General Superintendent V.A. Ballantyne noted,

These have been ten years of growth, development and outreach, as we have seen growth from 66 congregations to 135, from two conferences to five, and from about 8500 members to 12,000.¹

Such statistics would seem quite outstanding until it is realized that much of this growth has come through the merger of already established congregations with the Evangelical Church, rather than through actual reproduction of the church. It is of further concern to note that some conferences have remained almost static in their growth, and that in some instances, conferences have actually experienced strong declines.

Statements made by superintendents, pastors, and lay members reveal two things: (1) a recognition of the fact that, in many situations, evangelistic conservation has been

¹Report of the General Superintendent, Pacific Conference Journal of the 11th Annual Business Session, p. 87, July 25-27, Milwaukie, Oregon. Note that Dr. Ballantyne's figures are technically in error. There were 46 churches, 5734 members, and one conference in the very beginning, that is, the first six months.

lacking; (2) a resulting desire to see the church move forward in reaching larger numbers of people for Christ.

I. The Problem

The basic thesis of this paper is that church growth can be facilitated and accomplished through theological education by extension. In support of this thesis, the study will include the following points: (1) determination of the pattern of growth in each conference, and in the denomination as a whole; (2) consideration of possible reasons for poor or sporadic growth wherever it exists; (3) demonstration that there is a need for a denominational program of education and extension in order to facilitate church growth; (4) formulation of a prospectus for meeting that need.

II. Limitations

In the course of research, some limitations became clear. It became increasingly clear that the problem is very complex, suggesting many solutions, rather than one. This made it somewhat difficult to single out one problem and build upon it a thesis.

Attached to this realization was the growing awareness that perhaps some of the most important factors involved are the intangibles; those things in the realm of attitude and spirit which cannot be graphed or measured.

A very important limitation involved the gathering and interpreting of statistics. It was not possible to receive full statistics for every conference, as some were

not kept or cannot be located. Fortunately, very few statistics are missing. A further complication, however, is that it is impossible to determine whether conversion statistics indicate people already counted as church members who are saved, or only people from outside the membership who are saved.

Neither do conference journals and statistics reveal the full spectrum of a given conference. The report of the Director of Christian Education, for example, cannot reflect the activities of each individual church. Interviews with individual superintendents and pastors often deal in generalities as well. This study recognized that statistics may indeed hide the exception to the rule.

Finally, although the formulation of a general denominational prospectus will be a part of this study, and while the scope of the research will cover all six conferences, specific model programs of theological education by extension will be formulated for only the Eastern and the Western conferences. This is to demonstrate the flexibility of theological education by extension in meeting the needs of differing conferences.

III. Final Hypothesis

Church growth in the Evangelical Church of North America through conversions and through church planting is limited. Although there is much desire to evangelize and to expand, the real potential of the denomination is not being realized. Major contributing factors to this problem are

the lack of a philosophy of outreach and conservation, and the lack of a program of education, either on an individual conference level or on a denominational level, which would prepare church members for the tasks of evangelization, discipleship, and church planting.

This study will formulate a prospectus by which the necessary education could be provided in two strategic areas: (1) in preparing individuals for full-time ministries within the church, leading to ordination; and (2) in providing continuing education for pastors and staff members of churches.

IV. Method of Procedure

Statistical Research. The conference journals for the years 1968 - 1978 were gathered to study statistics on church growth, as well as to examine conference educational activities.

Interviews. Denominational leaders were interviewed concerning the need for educational programs within The Evangelical Church.

Research of Theological Education by Extension. The development of theological education by extension was researched, with special attention to the problems with which it attempts to deal, the impact it has had upon theological education, and the philosophy supporting it.

Development of a Prospectus. A prospectus was developed by which theological education by extension could be advanced within The Evangelical Church, in order to

encourage and facilitate church extension and growth.

V. Definition of Terms Used

Evangelical Church of North America. This title is used to represent the five conferences affiliated in this denomination: Pacific, Western, North Central, East Central, and Eastern. At times, Canada conference of the Evangelical Church of Canada is also included. For the purposes of this study, the title The Evangelical Church will most often be used.

Theological Education by Extension. By this term is meant programs of theological education, administered by the denomination in cooperation with an academic institution, which are conducted in many small centers, rather than at a centralized resident campus.

Tent-making. This term is used to designate that the person or persons involved in beginning a new church have full-time or part-time employment, and are self-supporting while they work to begin the new church. This allows the conference mission and extension funds to be spent elsewhere and encourages more lay involvement in starting new churches.

Status quo. This is a factor of 2.5%, the figure necessary for biological growth to be maintained.

VI. Organization

The presentation of this study is organized in the following manner:

(1) an examination of The Evangelical Church and The Evangelical Church of Canada;

(2) a study of the development of theological education by extension, as well as of the philosophy of the movement;

(3) an evaluation of the factors under consideration in applying theological education by extension to The Evangelical Church;

(4) the presentation of a prospectus for implementing theological education by extension within The Evangelical Church.

Chapter 2

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Set I of the graphs shows the numerical strength over the years of the various conferences in red.

Set II of the graphs shows the number of conversions in the various conferences over the years in blue. Set II also shows the number of members lost to the various conferences over the years (either through death or transfer) in black.

Set III of the graphs shows the number of members added to the various conferences over the years in red. The number of conversions in the various conferences over the years is shown in blue. This set also includes the number of deaths in the various conferences over the years in black.

The following set of graphs shows the numerical strength of the various conferences over the years.

This set of graphs supports our thesis by showing that the growth that has occurred in the various conferences has barely been above the growth necessary to maintain the status quo.

In the following set of graphs, each graph will be followed by an analysis.

CANADA

3900

3800

3700

3600

3500

68

69

70

72

73

74

75

76

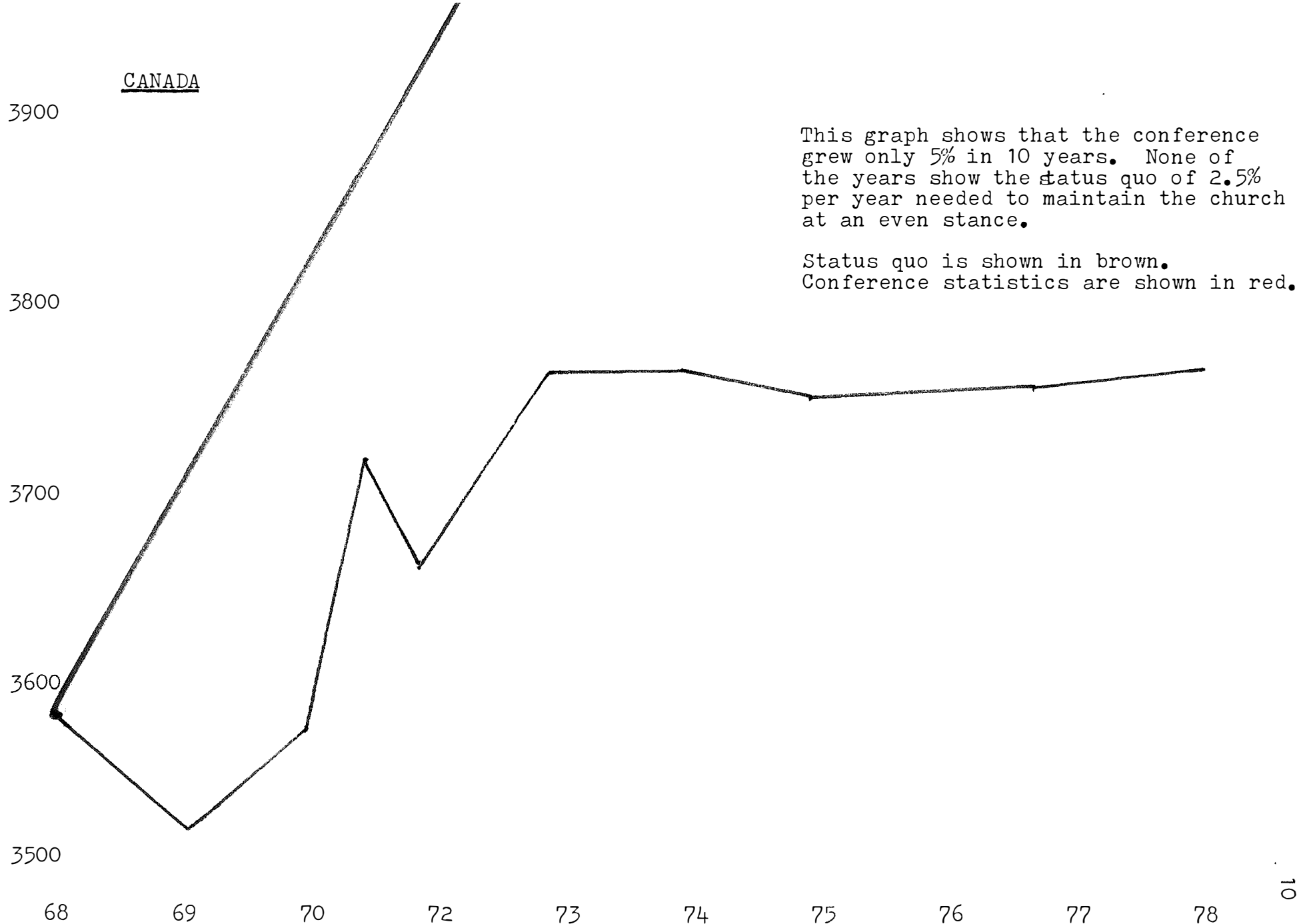
77

78

This graph shows that the conference grew only 5% in 10 years. None of the years show the status quo of 2.5% per year needed to maintain the church at an even stance.

Status quo is shown in brown.
Conference statistics are shown in red.

10



CANADA CONFERENCE: Graph Analysis

5% growth ~~for~~ the 10 years.

No years came near the status quo (2.5%).

Membership gain is far below decisions.

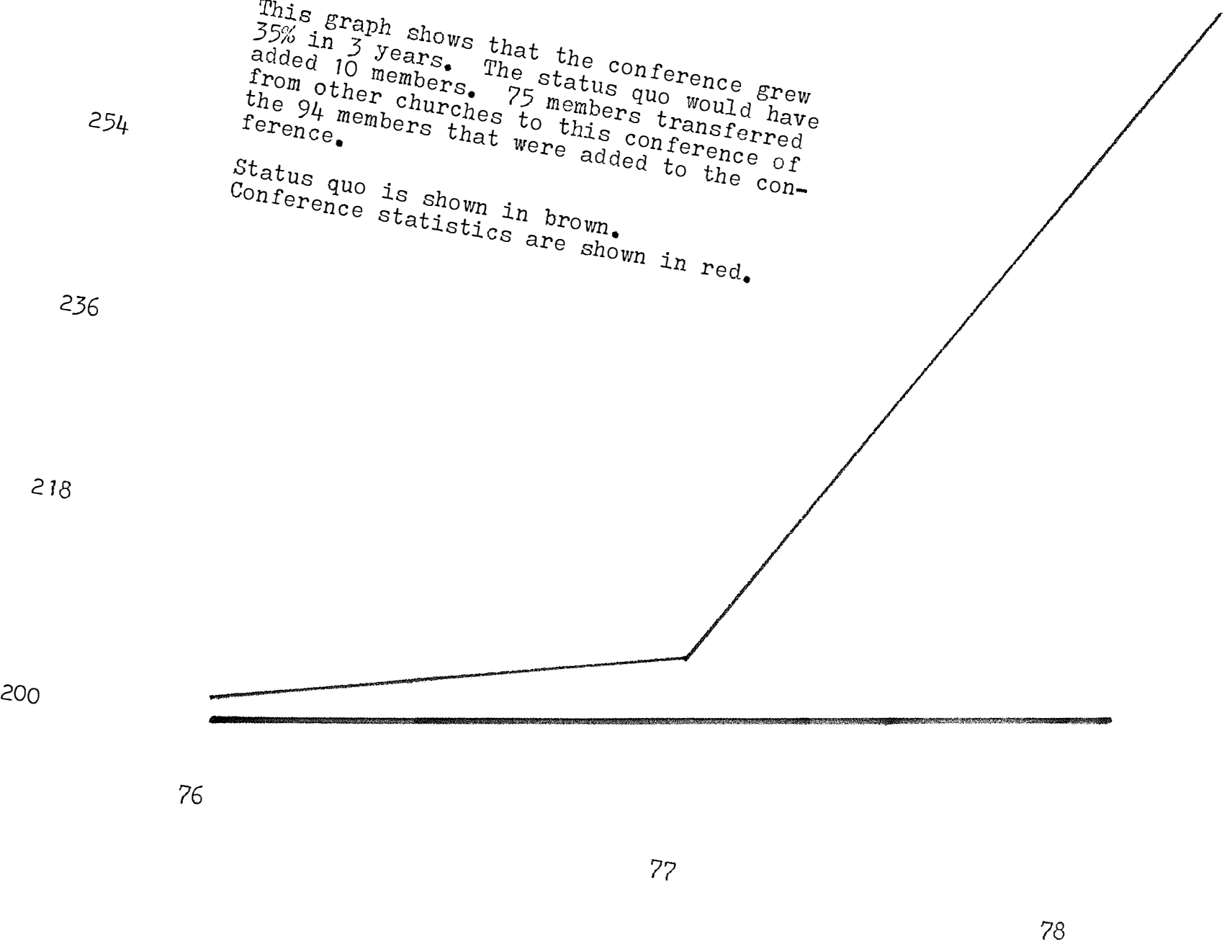
The status quo would have added 1002 members.

What was actually added was 157 members. This means that
actual growth was 845 to the negative.

Deaths remain fairly constant (40-50 per year).

This graph shows that the conference grew 35% in 3 years. The status quo would have added 10 members. 75 members transferred from other churches to this conference of the 94 members that were added to the conference.

Status quo is shown in brown.
Conference statistics are shown in red.



EAST CENTRAL CONFERENCE: Graph Analysis

35% growth for 3 years.

Each year definitely above the status quo but much of this is from the reception of members from existing churches.

The status quo would have added 10 members.

What was added was 94. This means that there was an actual growth of 84. Note that of those new members, some 75 were transfers.

EASTERN

1290

This graph shows that the conference has a 20% growth for the 8 years. The status quo (2.5%) would have added to this conference 178 members. There were 208 members added. Of thses, there were 229 from already existing congregations.

Status quo shown in brown.
Conference statistics are shown in red.

1225

1160

1095

1030

965

900

69

70

71

72

73

74

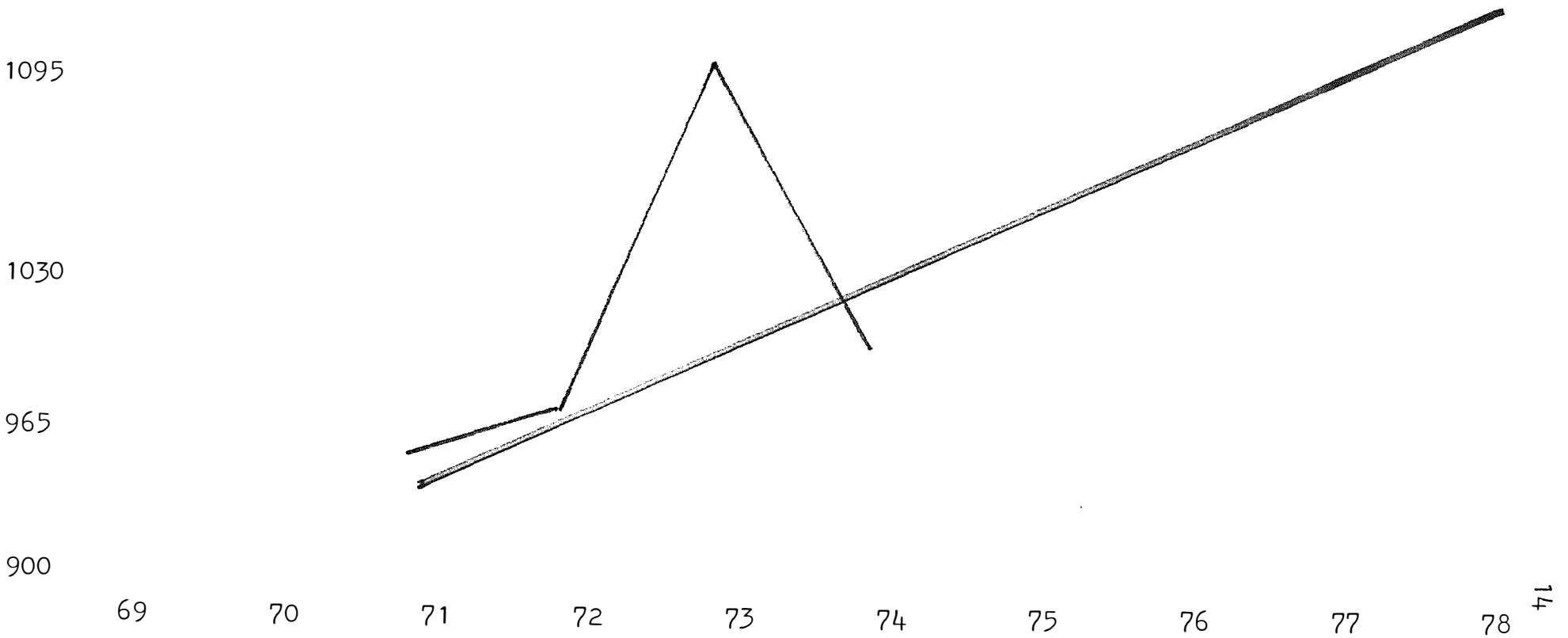
75

76

77

78

14



EASTERN CONFERENCE: Graph Analysis

20% growth for 9 years.

Most years above status quo but this is from the addition of existing congregations rather than new converts.

The membership gain is sporadic as there are no statistics for several years.

The status quo would have added 178 members.

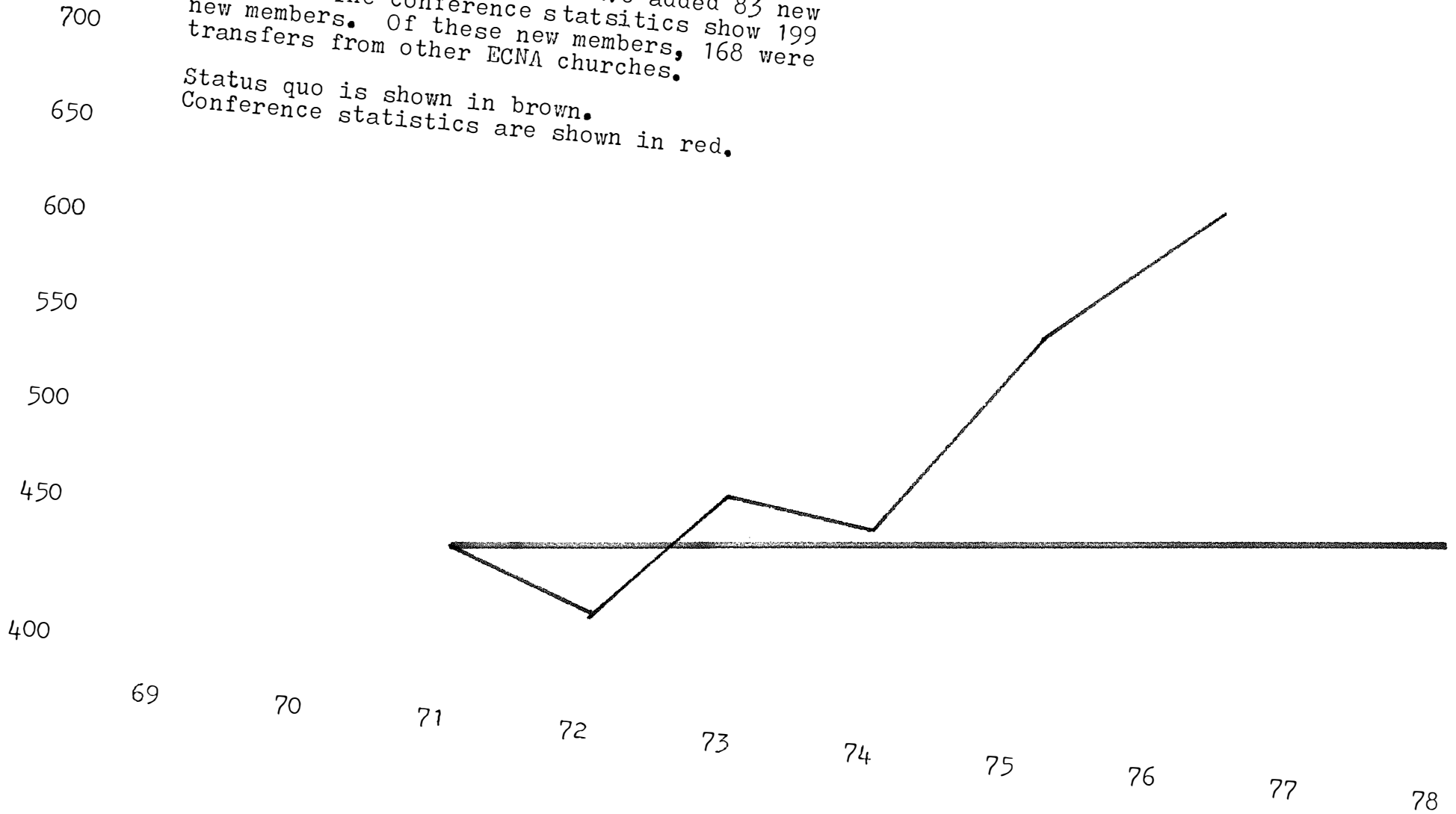
Actually added were 208. This means that there was an actual growth of 30.

