



WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

THE RIDGEWAY LONDON NW7 1RN

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SB:SG April 2, 2007

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

This letter is written to provide direction with regard to the territory assignment of the foreign-language congregations.

It must be admitted that in the early days, foreign-language congregations were allowed to consider large areas for their territory. For example, one foreign-language congregation viewed everything within the boundary of the M25 as “their territory.” Others took over entire counties.

However, we now have 104 foreign-language congregations and 283 foreign-language groups. In more recent times we have encouraged new congregations to have the same boundaries as the congregation from which they were formed. Then as explained in *Organized to Do Jehovah’s Will* page 107, “In congregations working multilingual territory, the service overseers of the congregations involved can work out a mutually acceptable system of covering the territory and directing interested ones to the appropriate congregation. This is necessary, since publishers of different-language congregations may be working the same territory during the same morning or afternoon, and we do not want to ‘offer any hindrance to the good news about the Christ.’—1 Cor. 9:12.”

Some time ago all of the English-speaking congregations in Britain were requested to provide details of their territory boundaries. Now we want to follow this pattern with regard to the territory of the foreign-language congregations.

We want foreign-language congregations to have realistic territory boundaries. The service overseer should take the lead in organizing this. Once this has been determined, on his next visit we would like the multi-language circuit overseer using the S-6 form to submit the recommended territory boundary to the branch office. Although the foreign-language congregation may have viewed large areas as “their territory” in the past, they should no longer do so in the future. Simply because an appointed brother lives many miles away, this is no reason for the foreign-language congregation to view all of the territory between his address and the Kingdom Hall as “their territory.” These adjustments do not mean that the foreign-language congregation is restricted from making follow-up calls, as a result of the S-43 forms, outside of their territory, as long as they do not encroach on the territory of another congregation speaking the same language.

As previously stated in a letter to travelling overseers, we do not want any foreign-language congregation spending time in “search work.” There is neither a Scriptural basis for this activity nor does it have the approval of the Governing Body. If a foreign-language congregation does not have sufficient calls to make upon people who speak “their language” we encourage them to engage in street work, or borrow maps from or support the field service

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arrangements of an English-speaking congregation. Of course when engaging in any of these forms of witnessing it would not be wrong at the end of a conversation to ask if the person being spoken to knows of anyone who speaks a particular language.

Many of the principles outlined above for foreign-language congregations apply with equal force to the foreign-language groups. When a foreign-language group is first formed it should only work the territory of the host congregation. If additional territory is needed then the above direction from *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will* page 107 should be followed. It should be remembered that the group comes under the oversight of the body of elders of the congregation.

As you will appreciate it would be possible to ask many questions on this matter. It could also provide the basis for much disagreement and disunity. Therefore please carefully and prayerfully consider this from the viewpoint of Jehovah God, Jesus Christ the head of the congregation and the faithful and discreet slave.—Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 4:6.

We look forward to the multi-language field continuing to make fine progress as all things “take place decently and by arrangement.”—1 Cor. 14:40.

With warm love and best wishes we remain,

Your brothers,

Watch Tower B. & J. Society
OF BRITAIN

c: All travelling overseers