Existing churches coming into the conference represent 229 members plus 13 ECNA.

NORTH CENTRAL

This graph shows that the conference had a 45% growth for the 5 years that we have statistics for. The status quo would have added 83 new members. The conference statistics show 199 new members. Of these new members, 168 were transfers from other ECNA churches.

Status quo is shown in brown.
Conference statistics are shown in red.



NORTH CENTRAL CONFERENCE: Graph Analysis

45% growth for the 5 years of statistics.

Only 1 year below the status quo (2.5%)

Membership gain is nowhere near the number of decisions.

The status quo would have added 83 members.

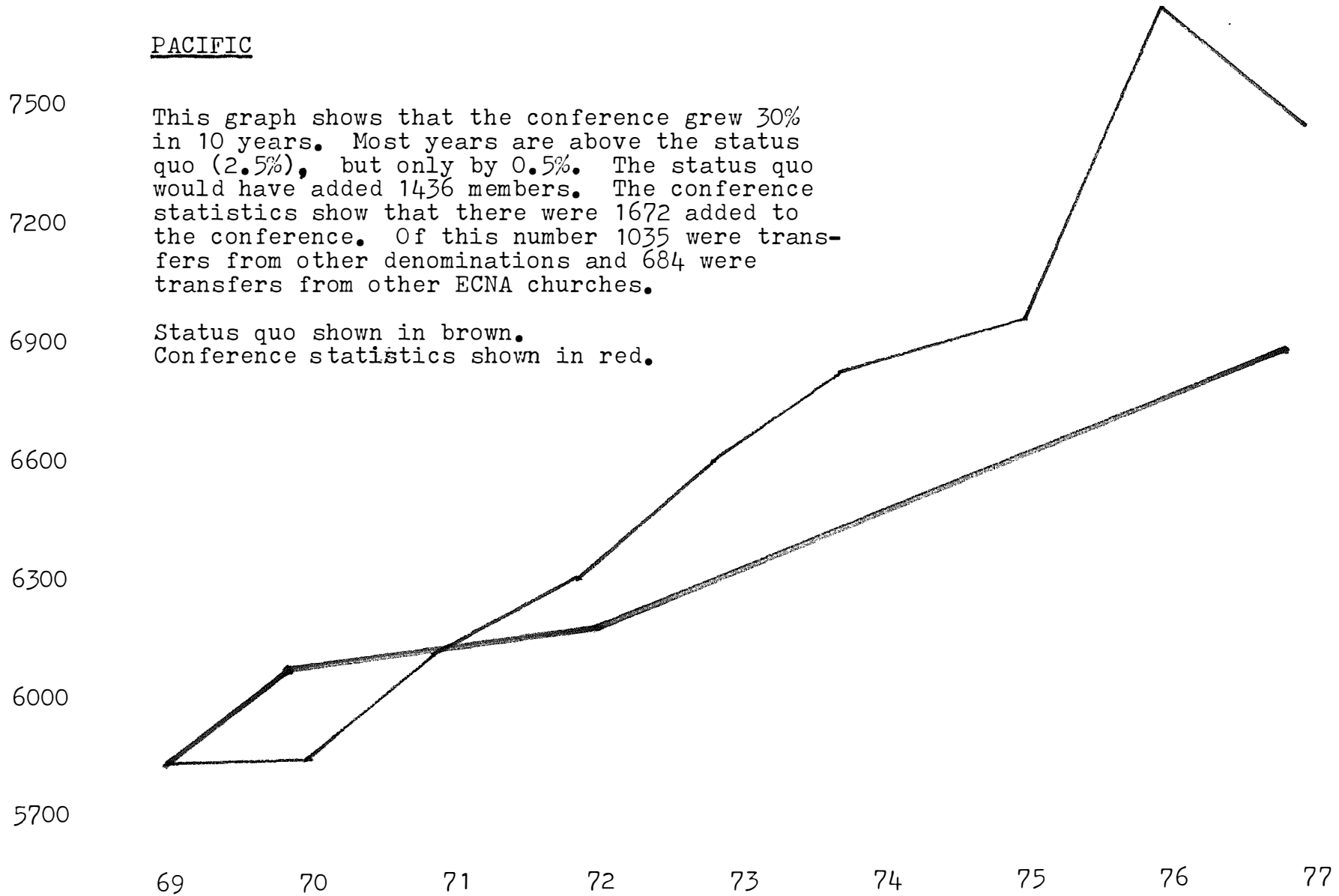
What was actually added was 199. This means that there was an actual growth of 116. Note that 168 were transfers from ECNA plus 95 from other denominations.

It is difficult to tell how many of the new members are WCC people.

PACIFIC

This graph shows that the conference grew 30% in 10 years. Most years are above the status quo (2.5%), but only by 0.5%. The status quo would have added 1436 members. The conference statistics show that there were 1672 added to the conference. Of this number 1035 were transfers from other denominations and 684 were transfers from other ECNA churches.

Status quo shown in brown.
Conference statistics shown in red.



PACIFIC CONFERENCE: Graph Analysis

30% growth for the 10 years.

Most years just above the status quo (2.5%).

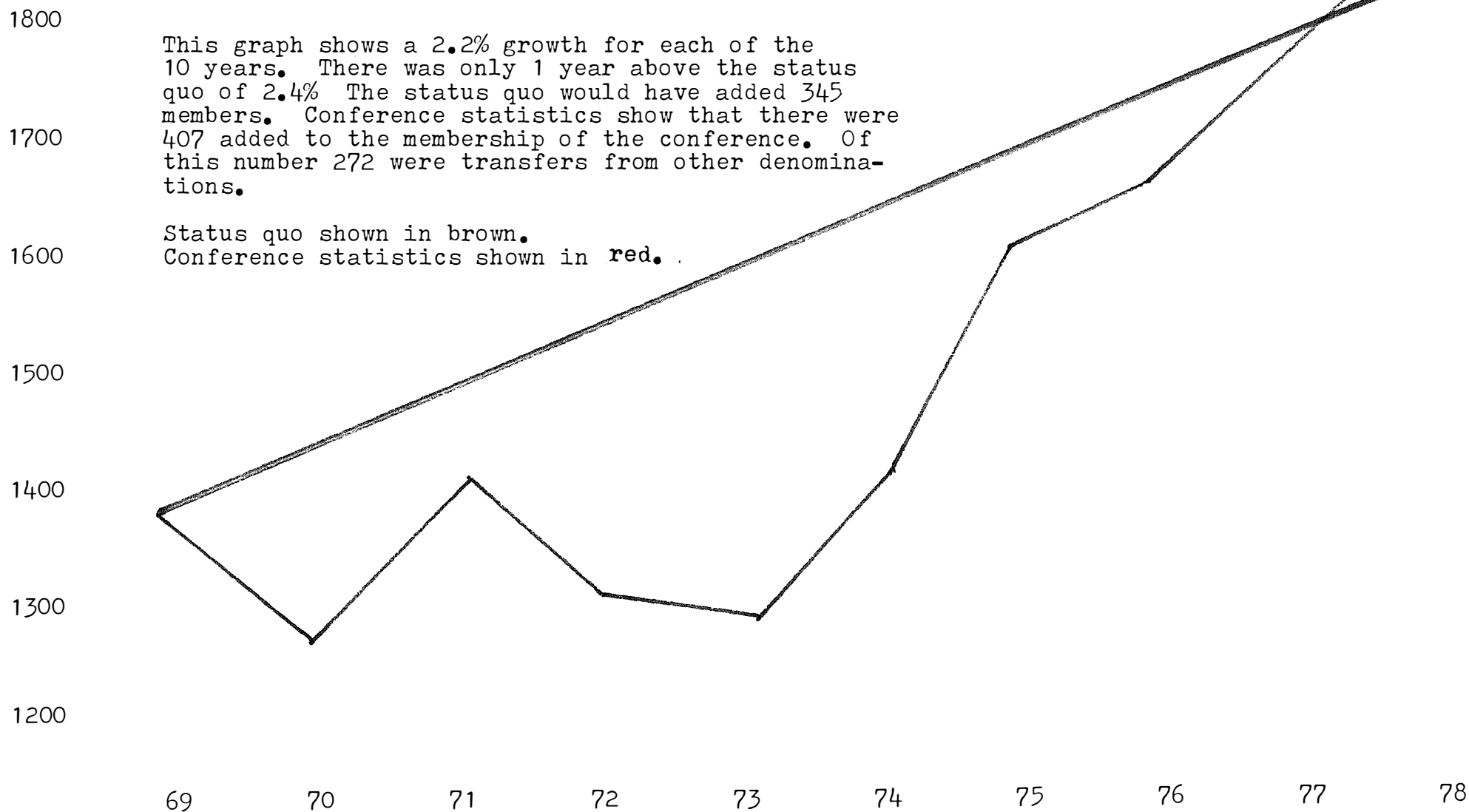
The status quo would have added 1436 members.

What was added was 1672. This means that there was an actual growth of 236. Note that 1035 were transfers from other denominations and 684 were transfers from ECNA.

WESTERN

This graph shows a 2.2% growth for each of the 10 years. There was only 1 year above the status quo of 2.4% The status quo would have added 345 members. Conference statistics show that there were 407 added to the membership of the conference. Of this number 272 were transfers from other denominations.

Status quo shown in brown.
Conference statistics shown in red.



WESTERN CONFERENCE: Graph Analysis

22% growth for 10 years.

Only 1 year above status quo (2.5%).

Membership gain is far below decisions while death statistics show that there aren't that many people dying to make the membership go down. It should go up.

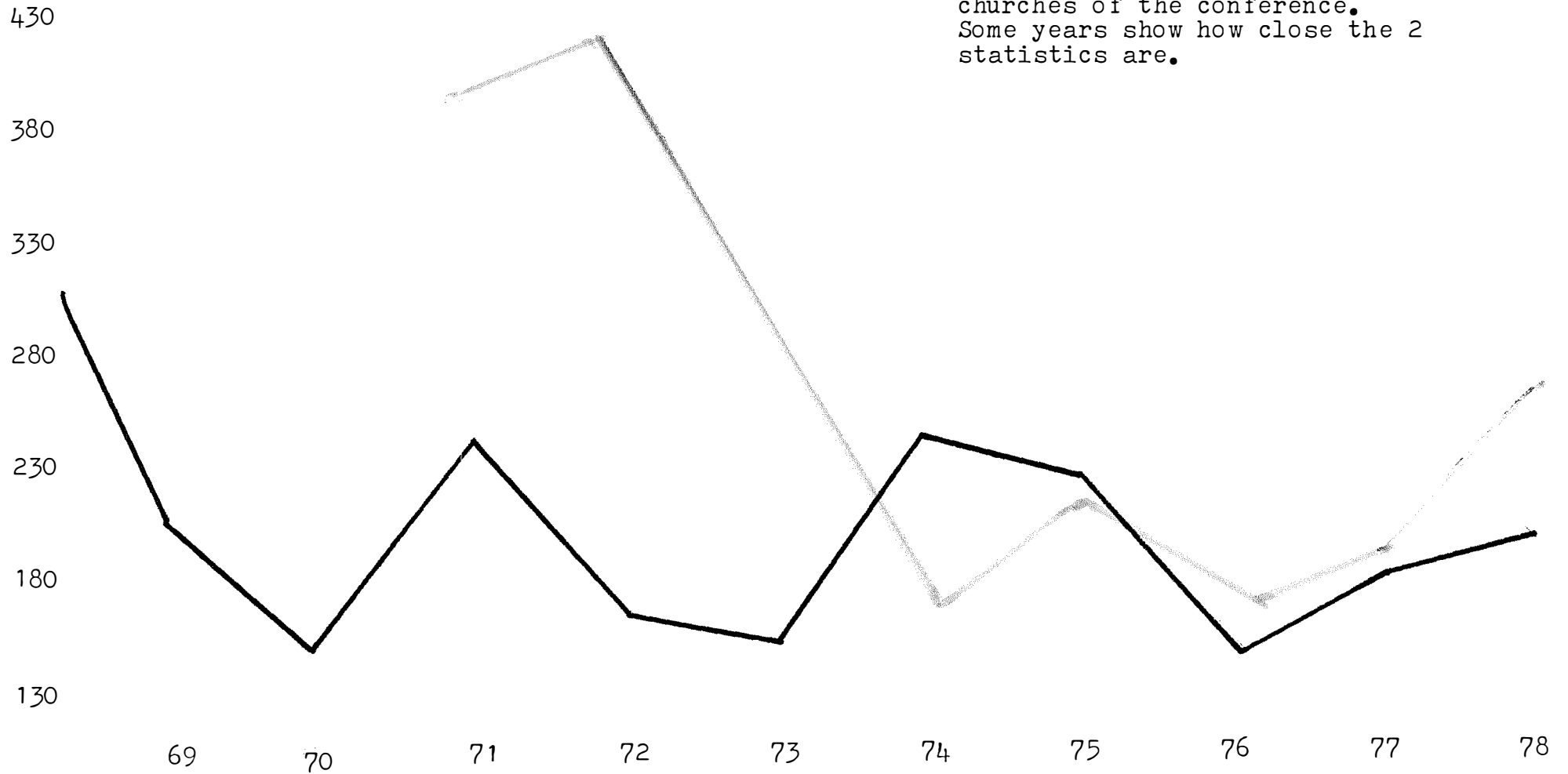
The status quo would have added 345 members.

What was actually added was 407. This means that there was an actual growth of 62.

The following set of graphs contrasts the number of conversions in the various conferences over the years in blue with the number of deaths in the conferences over the years in black. This set of graphs supports the thesis by showing that death has not been a major factor in causing church growth to be minimal in the various conferences. This set of graphs also shows that the number of recorded conversions has been quite high for most of the conferences, which should be a major factor in church growth.

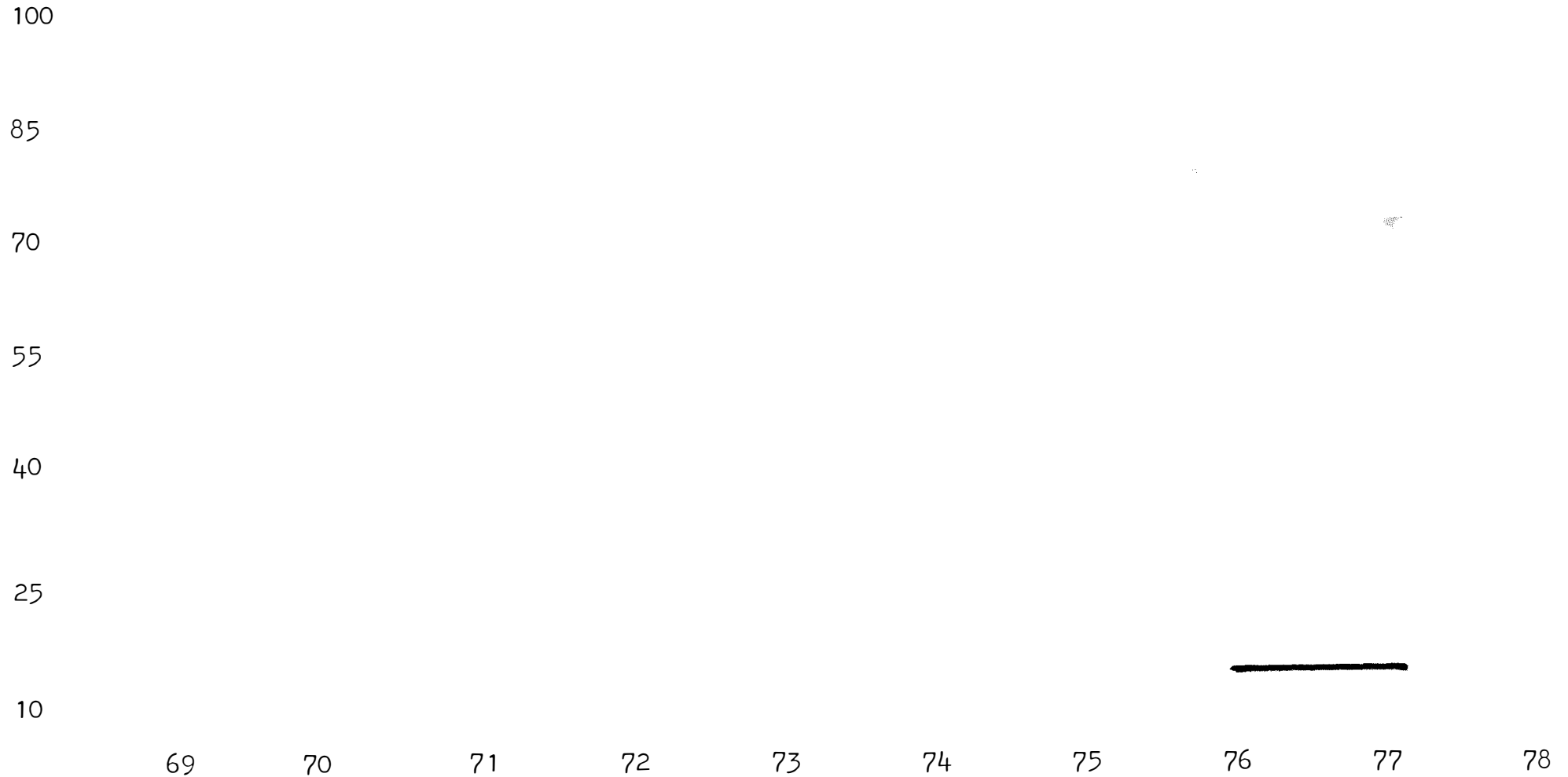
CANADA

Conversions (shown in blue) are compared on this graph with the number of deaths (shown in black) visualize how many more persons are converted than die out of the churches of the conference. Some years show how close the 2 statistics are.



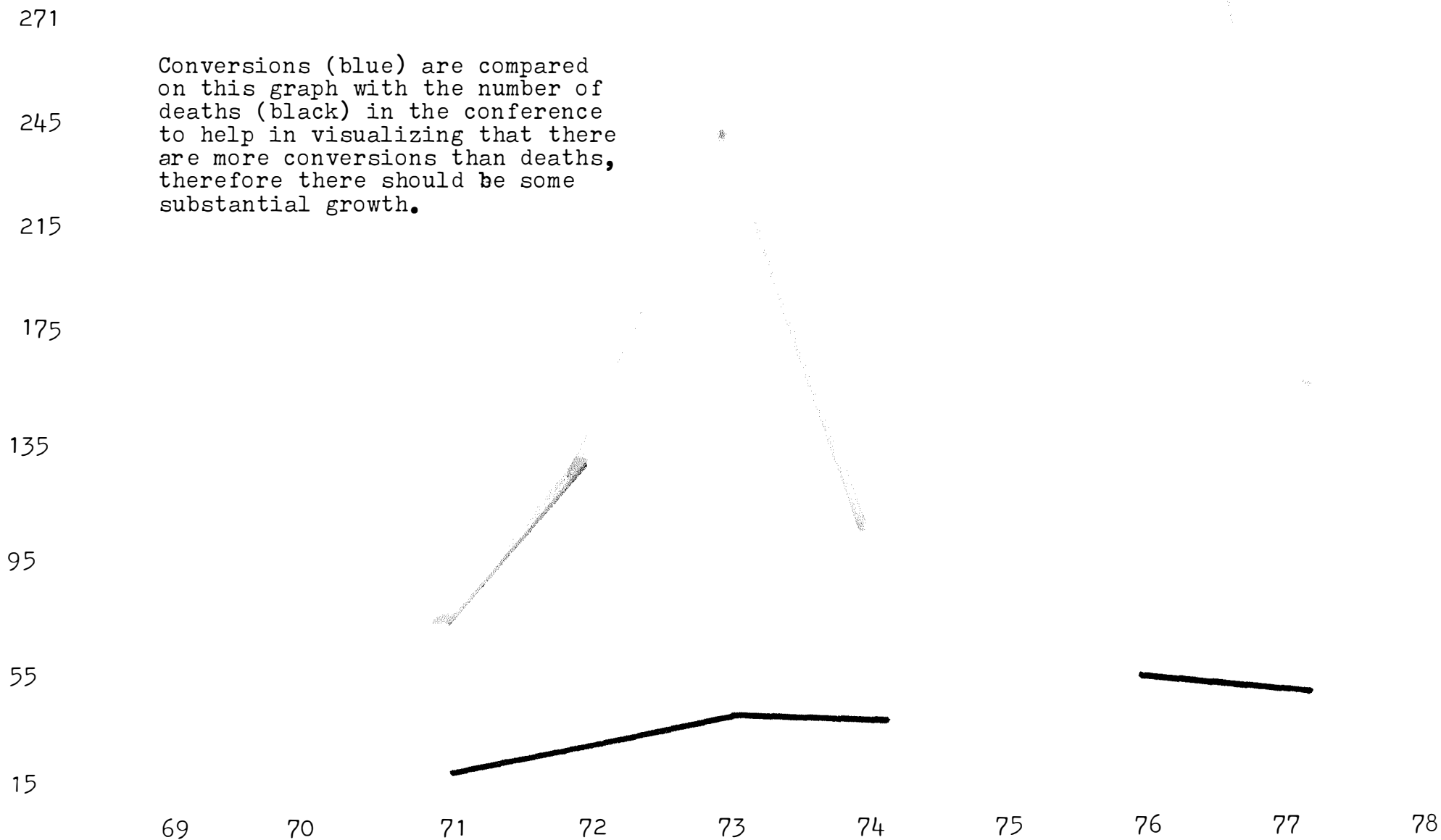
East Central

Conversions (blue) are compared on this graph with the number of deaths (black) to help in visualizing how many more persons are converted than die out of the conference.



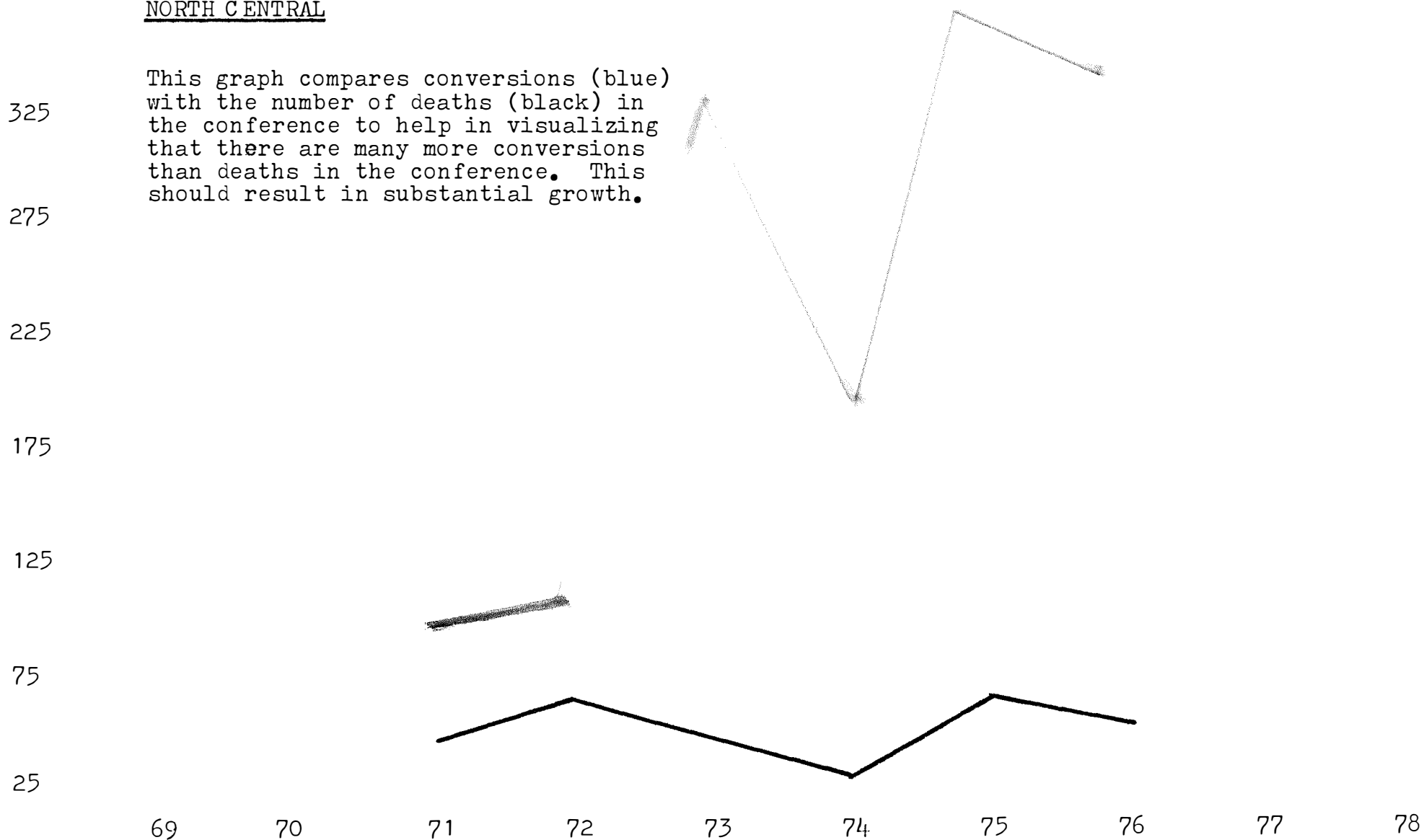
EASTERN

Conversions (blue) are compared on this graph with the number of deaths (black) in the conference to help in visualizing that there are more conversions than deaths, therefore there should be some substantial growth.



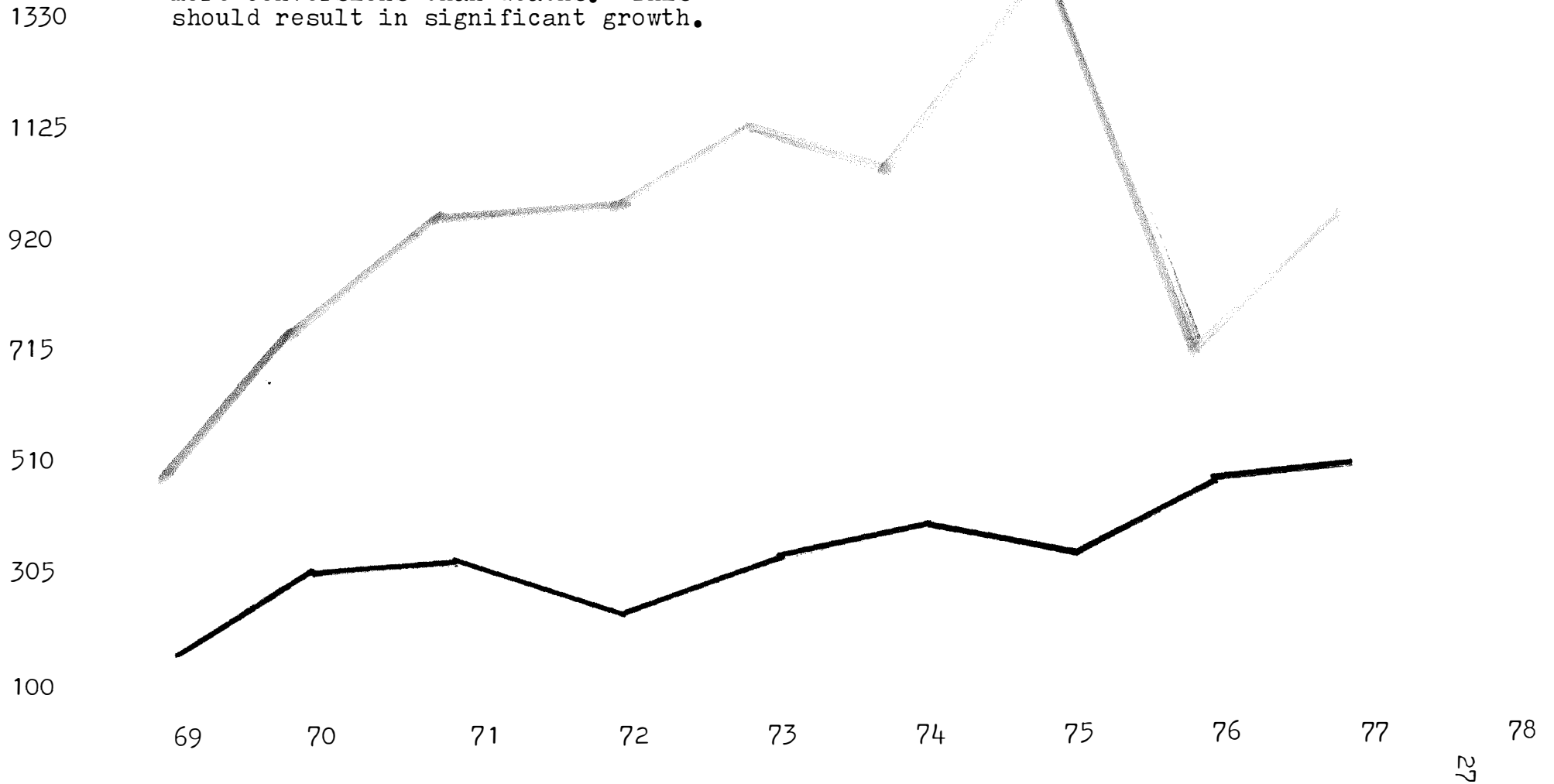
NORTH C ENTRAL

This graph compares conversions (blue) with the number of deaths (black) in the conference to help in visualizing that there are many more conversions than deaths in the conference. This should result in substantial growth.



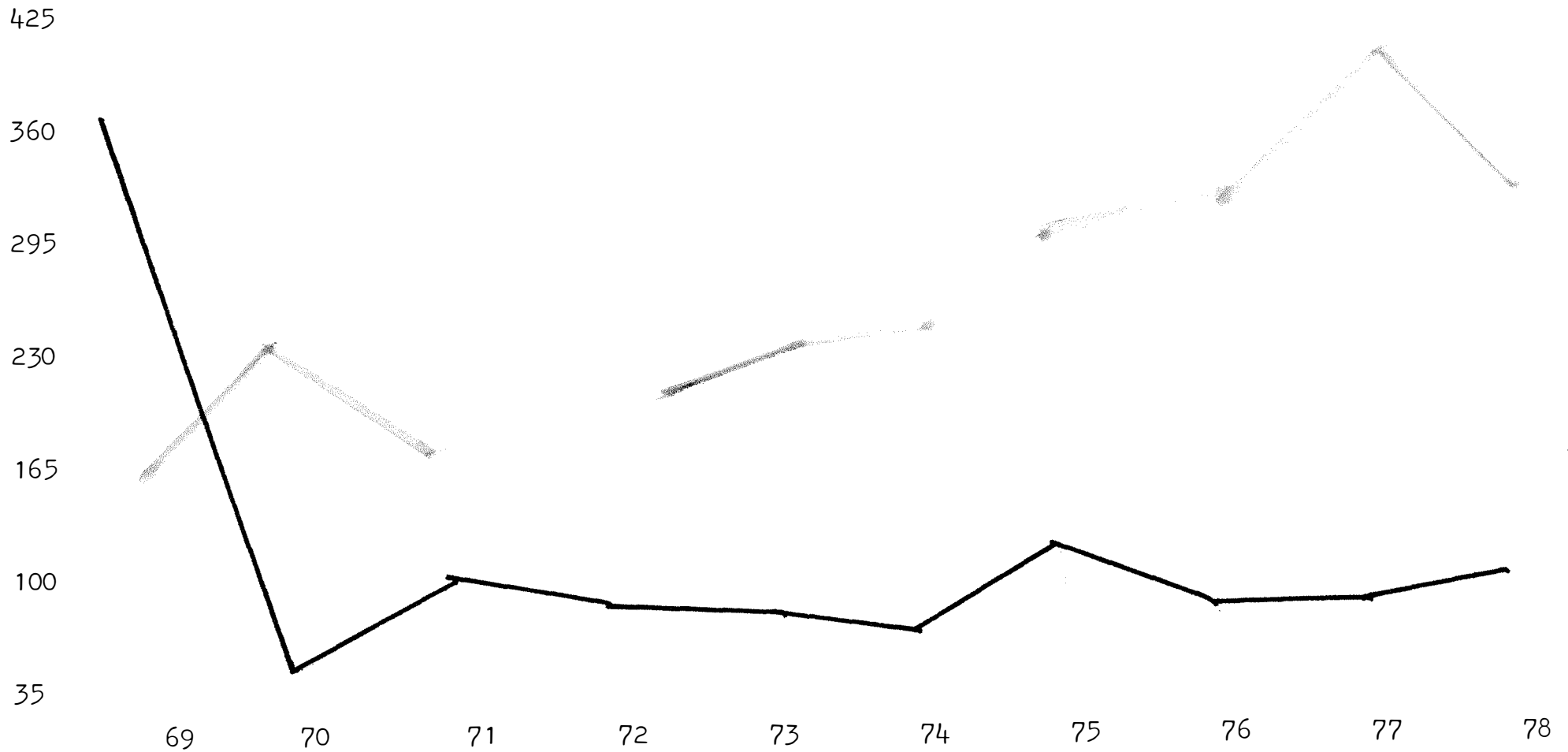
PACIFIC

Conversions (blue) are compared on this graph with deaths (black) in the conference to help in visualizing that there are many more conversions than deaths. This should result in significant growth.



WESTERN

This graph compares conversions (blue) with deaths (black) to help in visualizing that there are many more conversions than deaths in the conference, which should result in significant growth.



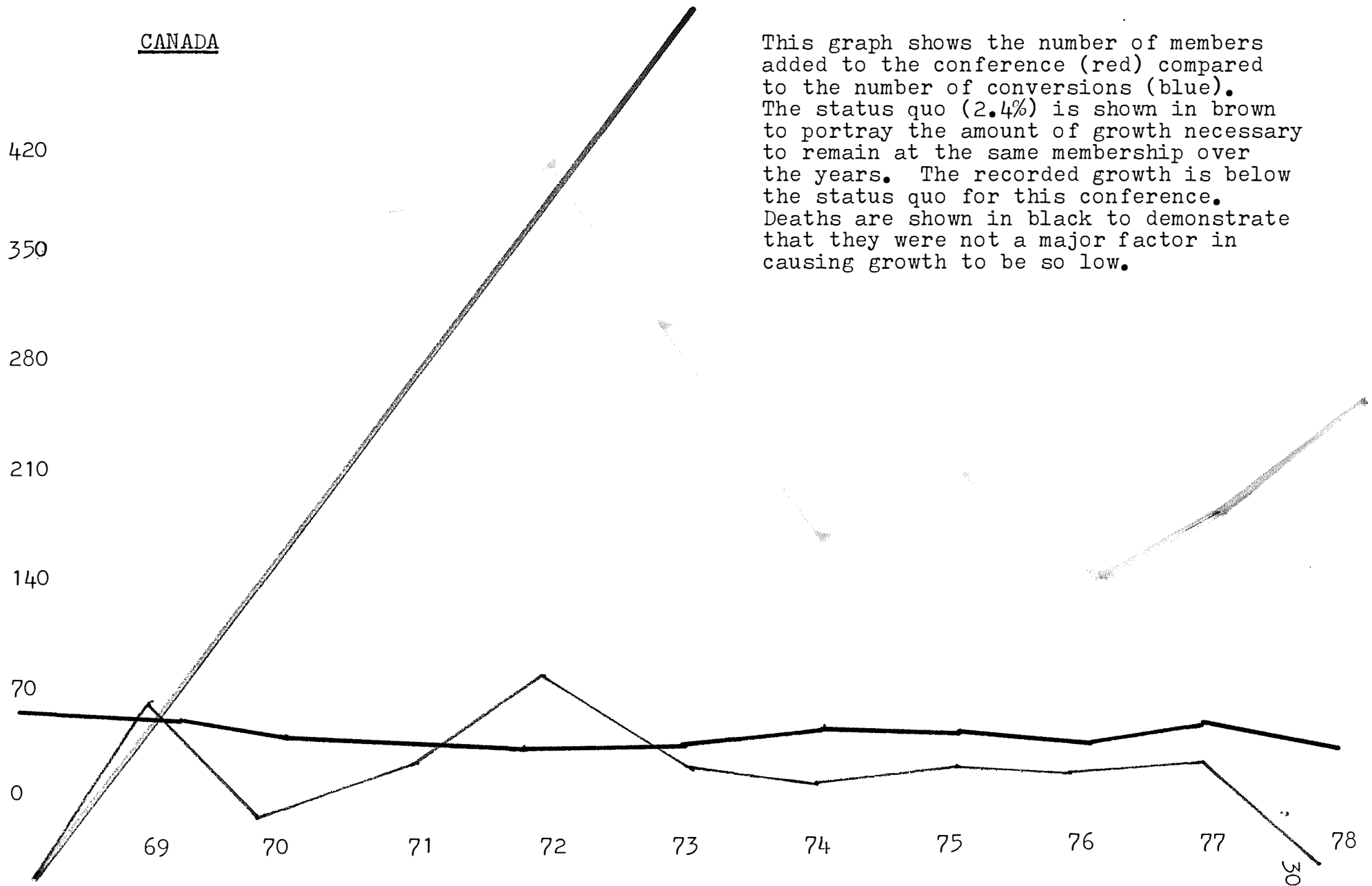
The following set of graphs shows the disparity between the number of conversions reported per year and the number of persons that were actually added to the rolls of the various conferences. The graphs include the number of deaths that were reported from the membership as a check or balance. If the number of deaths was not included, it would be possible to make the excuse that there were so many deaths that the number of conversions could not possible allow the church to "catch up."

This thesis contends that there should not be such a disparity between the number of conversions and the number of persons received into membership. It is believed that this could be significantly remedied by extensive lay leadership training that would equip the layman to minister to those around him. This would be somewhat of a threat to the traditional pastor, but need not be so.

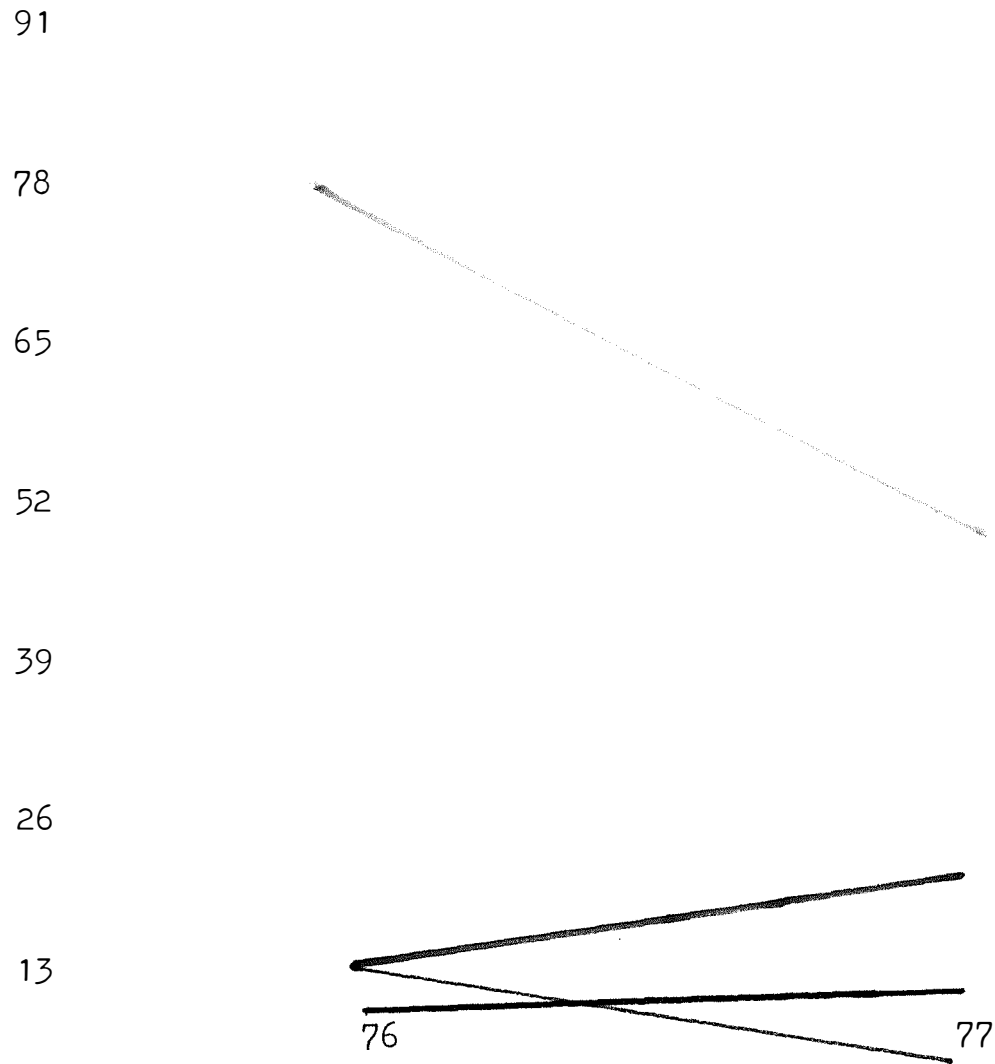
On the average, there are about three (3) times as many conversions as members received by each conference. This figure takes into account the standard of the death rate as indicated on the graphs.

This set of graphs supports the thesis by showing that for each of the conferences, church growth has been below the status quo necessary to maintain the membership over the years. This has not been because of a lack of conversions or because of an unusually high number of deaths. It is because of a lack of conservation and discipleship of those who are converted. There are many conversions, but not many members added to the conferences.

CANADA



EAST CENTRAL



This graph shows the number of members added to the conference (red) compared to the number of conversions recorded (blue). The status quo is shown in brown to portray the amount of growth necessary to remain at the same membership over the years. Deaths are shown in black to demonstrate that they were not a major factor in causing growth to be so low.

EASTERN

This graph shows the number of members added to the conference (red) as compared to number of conversions recorded (blue). The status quo (2.5%) is shown in brown to demonstrate the amount of growth needed to maintain the same membership over the years. The recorded membership is well below the status quo. Deaths are shown in black to portray that they are not a major factor in causing the growth to be so minimal.

240

200

160

120

80

40

0

69

70

71

72

73

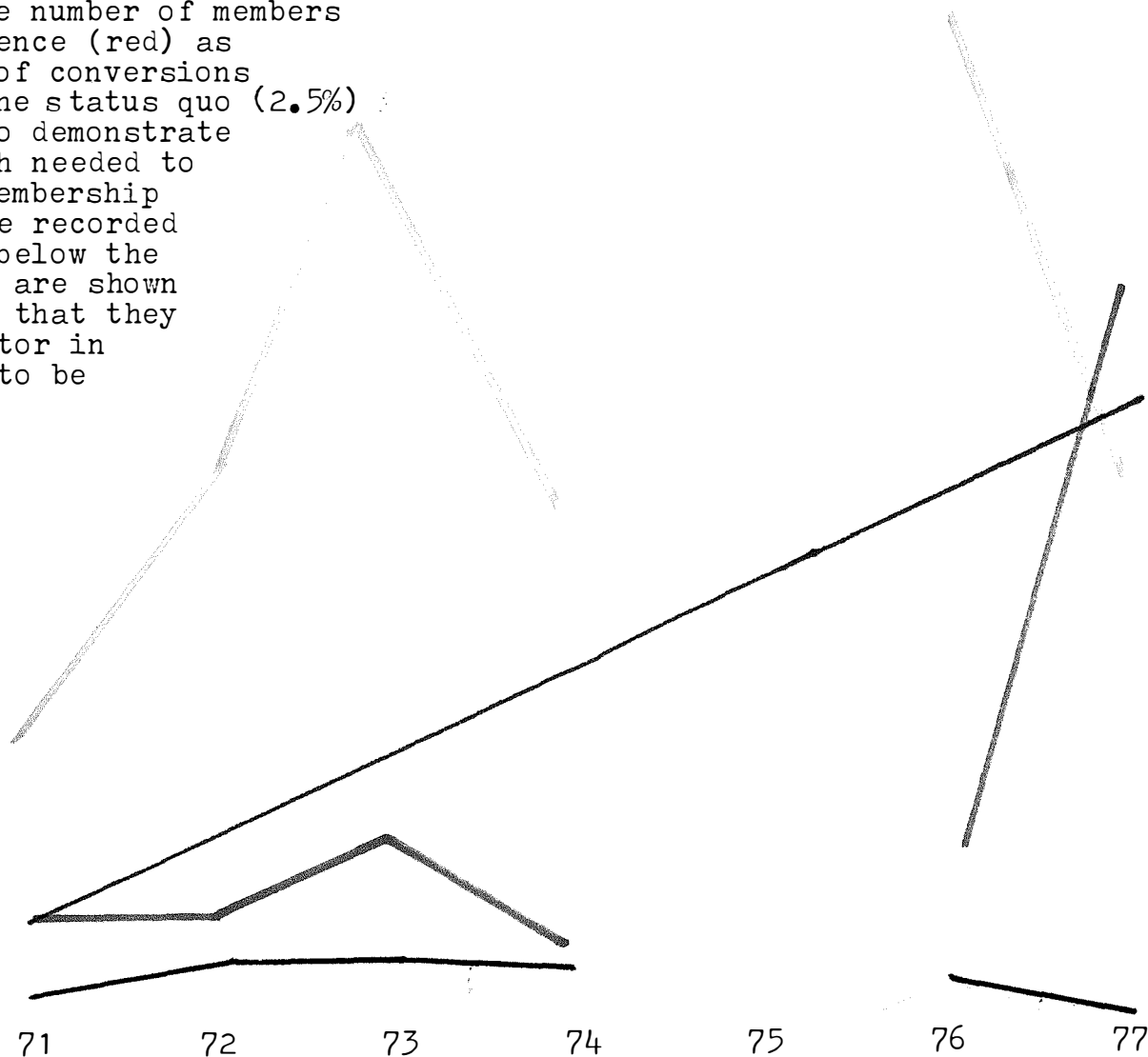
74

75

76

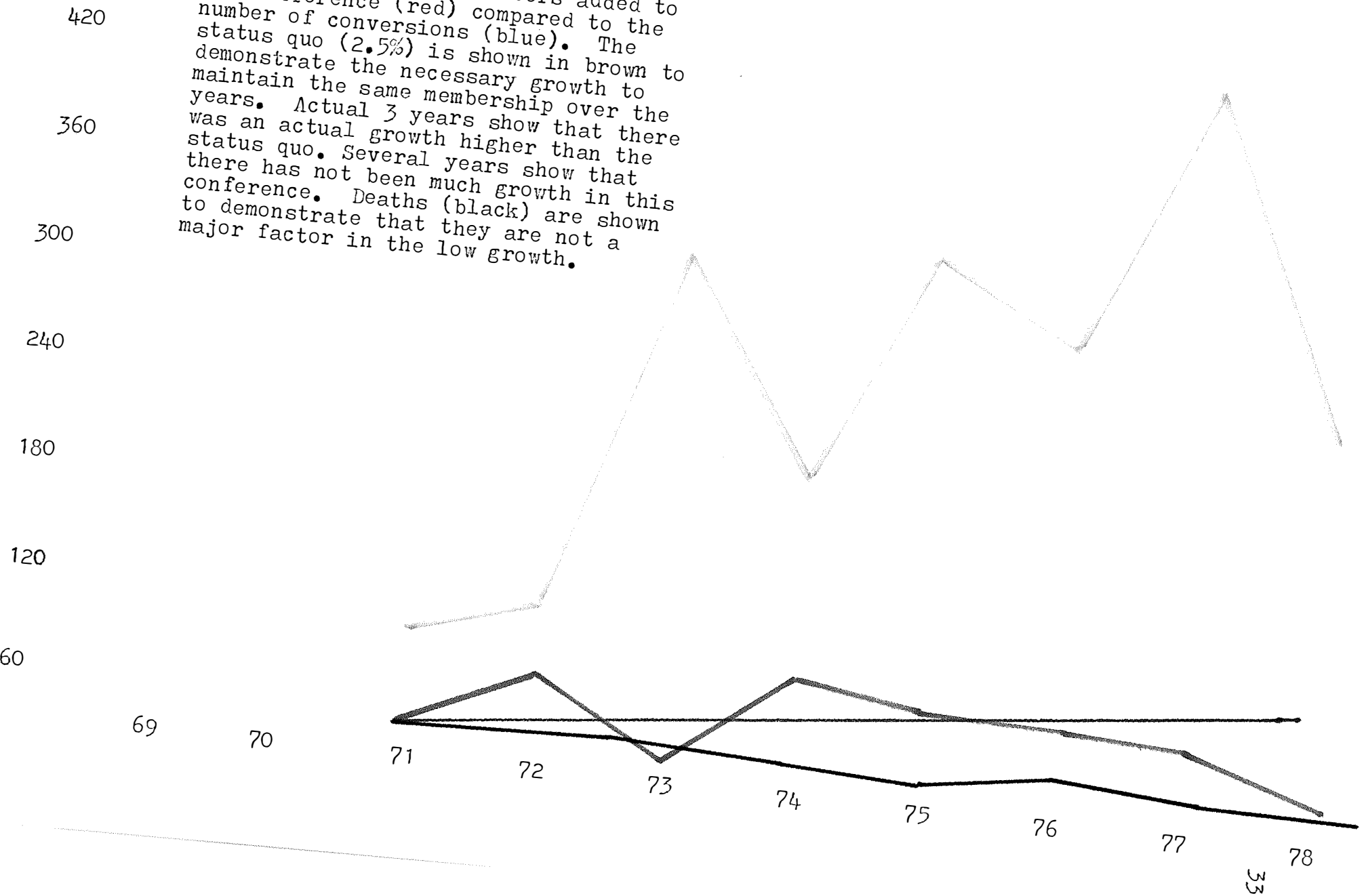
77

78



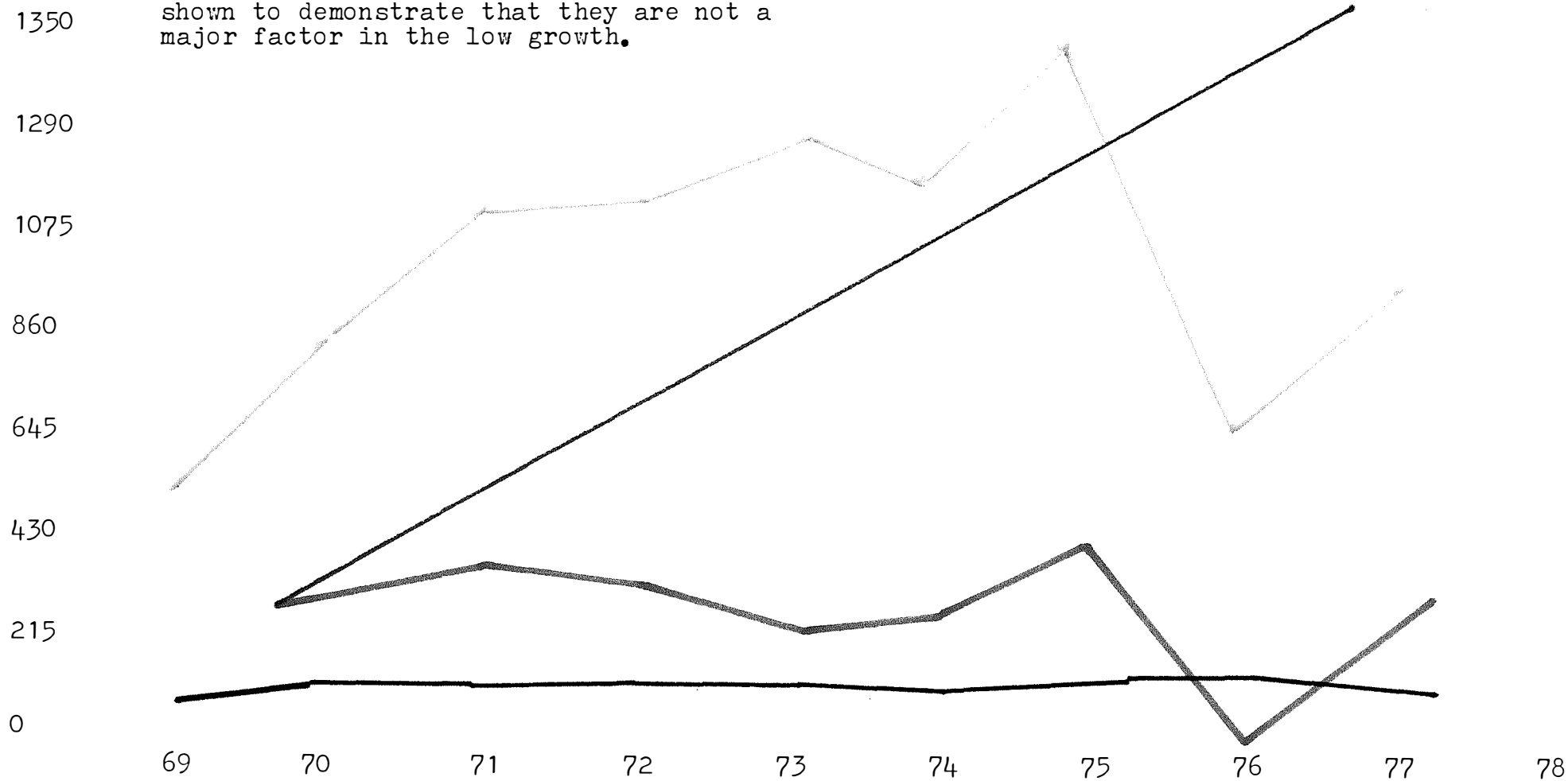
NORTH CENTRAL

This graph shows the members added to the conference (red) compared to the number of conversions (blue). The status quo (2.5%) is shown in brown to demonstrate the necessary growth to maintain the same membership over the years. Actual 3 years show that there was an actual growth higher than the status quo. Several years show that there has not been much growth in this conference. Deaths (black) are shown to demonstrate that they are not a major factor in the low growth.



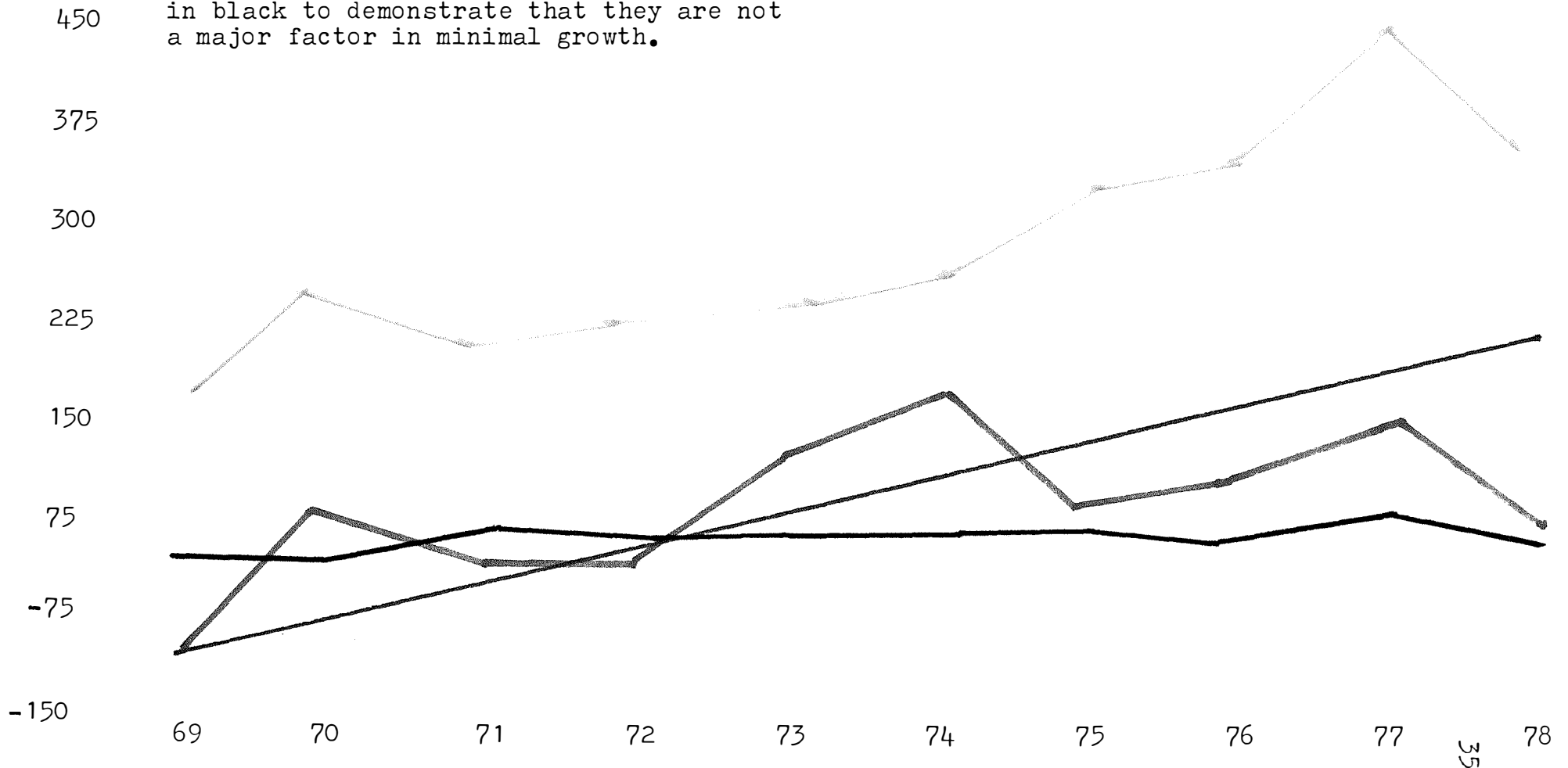
PACIFIC

This graph shows the number added (red) compared to the number of conversions (blue). The status quo (2.5%), is shown in brown to demonstrate the number needed to maintain membership level. Recorded growth is well below the status quo. Deaths (black) are shown to demonstrate that they are not a major factor in the low growth.



WESTERN

This graph shows the number of members added (red) compared to the number of conversions (blue). Status quo (2.5%) is shown in brown to show the necessary growth needed to maintain membership. The recorded growth is above the status quo for 4 of the 10 years. Deaths are shown in black to demonstrate that they are not a major factor in minimal growth.



Conclusion

The preceeding graphs show that there has been some membership growth in the Evangelical Church. They also demonstrate that growth has been somewhat below the status quo. Most of the growth has been due to the reception of members from other churches. Thus, not many persons are becoming members after they have a conversion experience; but a significant number of conversions are reported in each conference each year.

As assumption of this thesis is that more people are not received into membership due to a lack of trained leaders in the church who are able to do work discipling new Christians, and whose influence would encourage those new Christians to become members of the Evangelical Church. This assumption leads toward a study of the way some churches have dealt with this problem in the past.

Chapter 3

SELECTED HISTORICAL EXAMPLES ON THE PREPARATION LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

A look at some past examples can teach us much regarding the issue being addressed. When considering a change policy or direction, past experiences can lend needed light. Not only are past mistakes sometimes avoided, but it is also sometimes possible to view present problems in perspective by realizing that the Church in other generations has faced similar problems.

What have been the historical precedents in the preparation of leaders for the church? This is an important question to ask in preparation for a prospectus concerning theological education. A definitive study of the preparation of leaders throughout church history, however, is outside the scope and purposes of this study. Rather, this chapter will discuss several selected examples in order to demonstrate that leadership preparation within the church has been conducted through a variety of methods. The history of the church has been divided into rough sections to illustrate distinctions.

Examples from the New Testament/Apostolic Period

Two examples are to be discussed in this section: that of Jesus and that of Paul.

The disciples of Jesus learned by being with Him,

as evidenced in Mark 3:13-19. This was not formal education as the world viewed education, however, and they were soon described as being "uneducated, common men."¹ Yet, their preparation had equipped them for the task, for a short time later in the narrative they were recognized as bold preachers because they had been with Jesus. From Him they had received an authoritative message, and the courage to act upon it.

After the first disciples, the only clear picture of the preparation of leaders is to be seen in the methods practiced by Paul. Having himself received the finest education available, Paul practiced the apprenticeship method. He took carefully selected men with him on his journeys and trained them in the Scriptures. In turn, he expected these leaders, such as Timothy, to train faithful persons of proven ability who could be "continuing links in this educational chain."²

Paul also prepared co-workers in the places where he founded churches. While in a given place, he spent his time teaching, preaching, visiting, writing, and looking after the concerns of the church. Those who accompanied him gained first-hand experience in all these areas of ministry.

There were vast areas to be reached for Christianity during this period, yet there were few to do the work. Consequently, great emphasis was placed upon the lay leadership in carrying out the mission of the church. Sole

¹Acts 4:13

²Ralph R. Covell and C. Peter Wagner, An Extension Seminary Primer (So. Pasadena, Ca.: Wm. Carey Library, 1971), p. 53.

dependence upon a formally trained clergy would not have made it possible for the church to expand so rapidly.³

The method which appears to be dominant during this time is that of discipleship. Those who were capable trained prospective leaders, all the while continuing in the ministry of the Gospel. There was also a strong emphasis upon carefully maintaining the purity and excellence of what was taught, as evidenced especially in the writings of Paul.

Example from the Post-Apostolic Period

This period of church history begins with a gap, as not much is known about the worship or ministry of the church. Toward the end of the second century the situation becomes more clear. The majority of the church members were Gentiles, rather than Jews.

This development brought with it the problem of maintaining the purity of doctrine and of practice in the Church. In addition, the second and third centuries were times of persecution and theological dispute for the Christian faith. The church was under heavy attack by those who had not embraced the new faith. Christians were called upon to give a defense of their beliefs.

The catechetical schools, such as the one in Alexandria, originally begun by Clement and later expanded by Origin, spoke to these needs in the church, especially to that of maintaining the purity of the faith. The subjects included Bible training, natural sciences, geometry, astronomy,

³Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Vol. I, (New York: Harper Bros., 1937), p. 116.

philosophy, and ethics. These schools were intended for the layman, rather than the clergy.⁴ When challenges came from pagan philosophies and sharp critics, the teachers and students gave themselves to the defense of the faith.

The example drawn from this section is that of classroom instruction of the laity. A similar practice has continued within the church in the form of catechism classes as preparation for receiving church membership.

Example from the Middle Ages

This formal pattern of religious education and training was not adhered to in the fourth and fifth centuries. Rather, prospective ministers received their training through study with a bishop or with older priests.⁵ But a lay movement had been gaining strength, and soon the monastic movement grew strong. The vows taken required much time to be spent in study of the Scriptures, in meditation, and in prayer. The monasteries became centers of intellectual preservation and development during this period in church history.

Originally a lay movement, the abilities of the monks soon placed them in positions of leadership and spiritual counsel. Eventually, many monks were consenting to formal ordination as they sought to continue their ministries.⁶

⁴James H. Emery, "The Preparation of Leadership for the Pastoral Ministry," Extension Seminary, November 4, 1976, p. 3.

⁵Covell, p. 54.

⁶Emery, p. 4.

Attached to many cathedrals and monasteries were cathedral schools, with the tutorial method again being followed. Students gathered around a bishop to receive instruction in church dogma, liturgy, and Canon law.

Two methods of leadership preparation are drawn from this discussion. The first is seen in the monastic movement. Theological education took place in seclusion, as monks withdrew to concentrate upon their studies. This method, in a more moderate form, is also also reflected in the tutorial method conducted in cathedrals and monasteries.

The second method which has been cited is again the discipleship method, with prospective ministers receiving training from a particular bishop or priest.

Examples from the Reformation Period

As the Reformation movements developed and gained strength, theological education received much attention. A great emphasis was placed upon preaching that would clearly explain Biblical truth. Every church had at least one daily preaching service, and this gave great impulse toward study. The leaders in these movements labored to prepare preachers for churches whose people conducted personal Bible study. Catechisms were established for the lay people, and clergy were largely prepared in universities and academies.

Three methods of theological training are to be observed from this brief example. First, the laity was encouraged in independent study. Second, catechisms were prepared for the laity. And third, the clergy was largely

prepared in formal universities and academies.

Examples from the Modern Period

After the Reformation, many new movements developed which were outside traditional church lines. Many groups turned again to the mode of the student training at the side of an experienced pastor. This practice developed in part because certain groups, such as Quakers, Baptists, and Congregationalists, were excluded from many institutions and had to do their own training.

The method of leadership preparation used by John Wesley is worthy of note. Among converts to the Wesleyan movement were many capable people, although most were lacking in academic training. Wesley developed a rigorous system by which classes were organized to prepare individuals for the ministry on all levels. "They assigned eight hours a day to sleep and eat, eight to study and meditate, and eight to preach, visit, and do social work."⁸

This procedure allowed many Wesleyan preachers to become well equipped, yet at the same time to remain active in their particular ministry. An important part of the ministers' work was to catechize the parish families and to give counsel. Older ministers soon organized informal classes to share their insight and to give instruction.

This form of ministerial education was then later continued in the colonies, and later in America. Even after seminaries were formally established, many ministers continued to receive their education in the study of an older pastor.

⁸Emery, p. 7.

Two examples have been cited in this example. The first is, again, that of a discipleship method of leadership training. The second is that of the Methodist movement, in which capable lay members were organized into training classes. In many respects, these training classes are a form of extension education which occurred long before the modern movement by the same name.

Of worthy note in the present decade are the theological education by extension programs being formulated and carried out by some American seminaries. Many of these programs give opportunity for the student to earn the Doctor of Ministry degree. An example is that of the California Graduate School of Theology.⁹ This American movement has grown out of the events which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

The cited examples in this chapter have illustrated several methods of leadership preparation employed within the history of the Church. These methods include:

1. individual discipleship;
2. small groups of students gathered around a teacher;
3. monastic training;
4. formal academic training;
5. catechetical classes; and
6. independent study.

Other examples from history could be cited as well.

⁹California Graduate School of Theology, 213 South Kenwood Street, Glendale California, 91205; 1979 catalogue.

Viewed from the perspective of other methods of preparation, it is somewhat easier to grant that the development of a different kind of theological education on a denominational level might have much practical worth. The preceding examples have shown that the preparation of leaders has been achieved in many different ways, depending upon the circumstances. Often, the method and personnel have changed to suit the particular situation. In the case of the Wesleyan movement, the method reflects many similarities to the modern theological education by extension movement.

It is this last concept, that of theological education by extension, that this study will now view. The following chapters will examine the historical development and underlying philosophy of the modern theological education by extension movement.

Chapter 4

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION

What was to become a world wide theological movement began in the southwestern corner of Guatemala in 1962. It began as an experiment: the decentralized training of ministers through Evangelical Presbyterian Seminary. This experiment brought attention to the Seminary itself, and the concept soon spread to other parts of Guatemala, to Honduras, and eventually to the West Indies and Colombia. Subsequent developments made Colombia, Bolivia, and Brazil the three major centers in Latin America for implementing the ideas originally developed in Guatemala.¹

Three persons carried out key leadership roles in formulating the plan which came to be known as theological education by extension. These persons were Ralph D. Winter, Ross Kinsler, and James H. Emery. All were actively involved in missionary work in Guatemala. Kinsler was a pastor and theologian; Emery was a faculty member at Evangelical Presbyterian Seminary; Winter had been assigned to work in ministries with the many Indian groups in Guatemala. Winter explained how the project originally began.

¹Ralph D. Winter, Ed., Theological Education By Extension (South Pasadena, Ca.: William Carey Library, 1969), p. 3. This volume is a comprehensive compilation of articles, reports, conference minutes, and many other previously unpublished materials covering the development of this program.

Difficult as it may be for another school to follow the Guatemalan lead . . . it was much more difficult, or course, for the Guatemalan project to get under way since there was at that time no other respected school which could be appealed to as an example to copy. Thus it was that this pilot project had to depend in part upon the unusual advantage of a moment of considerable confusion. The seminary was being moved from the capital to a rural location. New members came onto the Board of Directors. The very change of location replaced a large proportion of faculty members and allowed certain novel features to go unnoticed until they had been proven. Both the national and the missionary staff happened to be extra congenial. The school itself was small enough for radical change to be discussed in a healthy way. But the most important smallness was the size of the country and hence of the national church itself . . . such that it was readily possible to meet all the church leaders concerned and, where necessary, explain the reasons for novel features.²

The new program was developed in response to problems and needs which Winter and Emery had observed with the traditional seminary situation. These observations are summarized as follows.

1. The Church in Guatemala, and in Latin America generally, was growing much more rapidly than the number of trained leaders who could serve them. At the same time as the 1962 "inventory," the leaders learned that the fine seminary in Guatemala City, which had been serving the denomination for twenty-five years, had prepared only ten pastors who were serving the denomination. Further, there

²Winter, p. 4.

were only five or six students enrolled in 1962, a number hardly sufficient to take care of the two hundred growing churches which belonged to the Presbyterian Church.³

2. The Guatemalan Presbyterian Church faced serious cultural problems in the selection and training of leaders. Within the country as a whole, and within the church, there were and are many gradations of race and culture. There were rural Indian groups, each speaking its own language, as well as city Ladinos with many educated professionals within the membership. These extremes created serious problems of language and culture when the traditional form of theological education was applied.

3. Each cultural group had its own way of selecting leaders, both within the community and within the church. When a seminary graduate from outside the community was sent to pastor a particular church, conflict often arose with the "natural leader," who held the confidence of the people, but who lacked formal training. Such conflicts frequently led to permanent division within the congregation.⁴

4. Very few prospective seminary students could meet the requirements for entrance into the existing seminary program: four years of primary school and two of secondary school.

³Ralph R. Covell and C. Peter Wagner, An Extension Seminary Primer (South Pasadena, Ca.: William Carey Library, 1971), p. 71.

⁴James H. Emery, "The Preparation of Leaders in a Ladino-Indian Church," Theological Education by Extension, Ralph D. Winter, ed., p. 17.

5. Further, the persons who most needed theological training were those who were already functioning as the leaders of the churches. They were not usually able to move to the seminary campus because of economic conditions and family responsibilities, even if they could meet the entrance requirements.

6. The problem of cultural differences again appeared within the seminary classroom. With students from widely divergent cultural groups, as well as at several educational levels, it was not possible to effectively reach any group. "That the past training programs have been inadequate is clear from the fact that almost half the seminary graduates have left the pastorate and are no longer connected with the church in any capacity."⁵

An evaluation of these basic and continuing problems brought about a major decision in 1962. The Seminary was moved to a new campus in the rural area, as it had been hopeless to train rural leaders by asking them to move to the capital. With the new campus three-quarters completed, another startling discovery was made. "We discovered that rural people could not any more easily leave their homes and go to another rural spot than to a city. Thus necessity became the mother of invention in our development of plans to go to the student in our decentralized program."⁶

⁵Emery, p. 18.

⁶Winter, p. 24. This observation was made in a report presented in 1963 to Dr. James Hopewell, then senior director of the Theological Education Fund.

Before very long, the leaders had realized that a decentralized program with regional centers in both city and rural areas, could reach all members of the church, each at his or her own level. In addition, the isolated Indian leaders could be effectively reached on a higher level than ever before. The plan for a decentralized program of theological education was structured along basic considerations which are summarized in the following five points.⁷

1. The church was called upon to serve two basic cultures, one in the city and one in the rural areas.
2. Merely to establish two seminaries was to harden the distinctions which already divided the two major groups, and would thus continue to divide the church.
3. The specific task was to design a seminary which would take any person, anywhere, who gives evidence of strong leadership traits, and take him as far as his "desires, gifts, and situation require."
4. The selection of students was to be made on the basis of experience as well as evidence of a call to service and a sincere desire to serve the Lord. In this way, a major "winnowing" takes place before much effort and money have been expended.
5. A single, central institution could be established, from which several "regional centers" would operate.

⁷These points have been summarized from articles and reports by both Winter and Emery, as reprinted in Theological Education By Extension, Ralph D. Winter, ed., pp. 11 - 28.

These regional centers would have the following goals.

a. They would train more than strictly pastoral workers, such as workers in Christian education, church music, and church finance.

b. They would provide training for greater numbers of people, especially older persons (30 - 45), married, of mature dedication and service to the church.

c. They would promote a "tent-making" ministry, partially or fully self-supporting. This final consideration was made in light of the realization that the Latin American, even more than the North American, has more confidence in the man who knows and is known in secular life and work than in the purely religious leader.

The basic purpose of the program which developed from the preceeding information was two-fold, and is perhaps best expressed in the words of Ralph Winter.

Our direct purpose is not to train theologians, since that kind of training almost by definition involves direct contact with the theologians of the world themselves, and that involves going where they are. Yet we do expect to invite outstanding people to the Seminary for special conferences several times during a year.

Our direct purpose is that of refining and enhancing the skills that already are manifest on the congregational level.⁸

The experimental extension program which began operation, and which developed over the following three years, had the following outward characteristics. First, there was no residential program, except in the seminary center at San Felipe. Rather, eleven regional centers

⁸Winter, p. 26.

gathered students in their own locations, once a week as a minimum.⁹

Second, each center had a small reference library, visual aids, and simple furniture. All students also made a monthly trip to the seminary headquarters for a two day review, as well as a time of spiritual refreshment.

Third, in order to make it possible for the faculty members to participate in the extension program, each class at the headquarters was taught one day a week for a three hour period. Each extension center then was visited weekly by a faculty member to assist the students there.¹⁰ The center leaders also included trained national pastors and missionaries.

Fourth, there was no subsidy or scholarship to anyone, except some help with transportation costs to the headquarter meetings if necessary. The student paid for his own food during the two day review.

Finally, there was no school year as is generally known. The time taken to complete a given degree might be less, but was usually longer, than the traditional length of time. Five courses were offered in a year. The residential student might take all five, while the extension student

⁹Ralph D. Winter, "This Seminary Goes to the Student," World Vision Magazine, (July - August, 1966), p. 12.

¹⁰Emery, "The Extension Seminary in Guatemala Three Years Later," as reprinted in Theological Education By Extension, Ralph D. Winter, ed., p. 91.

might take from one to five. The number was dependent upon motivation, time available, and financial resources.¹¹ Each student progressed at his own pace, handing in lessons as completed, with a maximum allowance of two years to complete a course.¹²

In his evaluation after three years, Emery made a crucial observation.

Academic achievement does not always correspond with successful leadership - some are good students and relatively ineffective in their churches while some are poor students and yet experts in creating and building up new churches. The preparation of material for these students which will fit their needs and the needs of their congregation is not only difficult, but our most crucial task at the present.¹³

Addressing this issue, Emery stated that at this point in the development a fairly traditional curriculum was being followed:¹⁴

<u>1st Year</u>	<u>2nd Year</u>
Old Testament Introduction	Theology
New Testament Introduction	Genesis and Exodus
Matthew	Religious Movements
Church History	Christian Education
Homiletics	Communication
Psychology and Sociology	
<u>3rd Year</u>	
	Church Administration
	Jeremiah and Romans
	Sects
	Pastoral Psychology
	Hygiene

¹¹Ibid., p. 92.

¹²This consideration was established in light of the fact that many students did not have sixth grade and were working on it at the same time.

¹³Emery, op. cit., p. 93. ¹⁴Ibid., p. 94.

There were, of course, problems to be faced in such an educational endeavor. In evaluation, these problems were not ignored. The first, as has already been mentioned, was the matter of rewriting many teaching materials, from Church history to Greek. It was a taxing problem to produce all of these materials, and to simultaneously work out the details of a new program.

Another recognized problem was that of helping students to develop self-study habits. Since they met at the center only once a week, there was no daily motivation from the teacher to study. However, this problem had a positive side in that it eliminated certain students, while selecting the most highly motivated.

It was not a simple task to select and train leaders for the extension centers, especially those who were not formal members of the seminary faculty. Many gifted leaders have important contributions to make, but can only do so when they understand the philosophy of education well enough to function within it.¹⁵ Once they were properly trained, however, such center leaders were able to carry many of the responsibilities of maintaining the center. This in turn lightened the load for the faculty members.

Emery noted that the extension system reduced the amount of time that a teacher had in personal contact with

¹⁵This problem has been capably addressed by David Leslie Hill, Designing a Theological Education by Extension Program (South Pasadena, Ca.: William Carey Library, 1974). The book includes an excellent programmed instruction manual to teach potential center leaders.

class members. This would be a disadvantage in many ways.

"However, the choice seems to be that the extension student can have study help in his center meeting and at regular monthly sessions, or he will have nothing at all."¹⁶ This was a problem the extension staff simply had to live with.

A closely related problem at this point concerned how to handle the practical experience side of such courses as homiletics and Christian education. The student in these areas needed direct evaluation of his preaching and teaching. In some centers, the students were required to submit written lesson plans and sermon outlines. The use of cassette recorders was anticipated as promising aid in this area.

The most critical problem, however, remained that of producing programmed materials for each of the fifteen courses. This was complicated by the fact that there were students studying at four academic levels, depending upon their pre-seminary education. The full curriculum required sixty programmed packages. In 1966, the matter of preparing these materials was strongly addressed.

What would be most helpful in this problem would be the cooperation of theological institutions in the same linguistic area. The emphasis should be on utility rather than on the theological fads of the day. We should be using the latest techniques and resources available.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 99.

In a cooperative effort, denominational differences in theology, etc., can be handled by different units being provided where necessary by each in the group. . . . The main thing would be the help in providing the large amount of basic material which must be produced. 17

The third year evaluation also evidenced many advantages which came from the experiment. The most obvious was the dramatic rise in enrollment. At this point in time, the seminary had 100 students, rather than ten or fifteen as in years past.¹⁸ The students ranged from rural Indians to professionals in the city, included both men and women, and were in both higher and lower academic levels than as before.

Additional advantages were perhaps best summarized by Dr. James F. Hopewell, then Senior Director of the Theological Education Fund. It is to be noted that this fund had granted money to underwrite much of the Guatemalan experiment, especially in the task of writing and producing the necessary materials. After visiting the field, Dr. Hopewell made the following observations.

The teaching of students within their own environment and in connection with their secular employment is not merely a gimmick. The Presbyterian scheme is drawing a different type of man into the ministry, and is equipping him in a way which gives at least some indication of being far superior to that gained in a residential full-time course. 19

¹⁷Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁸Winter, "This Seminary Goes to the Student," p. 12.

¹⁹James F. Hopewell, "An Outsider's View," Theological Education by Extension, Ralph D. Winter, ed., p. 101.

A summary of the benefits described by Dr. Hopewell in his evaluation follows.

1. Older men, established in a profession, were given opportunity to study theology. These men were already established leaders in their communities.

2. Their method of study forced them to rely upon reading and self-expression. "Passive acceptance of lectures is minimized."²⁰

3. The variety of centers permitted instruction at different levels, from post-sixth grade to university.

4. Transition to a tent-making ministry was natural. Types of vocational crises that may confront full-time seminary students in other countries were largely avoided.

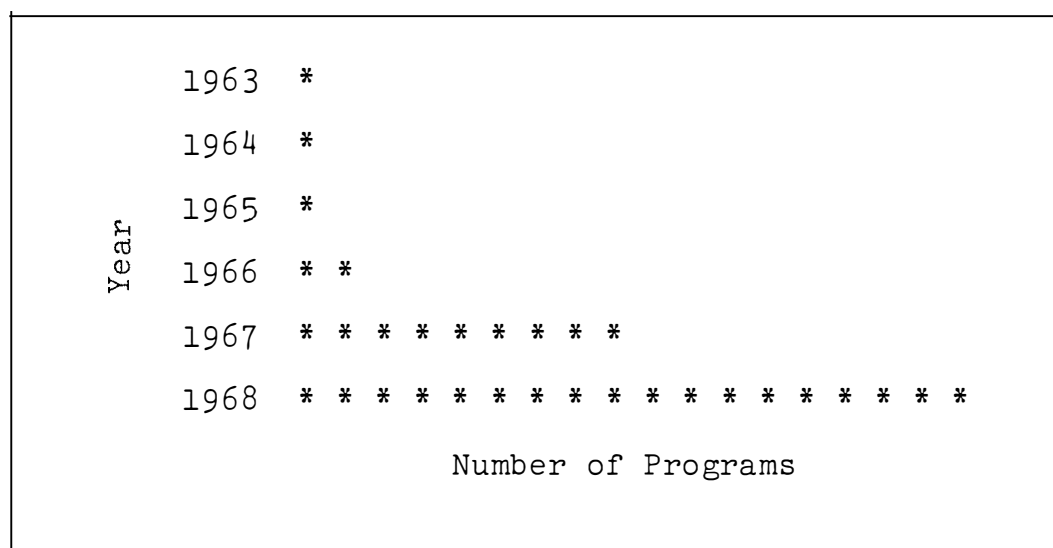
5. Pastors utilize courses as an effective type of continuing education.

6. Cost was surprisingly low. Because they work either in their churches or in secular tasks, students can afford to pay for their courses. Also, no subsidy for living expenses is required.

A final observation must be made. In order for such a program to succeed, much depended upon the capacity, ingenuity, and dedication of the teachers. They were required to spend long hours in travel, as well as in the preparation and grading of materials. These characteristics were evident in the small staff at the Presbyterian Seminary in Guatemala.

²⁰Ibid.

This, then, was the beginning of theological education by extension in the 1960's. It was in Guatemala that the groundwork was prepared. The program there has continued successfully, with other denominations within that country developing their own programs. Soon, however, the momentum began to build, and 1967 became the year of breakthrough. The small Guatemalan experiment was to be the beginning of a movement which would see eighteen programs established in Latin and South America between 1963 and 1968. The following chart shows the rapid growth of the extension concept.



Of the eighteen extension programs, fifteen were outside Guatemala. Several theological persuasions were represented. The names and locations of these early programs are listed as follows.

1. Presbyterian Evangelical Seminary, San Felipe, Guatemala.
2. Berea Bible Institute, Friends Mission, Chiquimula, Guatemala.
3. West Indies Mission, Guadelupe and Martinique.
4. Theological Institute, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Honduras.
5. Conservative Baptist Association, Olanchito, Honduras.
6. Theological Center, Evangelical United Church, Quito, Ecuador.
7. Evangelistic Institute of Mexico.
8. United Evangelical Center, Mexico.
9. Methodist Theological Seminary, Costa Rica.
10. Immanuel Bible Institute, Mennonite Brethren, Colombia.
11. United Biblical Seminary, Medellin, Colombia.
12. Association of Bible Churches, San Jose, Costa Rica.
13. John Calvin Seminary, Presbyterian, Mexico.
14. South Presbytery, Colombia.
- 15..Mayab Presbytery, Yucatan, Mexico.
16. Evangelical Mennonite Mission, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
- 17..Union of Biblical Institutions of Greater Colombia. (Fifteen schools involved.)
18. Central American Theological Seminary, Guatemala.²¹

²¹Winter, Theological Education by Extension, p. 123.

The sudden increase in extension education came in 1967 after a key workshop and consultation was held in Armenia, Colombia in September of 1967. This conference was funded by ALET, the association of theological schools in the northern region of Latin America.²²

The major accomplishment of this conference was the constitutional meeting of UNICO, which is the association of theological schools of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama. Also of major importance was the formation of the "Intertext Project." This was an advisory committee for textbook production, and an actual curriculum for the preparation of materials was provided.

The many topics considered at Armenia may be seen in reviewing the table of contents of the official conference booklet:

- What is extension education?
- Cultural distance and ministerial training.
- Programmed Instruction: Modern Application.
- Writing self-instructional books.
- Advanced training for teachers and leaders.
- Debate on accreditation and associations.
- Gifts of the Holy Spirit in leadership training.
- Preliminary instructions for preparing courses.
- Pastoral and lay courses: relationships.

²²Winter, Theological Education by Extension, p. 123.

The conference at Armenia held major significance.

Ralph D. Winter observed that

Up until Armenia a good deal of interest aroused and favor was shown toward the concept of the extension seminary had been on the part of agencies and individuals within the major historic denominations. From this point on, serious interest and participation has also been seen in the conservative-evangelical-faith-mission sphere, and in the Pentecostal tradition. ²³

The extension seminary was becoming firmly established.

Two of the first countries to begin their own programs were Bolivia and Colombia, both in 1967. Each program developed along different lines, and constitutes something of a study in contrasts. Since then, some projects have followed the Bolivian pattern, and others the Colombian. Many others have been highly flexible, adopting extension principles to their own needs.

The major difference in structure between the two programs was due to denomination emphasis.

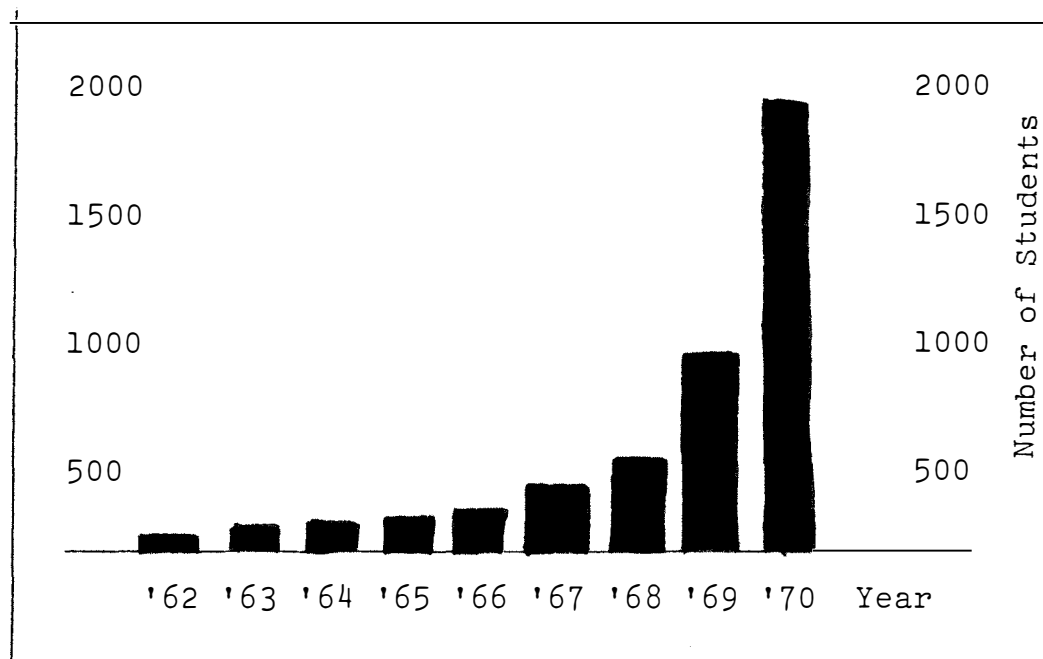
In Bolivia, after a workshop held in 1968, it was decided that each denomination would do well to develop its own extension program, especially those which were already operating residential institutions which were associated with one particular denomination. In Colombia, the presence of the United Biblical Seminary, an institution relatively independent of any denomination, provided the rallying point for a vast interdenominational project. ²⁴

²³Ibid., p. 149.

²⁴Wagner, p. 77.

In Bolivia, the George Allen Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Christian Union, under the guidance of Peter Savage, soon became the most extensively developed extension program. In Colombia, the United Biblical Seminary has extended geographically and in numbers, as well as in affiliations with other missionary groups. It continues as a truly united interdenominational effort. In other Latin American countries, especially Brazil, other extension education projects continue to develop.

The following chart illustrates the surprising growth in numbers of extension students in Latin America, from its beginnings in 1963 to a time of major evaluation in 1970.



The extension influence has not been restricted to Latin and South America. This movement has grown throughout the world, notably in Africa. A brief reading through issues of Extension Seminary²⁵ will reveal that extension programs of theological education are being carried out in countries as diverse as South Africa, Swaziland, Ethiopia, England, Botswana, Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Belgium, Indonesia, Australia, India, Lebanon, Fiji, America, Korea. Numerous other countries could be added to this list. The following list of statistics reveals the great number of students involved in extension programs of theological education throughout the world.²⁶

<u>Region</u>	<u>Countries</u>	<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>% of Total Students</u>
Africa	16	40	5,000	18.0
Asia	12	26	3,000	10.8
Caribbean	8	10	1,500	5.4
Europe	6	8	300	1.0
Latin America	17	130	15,000	54.0
North America	2	20	2,500	9.0
Oceania	3	6	500	1.8
Totals	64	240	27,800	100.0

²⁵This is the quarterly bulletin published by El Seminario De Extension, Apartado 3, San Felipe, Reu., Guatemala, C.A.

²⁶Extension Seminary, (December, 1976), p. 6.

Since its inception, theological education by extension has demonstrated its capacity for providing quality theological education and training at many different levels. Students range from those who are illiterate, to those who hold advanced degrees in highly specialized fields. The concept has been shown to be flexible enough to accommodate a variety of social, economic, and educational situations.

Serious consideration is warranted in regard to the application of theological education by extension to more North American denominations and schools. In a time of great need to evangelize communities and to establish new churches, the extension approach has much to offer. This study recognizes that there are many differences between the Latin American and the North American situations. However, there are also some similarities. Numbers of smaller denominations face the problems of limited resources, too few Christian workers trained to minister, and great needs which call for attention. The possibility of addressing these problems through a program of theological education by extension lends momentum to the study of how it might be implemented in North American denominations.

This study will now proceed to an evaluation of how a theological extension project might take its place in the Evangelical Church, an examination of the philosophy which supports the extension movement, and to a prospectus by which such a project could be implemented.

Chapter 5

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION

The chapter which presents an overview of the inception of extension education in theological circles also presents much of the philosophy which supports the movement. However, it is necessary to investigate the specific concepts involved in education by extension. Only in this way is it possible to eliminate misunderstandings about its purpose. This is crucial, as the reaction from many toward the concept of extension education has unfortunately been negative. Such reactions often occur because there is no clear understanding of the purposes of such programs. In addition, many extension programs have been quite outspoken in their criticisms of traditional and established methods of theological education.

That which follows is a summary of the philosophy of theological education by extension, whether it be explicitly or implicitly stated in the writings of those who deal in this field. This chapter is a positive statement of the fundamental philosophy which supports a very different approach to Christian Education.

Extension Education is Built Upon the Existing Structures

Theological extension programs first developed in answer to a felt need within the church. The resident seminaries simply were not producing enough of the kind of leaders who were equipped to minister to the churches. This was true not only in Guatemala, but throughout Latin and South America. The result was an educational concept which moved radically away from resident seminaries. The picture which has often been projected is that of an intention to eliminate resident seminaries altogether. Such is not the case.

The extension programs are very firmly centered in the resident facilities and program. They constitute the core which makes extension education possible. In the resident seminary, the school provides the core library, the faculty personnel, and the headquarters for the entire program. "Initial resistance often comes at a misunderstanding of this concept. We are suggesting an extension, not an extermination of the existing structures."¹ The two programs are intended to be complimentary, not contradictory.

Extension Education Trains the Leaders God has Called

Who calls people to places of leadership within the Church? Extension philosophy firmly believes that God is

¹Ralph R. Covell and C. Peter Wagner, An Extension Seminary Primer (South Pasadena, Ca.: William Carey Library, 1971), p. 8. This particular work embodies a very precise summary of the concept of extension education.

the one who calls leaders. He provides every church, every group of believers, with gifted individuals, and desires that they should minister through these gifts.

Why, then, do so many churches seem to be without adequate leadership, especially when there is no formally ordained minister present? The first reaction is to say that the problem with theological education is that it does not produce enough leaders to fill all the church positions. Extension education philosophy opposes such a reaction.

The fact is that in every church there are leaders waiting to be equipped. The problem with theological education is that these leaders are unable to adjust their lives to fit into the established program of education. The solution to the problem, then, is to adjust the program to meet the needs of these leaders.

Theological educators are now coming to recognize that the task of the seminary is not to make leaders. The calling of the seminary is to train the leaders that God has already made. Our seminaries and Bible schools should set their sights on this objective - training men and women who are the gifted ones of God for the ministry: pastors, teachers, evangelists, and others.²

Basically, a man or woman leads because of his or her spiritual gifts. We cannot train or educate a man or a woman to be a leader. Rather, the task is to educate the leader to do a better job of leading. This task provides a central goal for theological education by extension.

²Ibid., p. 6.

Extension Education Trains Leaders Where They Are

Extension education philosophy maintains that these leaders can and should be trained where they are. Our society has tended to become institution-centered, rather than person-centered. But there are many benefits to be received through a decentralized program which centers attention upon the leader:

1. The leader is not isolated from his community, but continues to minister throughout his education.
2. The academic courses have a greater impact when put to the test in the field.
3. Students develop study habits which remain with them throughout their lives.
4. More efficient use of time and money, as well as facilities, is achieved.
5. A greater number of students is reached.

These advantages make extension education quite practical for both the institution and the student.

Extension Education is Quality Education

A valid question to be asked at this point is whether or not it is realistic to expect that quality learning can be maintained in an extension situation. There is a tendency on the part of some to think of theological education by extension as another sort of Sunday School. To take such a view is to miss the intent of the concept.

Existing theological extension programs have clearly shown that such projects do issue in quality learning on the part of the students.

Where extension theology can exceed the standard approach lies in the whole-person approach; since students remain in their usual life context and work in their church during the week, the things that happen to them can be continually built upon in the study time and brought into the discussions.³

The extension student may learn in a different way, but learns equally well, if not better, than the resident seminary student.⁴ Some proponents believe this is because

Two or three motivated people, committed to each other and working in the presence of God, can bring the whole world into their discussion, and comprehend it in part. As to who actually taught them, it was not I, nor did they teach each other. The instructor of the things of God is God. This, I believe, is theological education taking place in the presence of God.⁵

The crucial factors in maintaining quality learning situations within the extension program are in developing appropriate curriculum materials, and then developing teachers who can carry out such demanding programs. Neither task is light.

As has been previously stressed, it is a heavy responsibility to write the materials necessary for extension education. This is because every situation is a little different from every other, and it is not usually possible to simply follow an established format. The program with even one capable and qualified writer is fortunate.

³Richard W. Sales, "Two or Three and God," The Christian Century (February 2 - 9, 1977), p. 109. The author was, at the time of writing, a missionary in Southern Africa, under the United Church Board for World Ministries.

⁴Ibid., p. 112.

⁵Ibid., p. 110.

Curriculum development requires planning from the point of view of the leader-in-training. His role and function in the church determine both the selection of subjects, as well as the manner of presentation.

Instructors and administrators who facilitate the extension program must be willing to commit themselves to a difficult task. Most will be required to travel a great deal. Grading programmed instruction materials, when added to the many other tasks of teaching, is burdensome. The process of continual evaluation and revision in order to meet student needs can become frustrating. Yet, these are the necessary parts of a successful extension program.

At this point, a caution is appropriate. Extension education philosophy does not advocate an over-emphasis upon academic accomplishments. Spiritual qualifications ought to be the foremost consideration in deciding which leaders to train, and how to accomplish their proper training.

More important than higher and higher academic requirements should be spiritual and cultural standards. A man of God who is fully accepted by his peers as a leader, who has spiritual gifts which equip him for his task, and who leads his church forward in winning people to Christ and planting new churches, is the man, regardless of his academic opportunities previously, who should be studying in our institutions. Unhappily, many who fit this description have not been eligible for our seminaries, and therefore have been excluded from the possibility of ordination.⁶

While students must be expected to maintain standards of excellence in their work, it is not to be academics alone

⁶Covell, p. 5.

which measure the eligibility of individuals to receive theological education through extension. Extension philosophy is directed toward meeting the student at his own level, and training him to properly fulfill his calling. Extension training permits classes as variable as the academic and geographical differences that confront us, while maintaining quality learning experiences.

Extension Education and Church Growth

It is important to note how extension education is tied to church growth when applied in theological circles. Five specific ties can be noted.

First, the rate of church growth is no longer dependent upon the number of seminary graduates produced who actually enter the pastoral ministry. Some denominations discourage the organization of a church until a pastor is available, thus making church multiplication directly dependent upon the seminaries. "This thinking can be changed, and needs to be changed. It can become an unwholesome deterrent to healthy church growth."⁷ When theological students are working within the church situation and are immediately applying what they learn, church growth is enhanced.

Second, church workers who remain in their communities, and who are not "institutionalized," remain more in tune with the current situation. They are thus more flexible in their thinking in matters of organization and administration.

⁷Wagner, p. 5.

Further, professional pastors have opportunity to renew their training and to gain new insights through extension programs.

Third, a tent-making, or self-supporting, ministry is encouraged through extension education. This is often a critical factor in deciding whether or not to open a new work. Supplying the needs of a pastor and family for the years it usually takes to develop a self-supporting church can be a serious financial burden for many denominations and groups. If, however, the church is established by trained ministers who also support themselves, church growth through the planting of new churches can proceed more rapidly. It would be possible to send two or three teams of theological extension students or graduates to begin a new work.

A fourth consideration is that larger numbers of students are reached through extension programs. Larger numbers of trained workers means that more people can be reached and disciplined. Church growth is facilitated through the process of multiplication.

The fifth connection to church growth is closely related to the fourth. Most laypersons, as well as many pastors, feel inadequate when faced with the task of establishing a new church, or of administering a Sunday School department, or of doing personal calling and evangelism. Receiving the necessary training, combined with practical experience during the training, provides some of the confidence which is often lacking in the performance of such responsibilities. Those who have received training are usually more

willing to attempt a new work.

The philosophy of theological education by extension includes these basic concepts:

1. Education by extension is built upon the already existing educational institutions, and does not seek to eliminate them. It seeks to extend their ministries.

2. Education by extension seeks to train the leaders God has called.

3. Education by extension seeks to train these leaders where they are.

4. Education by extension seeks to maintain high standards of teaching and learning.

5. Education by extension is closely tied to the implementation of church growth.

The task is to take the facilities that exist and use them to train the gifted leaders of God. In this way, larger numbers of workers can move more effectively into a world that desperately needs to hear the message of the Gospel.

Chapter 6

A PROSPECTUS FOR ESTABLISHING THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION IN THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The implementation of a denomination-wide program of education by extension is presently hindered in The Evangelical Church. There is no person, committee, or board charged with the responsibility for Christian education within the denomination as a whole. Each conference is free to develop its own program, although recommendations do come from the Council of Superintendents and from the General Superintendent.

A new Discipline is being prepared which will provide for a general convention, with some structure which will govern the denomination as a whole. However, this prospectus will call for the establishment of a board on a denominational level which would be charged with conducting education by extension. This study will refer to such a board as the Board of Extension Education for Ministry.

The new Discipline will provide for a Board of Christian Education, as well as for a Board of Church Extension. This latter board is new, and is charged with the administration of the following responsibilities on the annual conference level. The Board of Church Extension shall:

1. Make provision for adequate surveys of population centers within the boundaries of the Annual Conference with the view to possible church planting.

2. Study and make an analysis of the statistics of the existing churches within the Annual Conference, their facilities, location, potential growth opportunities, and make recommendations to the Board of Evangelism for any possible assistance where needed.

3. Cooperate with the Conference Superintendent(s) in the establishing of new churches, giving counsel and guidance as to possible and feasible locations, suitable building locations, projections and plans, and adequate financing of the proposed projects.

4. Through the Director of Church Extension, promote the needs of Church Extension in all the churches of the Annual Conference, prepare promotional materials for raising support for Church Extension throughout the Conference, and make reports of progress to the ministers and the congregations of the Conference.

5. Prepare and recommend to the Conference Council of Administration and the Annual Conference, an annual budget for the work of Church Extension in the Annual Conference, with recommendations as to means of raising the necessary funds.

6. Cooperate with local Church Councils of Conference Mission Churches in giving counsel in the development of programs designed to build those local churches into full time fields of labor, giving advice on building locations,

plans, and financing, and other matters as may come before the Board concerning local church matters.

7. Fulfill other tasks assigned to it by the Annual Conference.¹

The Board of Church Extension is on the annual conference level, as are the Board of Christian Education and the Board of Ministerial Relations. This study proposes that a board on the general conference level be established to work in close cooperation with these three annual conference boards, and to facilitate theological education by extension programs within the annual conferences. For the purposes of this study, such a board will be named the Board of Extension Education.

The Board of Extension Education

The membership of this supervisory board shall include the following individuals:

1. The Coordinator of Theological Education, who shall be hired on the general conference level and be charged with responsibility for coordinating the extension programs throughout the denomination;
2. The chairman of the Board of Extension Education shall be one conference director of Christian education, as elected by all the annual conference directors;
3. The General Superintendent;

¹This job description was taken from the materials which are being edited for the new Discipline, and were provided by Dr. George Millen, of Pacific Conference.

4. A representative from the Council of Superintendents;

5. The academic dean and one faculty member from each cooperating educational institution.

The Board of Extension Education would be free to invite guests and interested persons to the board sessions.

The Board of Extension Education would be amenable to the Executive Council of the general conference.

Job Description of the Board of Extension Education

The Board of Extension Education would be established to execute the following responsibilities:

1. This Board would maintain all records and statistics relevant to the functioning of extension programs within The Evangelical Church;

2. This Board would set standards for the functioning of theological extension education directors and personnel.

3. This Board would supervise the academic programs of all extension projects. Specifically, this board would approve all matters of establishing or changing curricula.

4. This Board would supervise the coordination of the various extension programs with the cooperating schools.

5. This Board would establish and approve the granting of credit on the basis of life experience equivalency examinations. This would be done in cooperation with the particular academic institution granting the credit.

6. This Board would evaluate and approve the granting of credit for participation in various educational

activities outside the extension program, such as leadership training seminars or missions seminars.

7. This Board would establish guidelines and standards for use in transferring credits from academic institutions other than those cooperating in the extension programs.

8. This Board would establish a core curriculum, within which each extension program would develop a course of study structured to meet the given situation.

9. This Board would assist the individual conference extension programs with financial procedures. Specifically, guidelines would be made available in the matters of setting tuition fees, drawing up budgets, payment to personnel, and so forth.

10. This Board would supervise the conferring of degrees by academic institutions in either of two ways. The Board may title its own degrees, such as Bachelor of Religious Education, or Master of Christian Ministries, for example, and ask the cooperating institutions to use that title in conferring the degree. Or, the Board may accept several different titles, working within the established degree programs of the cooperating institutions. In this case, the Board would be responsible to make sure that all accepted degrees on a given level were reasonably equivalent. It would seem that the second possibility would prove best at the outset.

11. This Board would establish standards for the development of center libraries.

Responsibilities of the Director of Extension Education

1. The Director would maintain a central office where statistics and information concerning all extension programs would be maintained.
2. The Director would maintain working relationships with all cooperating academic institutions. Specific areas of concern would be in curriculum development, use of faculty members, and maintenance of academic standards.
3. The Director would maintain a program of training for all extension directors. Specific areas of concern would be in administration, leadership, teaching techniques, and curriculum development.
4. The Director would maintain communication between the extension programs in order that all directors know what is developing in other programs. This might best be done through a regular publication, such as a newsletter.
5. The Director would serve as a resource person for all extension directors in providing information, suggestions, and encouragement.
6. The Director would ensure that all standards as established by the Board of Extension Education are kept.

Cooperating Academic Institutions

The establishment of a working relationship with an existing academic institution is the first step to a permanent extension program. This relationship has much to recommend it. First, the academic institution would serve as a resource center. This is especially true for the library, which is

vitally necessary for the preparation of course materials and for the production of instructional manuals.

Second, faculty members would serve as a rich resource. The professors could be made available for a few days or for a week to conduct extension center seminars. In some situations the academic institution might be close enough to allow the faculty members to travel to a center for weekly sessions. Other possibilities for the use of faculty members include taped lectures, video tape machines, and written papers to be read during class sessions.

Third, the academic faculty would serve as a resource for the extension director. He or she would have access to counsel and assistance in developing courses and writing curriculum materials.

Fourth, the credits earned through an established school become transferable to other institutions. This is especially valuable for the student who chooses to go on to a further degree, or who moves to a different location.

Fifth, the extension program with close ties to an academic institution can continue smoothly even if the extension program director should leave. The succeeding director would be able to assume responsibilities with few problems.

After this relationship is established, the exact format of the extension program would take form according to the role played by the academic institution. Weekly student sessions at the center are the minimum number which should be allowed. Some centers will meet with a faculty member every week. Some will study together as a group in preparation

for a week's seminar with the professor at the end of the course. Still other extension programs will be fortunate enough to have a seminary graduate as a director who will be equipped to teach many of the courses.

The important concept is that the system is flexible at this point. Under the supervision of the Board of Extension Education, the program director would find the format which works best, and then use it. This is possible when standards are set to maintain minimum requirements.

The Core Curriculum

The core curriculum is designed to serve as a standard for those who develop curricula for different extension programs. The core curriculum has three major divisions, with general course listings. Using these general headings as an indicator of the areas which must be covered, the extension director would be free to write syllabi for specific courses which will meet a particular situation. The specific courses in theology designed as continuing education for pastors would differ from those designed for persons with no previous theological training. Yet, the two groups would work within the same framework.

The core curriculum, with general course descriptions, is outlined as follows. This core curriculum could, of course, be revised and expanded by the Board of Extension Education as the growth of extension programs throughout the denomination made revision necessary.

Foundational Studies

1. Bible Content Courses: These courses are to include Old and New Testament surveys, as well as specific book studies such as Romans, Pastoral Epistles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Minor Prophets. The emphasis is to be upon the use of the inductive method of Bible study.

2. Church History: These courses are to cover the development of Christianity from the end of the Apostolic period to contemporary American developments. The expansion of the Church, the development of Christian thought, and the growth of controversies and doctrines are to be covered.

3. Comparative Religions and Cults: These courses are to be a study of the major living religions of the world, and of the major non-orthodox groups in North America today. There is to be an emphasis upon meeting challenges to the Christian faith as made by these groups today.

4. Missiology: These courses are to investigate the Scriptural understanding of missions, the basic theological concepts of missions, and the place of missions in the life and practice of the church.

5. Apologetics: These courses are to constitute a study of the major problems confronting the adherent of the Christian faith and the way in which various schools of Christian apologetics have sought to resolve them.

6. Discipline of the Evangelical Church: These courses are to be an introduction to the basic theological beliefs of The Evangelical Church. There is to be an examination of basic doctrines, church government, and practices of the Church.

Theological Studies

1. Christian Theology: These courses are to be a study of the Christian understanding of the doctrines of God, man, sin, Christ, faith, revelation, redemption, the Church, and last things.

2. Theology of Christian Holiness: These courses are to be a study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit as revealed in Scripture, and of the life of holiness.

3. Pauline Theology: These courses are to be an in-depth study of the doctrines and principles contained in Paul's epistles, with an emphasis upon application of such principles to the contemporary church.

4. Philosophy: These courses are to be a survey of the major schools of philosophy and their relationship to contemporary religious thought. There is to be an emphasis upon modern philosophies of epistemology as they compare with Christian epistemology.

5. Christian Ethics: These courses are to constitute an inquiry into the basis of ethical systems, and a systematic study of Christian ethics for the purpose of applying the Christian ethical ideal to contemporary culture.

Practical Studies

1. Homiletics: These courses are to examine the methods of sermon preparation and presentation. Concentration is to be given to the practical means of effective Biblical preaching.

2. Biblical Hermeneutics: These courses are to be a basic introduction to methods in Bible study and to principles of Biblical interpretation. There is to be an emphasis upon the inductive method. Whenever the availability of proper instruction exists, the Biblical languages are to be included in this category.

3. Principles and Practices of Christian Education: These courses are to constitute study in principles of teaching, classroom techniques, and curriculum use and development. There should also be a survey of the scope of Christian education in the church as regards planning, goal setting, delegating, and evaluating.

4. Principles of Church Growth: These courses are to cover methods of evangelism and discipleship. Particular attention should be given to the study of growth principles and to the development of effective local programs by the students.

5. Principles of Administration: These courses are to study the fundamental management principles of leadership and administration, with concentration upon the application of these principles to the various ministries of the church.

6. Educational Ministries: These courses are to be a study of the nature, needs, and characteristics of age levels and special groups, with emphasis upon structuring programs to meet the particular needs of each group.

7. Pastoral Care and Counseling: These course are to examine counseling techniques, pastoral psychology, marriage and family counseling, and problem areas of ministry.

Physical Facilities

Traditional educational programs must deal with the cost of providing and maintaining facilities. The cost of building a new educational facility is usually quite prohibitive. One of the advantages of extension education is that new facilities are not required.

The extension programs would make use of the church facilities on the local level. Many churches would already have available the necessary audio-visual equipment in the form of film and slide projectors, screens, overhead projectors, cassette recorders, and chalk boards. If it would be necessary for the extension program to procure the necessary equipment, such an expense would be minimal when compared to the cost of providing a traditional campus. In actual practice, extension directors and teachers would be best equipped if they had their own equipment for use in teaching.

Libraries

Each extension center would establish a core library for the use of the extension students. The library would consist of basic textbooks and research works. The Board of Extension Education would aid each program in establishing this core library in two specific ways. First, the Board would approve a list of books which would be contained in each library. Second, the academic deans and faculty members on the Board would recommend texts and research books to be included as called for by the specific

courses being offered.

The building of the core library will constitute one of the largest initial expenditures in any extension program. Once established, however, the library would continue to grow through gifts, memorials, and by annual budgeted amounts on the part of all church using the extension center. All extension instructors would be instructed to place a copy of their notes and course materials in the library. In this way, they are available for reference if instructors should change. Also, they will be of valuable use to directors in supervision and evaluation of courses. A copy of all texts used should be included in the library as well.

Supervision of Extension Personnel

The successful functioning of all the parts of the extension program would be largely determined by the extension personnel, whether they be teachers, administrators, or discussion group leaders. Among the most important tasks of an extension director would be the supervision of all personnel.

Although an individual may be competent in a given field, such expertise does not necessarily make the individual a teacher. In addition, the kind of teaching done in extension education would be unlike that to which most people are accustomed. This is because the average extension student will be older and more capable of studying independently. Adult students cannot be taught in the same manner

as high school students.

It would be important, indeed necessary for the extension director to establish and maintain a program of training for all personnel.² The extension personnel would thereby be acquainted with the philosophy of theological education by extension, and with the principles of teaching adults. Such a program of supervision would keep the director aware of what is happening in the extension program as a whole. On the annual conference level, in many cases, the Director of Christian Education would be providing such training for the extension program directors, with a concentration upon leadership and administration.

The extension director would strengthen the program by allowing the students to evaluate each course. The director could then share these evaluations with the teacher or group leader. This procedure would aid in overcoming weaknesses and in building upon strengths.

Another important task concerning personnel will be the recruitment of a teaching staff. Through a program of supervision and training, as discussed above, individuals without formal education as teachers could be trained to teach. Many individuals from within the community could be drawn upon. Also, a competent and diligent student in a

²All the major works in theological education by extension deal with this issue. The reader is referred to the previously mentioned work by Ralph D. Winter, Theological Education by Extension, for detailed discussions and suggestions, as well as for a bibliography on the subject.

particular course could be encouraged to continue study in that subject, with the goal of teaching that course on a permanent basis.

Two important cautions must be given to the director at this point:

1. The director must be careful not to attempt to personally carry the full teaching load, even though he or she may be competent to do so. If the director should be removed from the program, the extension center would be hard pressed to continue to function. The director should strive to build a program that will continue smoothly even when the leadership changes.

2. The director must also be careful not to rely too heavily upon local pastors and church staff members for teaching responsibilities. Such personnel are often so occupied with affairs of their ministry that sufficient time could not be given to the extension program. Also, church staff members and pastors often change churches. Too great a reliance upon them could easily become problematic.

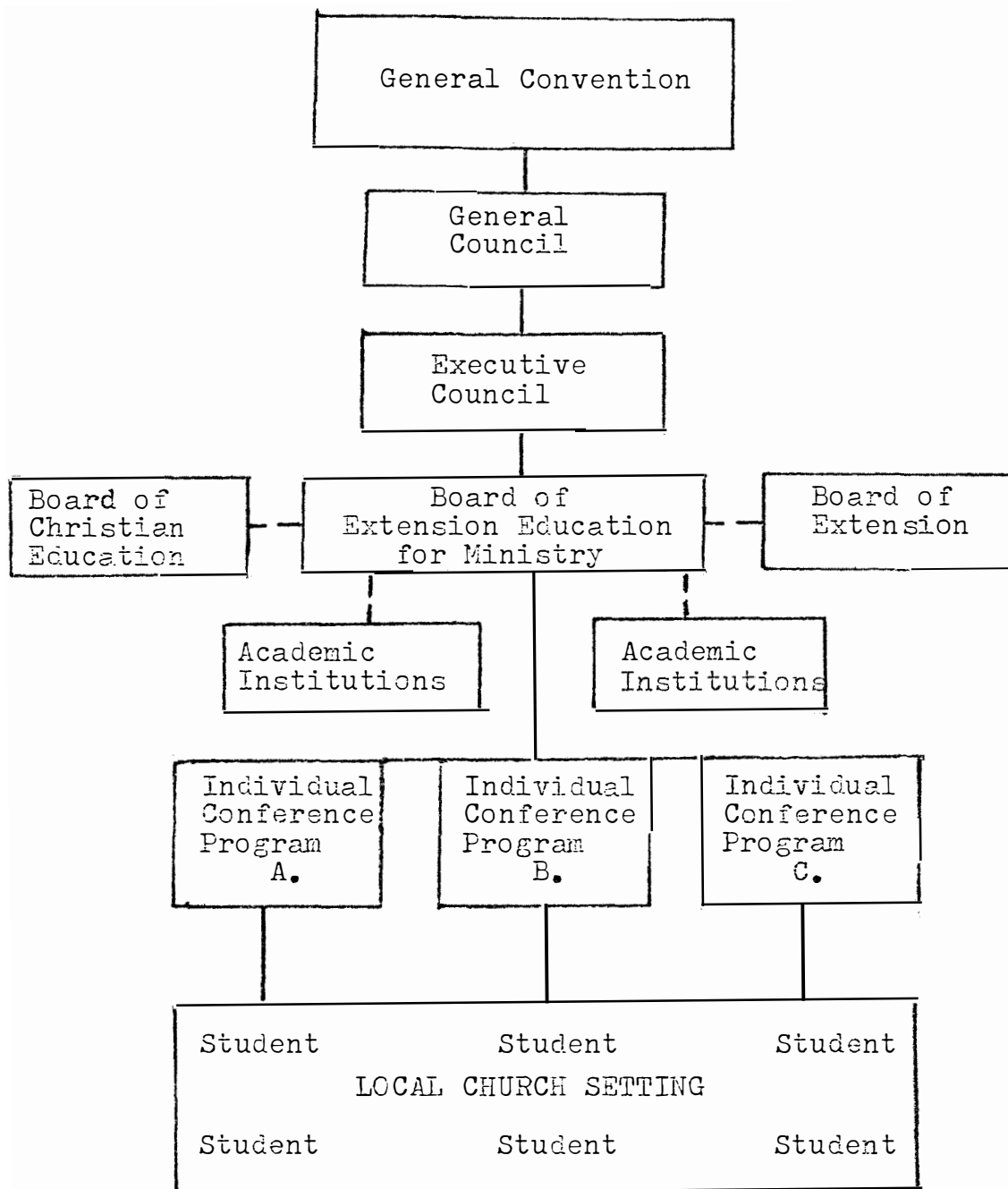
All this is not to say that pastors should not be used as teachers and leaders. They will be valuable resource persons. However, caution must be used to avoid too much reliance upon them.

This prospectus is presented in the belief that The Evangelical Church would be benefited through it. The overarching goal of such an educational undertaking would be the preparation of individuals for the ministries of the

church, and through these individuals to reach those who do not know Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

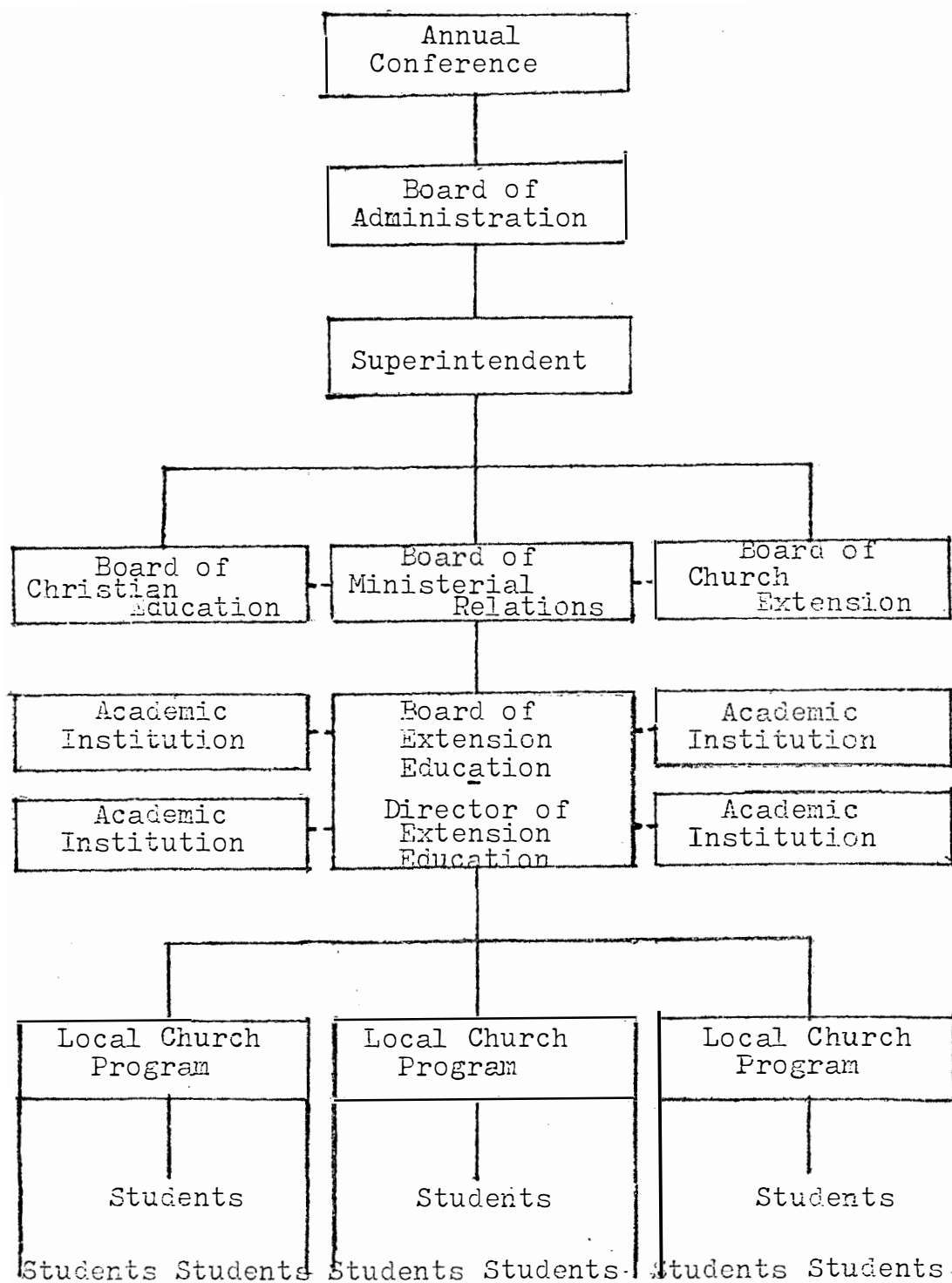
However, this prospectus is not offered in the belief that it could be implemented immediately. Rather, it will be necessary to begin in one place at a time, gradually building a program of education which will be denomination-wide. The following two sections will be proposals for beginning theological education by extension in two individual, and very different, conferences of The Evangelical Church.

Proposed organizational chart
for the Board of Extension
Education for Ministry with the
new general church organization
as outlined by the new Discipline
of The Evangelical Church.



Proposed organizational chart
for the Board of Extension
Education for Ministry with the
annual conference organization
as outlined by the Discipline
of The Evangelical Church.

Organizational Chart - Annual Conference Level



Chapter 7

THE WESTERN CONFERENCE: A PROSPECTUS

The Western Conference comprises twenty-seven churches in Montana and North Dakota. The membership presently numbers almost 1800. During the ten years since 1978, nine new churches have been added. However, Superintendent Richard Kienitz stated in an interview in March of 1979 that only two of these churches were actually planted, with new congregations being established. The other seven were established among groups of people who were former members of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. There are both city and rural churches within the conference.

Western Conference recently acquired, through merger, property in Denver, Colorado. There is a church which needs to be re-opened, but no one is available to do the work. In addition, there are opportunities to plant churches in areas as far south as Arizona and New Mexico. Again, there is no one available who can do the work. Besides these opportunities, there are some existing churches within the conference without resident pastors, and many new areas into which the church should move. Some of the existing churches are large enough to be hiring multiple staff members.

Western Conference is desirous of implementing church extension. At the 1978 annual conference meeting,

approval was given to employ an individual to concentrate on the work of church extension and growth. The method has been to study each church, to determine its potential, and then to aid the church in setting goals and plans by which the goals can be reached. Good results are being seen in some situations, and the attitude toward the work of extension is quite positive within the conference as a whole.²

Such a program of evaluation of potential for growth would be strengthened by the implementation of extension education. When questioned as to what plan was being followed to actually establish new churches, Superintendent Kienitz stated that he hoped to raise money, then send some one to start the church, and then to raise money for another new church. He agreed that it would be an excellent addition to the plan to train teams of ministers, and then to send them as tent-makers to establish new works.

Superintendent Kienitz is most favorable toward the idea of an extension education program, and would be cooperative in a move to establish one in the Western Conference. The first possible date would be 1980, and tentative plans are now being made to present a formal proposal to the Board of Ministerial Relations and to the annual conference. The following prospectus is presented for use in establishing education by extension within Western Conference for the purpose of training church extension workers.

²Information received during a personal interview with Superintendent Richard Kienitz in March, 1979.

Location

The most favorable place to establish an extension center would appear to be Billings. Three Evangelical Churches are located in the city, each of which is well established. Two are growing extremely well, with one of them building new facilities. The third has good facilities, but is struggling to regain ground lost in recent years. Later centers would be established in Great Falls, Bozeman, and Glendive, Montana; and in Jamestown, North Dakota.

Within driving distance of Billings are the Evangelical Churches located in Columbus, Absarokee, Broadview, Rapalje, Reedpoint, and Big Timber. In this way, the Billings extension center could serve a much larger number of congregations. Two colleges and a large public library are located in Billings, which would make educational opportunities outside the extension center possible.

The Cooperating Academic Institution

Hillcrest Christian College is located ninety miles across the Canadian border, eight hours drive from Billings. This is the official training school of the Evangelical Church of Canada, which is soon to be joined with the Evangelical Church of North America. Many students from the Western Conference have attended Hillcrest, so it is well known throughout the conference.

President James Field expressed positive interest in cooperating with an extension program through Hillcrest.

The College presently awards a three year Diploma, and a four year Bachelor of Religious Education Degree. The latter degree is accepted by several theological graduate schools. Hillcrest has recently been accepted as a probation status institution by the American Association of Bible Colleges, and is anticipating accreditation by that body in two to three years.

As the B.R.E. Degree at Hillcrest requires a year of study at a university or liberal arts college, the Billings extension student would be in a good position to complete such a degree. Eastern Montana College offers a full range of degrees, as does the private Rocky Mountain College.

Administering the Extension Program

Ideally, the extension program would be supervised by a full-time director, working through the office of the academic dean at Hillcrest Christian College. It might be advisable for the director to be named an adjunct professor at Hillcrest.

A problem which will need to be carefully considered is that of the Canadian/American border. In years past, it has been difficult for a citizen of one country to live and work in the other country. If a good deal of travel is to be conducted between the two countries, proper arrangements will need to be made with Immigration authorities.

There are many possibilities for the working arrangement made with the director. The director could live and teach on the Hillcrest campus, and commute to the center in

Montana. Conversely, the director could live in Montana and commute to the Hillcrest campus whenever necessary. This arrangement will be determined only when the final agreement is made with the College. This prospectus advises that the director live and work in Billings in order to spend as much time as possible in contact with the extension center. In the beginning, it will probably be necessary for the director to be a tent-making minister.

Teaching Arrangements

As discussed in previous chapters, there are many ways to arrange the teaching responsibilities in an extension center. As Hillcrest is not a far distance from Billings, it will be possible in some courses to have a faculty member travel to the center for some class sessions. Some courses will be well taught in a one week seminar, much like an intersession or a mini-term of one week. Yet others could be successfully completed through the use of cassette tapes, reading assignments, group discussion, and projects prepared by a Hillcrest faculty member who visits the extension center only once or twice.

Many possibilities exist in Billings for recruiting teaching personnel. The following suggestions are offered.

1. Christian public school teachers could be used to teach courses on techniques for teaching the different age levels.

2. Christian counselors could be engaged to teach the various aspects of counseling.

3. There are members within the churches who have made a specialty of a particular Bible book or of a certain cultic group. Such persons could be able teachers in the extension center.

4. There are Campus Crusade and Intervarsity Christian Fellowship staff members in Billings who could also serve well.

5. Several pastors within the Billings area are able teachers who could be helpful in building the teaching staff.

Curriculum

In the initial pilot project, this prospectus suggests that the goal be the completion of a two-year course of study, leading to the completion of an Associate Degree in Christian Education. Upon the successful completion of this project, students could go on to the Diploma or the B.R.E. The pilot project would then be revised and expanded, more closely following the course outlined in the denominational prospectus. Individuals could then be prepared for ordination, if desired, in cooperation with the conference course of study. The relatively close proximity of Western Evangelical Seminary would make possible the later development of an extension program at the graduate level.

Following is the proposal for the two year course of study in the pilot project.

1st Year

Bible Study Methods
Bible Survey - Old and New Testaments
Biblical Theology - An Introduction
Techniques of Personal Witnessing
Principles and Practices of Teaching
Ministries to Children

2nd Year

Church History - An Overview
Principles of Discipleship
Theology of Holiness
Ministries to Youth
Ministries to Adults
Principles of Organization and
Administration

Even when more fully developed into a permanent extension program, the extension curriculum will not be duplicating the conference course of study. Rather, it will serve to strengthen and benefit that course. First, those who are taking the conference course will be able in many cases to participate in a classroom experience. A broader range of courses will be available to the conference ministerial student. And a tent-making ministry will hopefully be encouraged in ministerial students trained in this fashion. It is the belief of this prospectus that individuals can be prepared for ordination within the Western Conference by meeting all the requirements of the conference course of study in extension classes.

Library Facilities

During the pilot program, the director will be involved in building a library for use in the extension center. This will be a major task. Many pastors may have reference works and texts which they will loan for use in a particular course. There will also be church members with good libraries who could be called upon for help. However, the goal should be a permanent reference library for use by the students.

Programmed Instruction

In some courses, programmed instructional materials will be necessary, even in our society. There are many books, study courses, and visual aids on the market which can be used to good advantage. However, the extension program will need well-formulated, condensed, extremely practical materials in order to meet very specific situations. A high priority must be placed upon demonstrating to the students the relevance of the materials to their ministry. The project director will be the one charged with the responsibility of producing such materials.

Learning Experiences Away From the Center

It would strengthen the program to plan times on the Hillcrest campus when all the extension students can come together for a time of study and fellowship with the faculty members. When the group is small, as in the pilot project, this will be feasible. An especially good opportunity would be to participate in the annual Mini-term held on the Hillcrest campus each winter. Other retreats can be planned for the extension students without going so far from the Billings area.

Students should also be encouraged to participate in seminars and training courses offered in the area by such groups as International Center for Learning and the Lay Institute for Evangelism. Credit for the courses can be granted upon the completion of an adequate report by the student.

An extension such as has been discussed in this prospectus would soon begin to prepare leaders who would be capable of carrying out the work of church extension in the Western Conference. The impact of trained workers who remained in their churches and did not go to work in a new church would hardly be lost. The established churches need trained workers, too.

It is worthy of note that such a program could also be easily established in Medicine Hat, if the churches there chose to do so. This would reach those who are unable to enroll in the regular course of study at Hillcrest. Extension students in Medicine Hat would have the excellent advantages of ready access to the library and to faculty members. They would also be in an excellent position to take advantage of the many good speakers and teachers who visit the campus.

Theological education by extension affords opportunity for growth in Western Conference. The prospect is that of a positive reception, and the situation in Billings would seem to afford a high possibility of success. It is the recommendation of this study that a pilot project be implemented as soon as possible, with the goal of establishing a permanent and expanded extension program at the end of two years.

Chapter 8

THE EASTERN CONFERENCE: A PROSPECTUS

The Eastern Conference comprises sixteen churches in Pennsylvania. The membership presently numbers almost 1300. During the 10 years since the denomination's inception, several churches have been added to the original two or three that organized with the Oregon Conference. Nearly all of them, however, were former Evangelical United Brethren Churches that could not make it on their own. There is now only one church that was started from "scratch." The other one folded two years ago.

The Eastern Conference is currently attempting to "build" another pilot church by making it another responsibility of an already overworked pastor. The Conference feels that there are several opportunities for church planting in the area but they say that they do not have the men to fill the need and opportunity.¹

The following prospectus is presented for use in establishing an extension education program in the Eastern Conference for the purpose of training church extension workers. The adaptability of T.E.E. to various educational levels referred to in chapters 4 and 5 can be noted by the

¹Charles F. Palmer, Conference Superintendent, January, 1979.

presentation of a graduate level of T.E.E. in this conference as opposed simply to presenting another associate of arts level program in copy of the Western conference prospectus.

Location

The most favorable place to establish an extension center would appear to be Cambridge Springs. There are no Evangelical Churches of North America there but there is a Christian Church there that is in favor of establishing a seminary program. There is an Evangelical Church in Corry, some twenty miles away. The Conference Superintendent lives in Corry, which makes him readily available for consultation and reference for the extension program.

Within a two-hour driving distance are 7 of the Evangelical Churches of the Eastern Conference. There are no Wesleyan-Arminian schools within a 100 mile radius of this general area to cooperate with. The cooperating institutions would have to be 1) the Evangelical School of Theology in Myertown, Pennsylvania--300 miles from the center and 2) Taylor University in Upland, Indiana--400 miles from the center and 3) Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio--200 miles from the center. There are numerous Presbyterian and Lutheran and Catholic schools in the area of the center that would be readily available as resource centers in conjunction with the cooperating institutions.

The Cooperating Academic Institutions

All three of the cooperating institutions are of the Wesleyan-Arminian persuasion. In addition to this, all three

are on a friendly basis with the Evangelical Church, having some of the same heritage and roots. All of the schools are well within a day's drive from the center.

Dr. Arthur M. Climenhaga has proven himself to be an innovative and progressively minded person when it comes to the question of education for the ministry. It is anticipated that his influence and counsel at the Ashland Theological Seminary will prove to be invaluable.

Dr. Milo Rediger has also proven himself to be a progressively minded person in the education and training of persons for the ministry. Under his guidance and leadership Taylor University has grown to produce hundreds of men and women equipped for the ministry. It is anticipated that his valuable friendship and counsel will prove to be a great aid to the extension program of the Eastern Conference.

Dr. Leon Hynson of the Evangelical School of Theology has been trying to procure full accreditation from the American Association of Theological Schools for several years. It is anticipated that the additional student-faculty-library load of the extension center will be an aid in achieving this goal. It will demonstrate to the American Association of Theological Schools that The Evangelical School of Theology is progressive in nature and is doing its part in producing pastors.

Administering the Extension Program

Ideally, the extension program would be supervised by a full-time director, working through the offices of the academic deans of the cooperating institutions. This director should

become an adjunct professor of one of the cooperating schools.

The director would need to live and work at or near the center itself along with several of the staff persons needed for the record keeping and curriculum building of the center. It will probably be necessary for the director to be a staff member of the Christian Church that would be providing the facilities for the library and classrooms. This arrangement would be necessary only as long as the center remained small enough that it could not support a full-time director.

Teaching Arrangements

The director would also serve as the major professor at the inception of the program. Later on, as the program grew, there would be the need to hire other full-time professors to take the load of travelling around to the various locations for the local classes.

Other personnel to be recruited at the inception of the extension program would include some of the numerous professional educators that attend the Christian Church that has offered facilities for the center. At present there are twelve persons that are fully qualified to teach by the Pennsylvania Department of Education attending the Christian Church. One of these has served as a pastor and is contemplating entering the ministry on a full-time basis.

The pastors of the area represent several years of academic training and might well be considered for faculty positions in the center. The pastor of the Christian Church has a Master of Divinity from The Gordon-Conwell Theological

Seminary. There is an United Methodist minister nearby with his Doctorate from Duke University Divinity School. It is possible that these and several others might be approached and recruited as adjunct faculty of the center.

One could also consider the many men and women who have made intensive study into particular books of the Bible as qualified to teach material on those books.

Curriculum

At the outset, of the project, this prospectus suggests that the goal be the completion of a two-year course of study, leading to the Master of Christian Ministry degree. Each of the three cooperating schools are fully prepared to work out and advise in the development of a curriculum plan that would prepare the student to receive this degree. It is an already accepted and awarded degree by such institutions as Multnomah School of the Bible in Portland, Oregon and Huntington College Graduate School in Huntington, Indiana. Both of these schools have earned their influence in the academic and pastoral environments. The cooperating institutions have the academic facilities for the addition of the Master of Christian Ministry degree. Each cooperating institution would endeavor to outline an appropriate curriculum for the awarding of the degree through their school in conjunction with the extension center director. This would facilitate the implementation and inclusion of the required courses for the Evangelical Church's purposes.

The following is a proposal for the two-year course of study in the Eastern Conference project.

1st Year

Christian Theology as presented by H. Wiley
Christian Ethics as presented by Bert Hall
Homiletics as presented by Broadus
Historical Survey of Christianity
Introductory Christian Education
Missiology as presented by Winter
New Testament as presented by Guthrie
Old Testament as presented by Guthrie

2nd Year

Expository Preaching
Evangelism and church growth
Pastoral care and counseling
Philosophy of ecumenism
Prophetic preaching
The Discipline of the Evangelical Church

When fully developed, this program could effectively eliminate the present conference course of study. The extension program will be able to provide more intensive study opportunities as well as more qualified faculty members to direct that study. It is anticipated that this program will ready men and women for the pastoral office in the Evangelical Church as well as provide continuing education for those who are already pastoring.

Library Facilities

During this pilot project, the director will be involved in building a library for use in the extension center. He will likely be able to procure the use of several private libraries by arrangement with the owners but the goal should be the building of a permanent reference library for use by the center. It is anticipated that the Christian Church's extensive library will be available for use as well as the libraries of the various local churches participating in the

extension program.

Learning Experiences

The program would include learning experiences on a seminar basis on the campuses of the cooperating institutions. These seminars would not be longer than one week in length. There would also be learning experiences available at the center itself in the Christian Church for two or three days. The majority of the learning experiences, however, would be at the locality of the students. This would be the local church of the student or even his home. These learning experiences could be done live or by means of the many audio-visual materials that are available today, i.e. video-tape, magnetic recording tape, records, et. al. Locally presented seminars by those considered experts such as Bill Gothard could also be used as profitable learning experiences for the student enrolled in the extension center.

Theological education by extension seems to be a viable solution to the problem of training pastors in the Eastern Conference. There seems to be a positive response on the part of the Christian Church which should be explored. It is the recommendation of this study that a pilot project be implemented as soon as possible with the goal of establishing a permanent and expanded extension program within a reasonable length of time.

Chapter 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to demonstrate that church growth in the Evangelical Church can be accomplished by training new leaders for the church through theological education by extension. To do this, appropriate terms for this study were introduced and defined, and limitations were developed to narrow the scope of the work. Further, statistics demonstrated that conservation of conversions has been minimal in each of the conferences, and that growth of this kind, as a whole, has been below that which is necessary to maintain the status quo. The statistics showed that the number of conversions was quite high, but that those converted apparently did not join the membership of the church.

Historical examples of how church leaders have been prepared were presented to show that there have been varied methods used to train leaders. Some historical methods have had characteristics similar to contemporary theological extension programs. The history of theological education by extension was presented to show the needs which brought the movement into existence. Many of those needs still exist in the United States today.

The history of theological education by extension is not all that has been included as background and supportive

material. The philosophy of theological education by extension was perceived as being vital in the preparation of leaders for the Evangelical Church, because this method could train more leaders than are now being trained in the resident seminaries. Theological education by extension was shown to be a flexible program whereby trainees at several levels of understanding and competency could be educated for leadership, with materials adjusted to their own levels.

As was stated in the chapters concerning theological education by extension, traditional educational institutions and programs are not eliminated. Rather, they are enhanced. It does, in fact, rely quite heavily upon resident institutions because their facilities and faculties are the base of any quality theological extension program.

A general prospectus for a theological education by extension program was prepared and presented for the Evangelical Church as a whole. This prospectus proposed general requirements of course study to be met, and it established guidelines for a board and director of extension education, implementing the programs of each of the various conferences. Still, it was necessary to establish guidelines for the various educational institutions participating in the denominational program. Faculty and library resources of these institutions were shown to be an important and necessary part of the extension education program.

Two different conferences were chosen and a prospectus was prepared for each, based on the unique situation

of each conference. Because of the differences in the two conferences, the prospectus for each clearly showed the flexibility of theological education by extension in preparing leaders from different levels of understanding and competency, yet within the same basic program.

The Western Conference prospectus called for a pilot project, which was designed to draw upon the facilities of a college. Leaders were to be trained at the associate of arts level, in preparation to go on to further study. This pilot program was to be expanded into a degree program at the bachelors level, and could eventually go on to a graduate level program.

The Eastern conference prospectus was prepared with an entirely different situation in mind. The program was designed to build upon a bachelors level and to train leaders at the graduate level, with the help of a nearby cooperating seminary. There are no seminaries in close proximity, so it was believed necessary to plan a program that would bring the seminary program to the student.

These two differing conference programs demonstrate how the Evangelical Church could use theological education by extension to meet the need of training leaders at different levels of understanding and competency. These leaders would then be able to work toward church growth in the Evangelical Church.

Conclusions

There has been no single method of training leaders for the church. Some historical examples of church leadership training have bordered on theological education by extension. This method has been a positive influence on church growth in foreign countries. Theological education by extension makes the task of training leaders for the church easier by bringing the education to the student. It benefits the student economically, because it costs less than traditional education. It benefits the student physically because it functions as an extension of the traditional school in the student's local area.

A problem impairing substantial growth appears to be that there are not enough leaders to keep the Evangelical Church growing substantially. Theological education by extension may be an answer to the question of how to train enough leaders in the shortest possible time. Theological education by extension is, therefore, a viable option for the Evangelical Church in providing trained leaders for the ministry of church growth.

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