

April 4, 1949

Dr. Arnold T. Ohrn
Baptist World Alliance
1628 Sixteenth Street, N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

Dear Dr. Ohrn:

I am sorry that my absence from Richmond has delayed my reply to your letter of March 23, with reference to the letter you received from Mr. Kawano of Japan.

Since Mr. Fujii is in the United States and will be traveling from Louisville, Kentucky, to attend the meeting of the Executive Committee, I am wondering if the rule of the Executive Committee to take care of traveling expenses of members of the Executive Committee, excepting always overseas travel, would not include Mr. Fujii's travel from Louisville to Washington. Even though he is a representative from overseas, the traveling expenses involved will not be for "overseas travel".

I fully agree with you that Mr. Fujii should attend the meeting of the Executive Committee on May 2 and, if, after further consideration of the ruling of the Executive Committee concerning payment of traveling expenses, you feel that the ruling does not permit the payment of Mr. Fujii's expenses from Louisville, we will make arrangements for our Board to provide the expenses.

We shall have to give consideration at a later date to the matter of providing expenses for representatives from Japan, as well as from other areas abroad where our Board is related to Baptist groups, to attend the meeting of the Baptist World Alliance in Cleveland.

Referring again to Mr. Fujii, I suggest that you arrange for him to attend the meeting in May, with the understanding that we will reimburse the Executive Committee for his expenses in case you are not able to provide them.

Cordially yours,

M. Theron Rankin

MTR/tsb

File shown - B.W.A.

April 20, 1949

Dr. R. Paul Caudill
First Baptist Church
Memphis, Tennessee

My dear Friend:

Thanks ever so much for your kind letter of April 16. I think I had better send you some information concerning this matter of bringing my son-in-law (not my son) to this country for post graduate work.

As you know, the Baptist work in Norway has been closely linked with the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society in New York. At present a most gifted and promising young Norwegian Baptist preacher by the name of Rev. Nils Engelsen is taking a one year postgraduate course at Andover-Newton Theological School. His expenses in this country are being taken care of by Andover-Newton and the A.B.F.M.S. jointly. Ocean travel both ways for Engelsen and his wife has been paid for by Norwegian friends. Quite likely a similar arrangement could be made with the A.B.F.M.S. with regard to Rev. Reidar B. Bjornard (my son-in-law). But, frankly, I think it is a good idea to let at least a few of our men from Northern Europe come into contact with Southern Baptists. It would, perhaps, not be natural to approach the A.B.F.M.S. in such a case, as it might easily cause them some embarrassment with regard to their own seminaries.

Reidar Bjornard is the son of one of our finest and most successful Norwegian Baptist preachers, Rev. J. G. Kallestad. Mr. Kallestad died in 1932, leaving his wife and children in straitened circumstances. Reidar worked hard to earn his living while going through college. When Norway was invaded in 1940 he was studying theology at the Lutheran Theological Faculty of the University of Oslo, the same University where Mr. Engelsen secured his degree (qualifying really for a Government appointment as clergyman in the State Church.) When the Germans closed the University in 1943 he had to flee the country to avoid arrest and deportation to a prison camp in Germany.

In Sweden he was drafted into the service of the Norwegian Government as Welfare Officer among the troops in process of being trained there. He was more than ordinarily successful in this work.

After the liberation of Norway in 1945 he returned to Norway with the troops, and was placed in charge of military welfare matters in the entire north of Norway. While there he, for a few times, supplied the pulpit of the leading Baptist Church north of the Arctic Circle. When the pastor moved to Trondheim, to the surprise of Reidar the Tromsø Church extended to him a unanimous call to the pastorate. At the same time he was approached concerning a much better paid job with the Government (Department of Defense) in Oslo. He was to have been placed in charge of the educational division of the welfare work among the military throughout the whole country. He would be made a captain at once, and a Major a little later. Reidar chose the ministry.

In March 1946 he married my youngest daughter, Karin, and in May the same year he took up his work with the Tromsø Church. His two years north of the Arctic Circle proved very successful. It was with great regret the church let him go to the seminary.

When I left my position at the Seminary to take up work with the B.W.A., and Mr. Engelsen, who was to be my successor as theological teacher, was to go to the U.S. A. for a year, the only Baptist worker in Norway found qualified to give theological instruction during Engelsen's temporary absence, was Reidar Bjornard. He yielded to pressure and came to Oslo to take up work at the Seminary, at the same time resuming his interrupted studies at the University. He expects to take his degree in December of this year. This degree- candidatus theologiae- is the equivalent of a Master's degree in this country, or even of the doctorate of many institutions.

When he has taken his degree he plans to enter pastoral work again. But according to reports from the Principal of the Seminary, he has been most successful in his pedagogical work. I think it likely that as the educational work of Norwegian Baptists grows he will find his place in this department. At any rate he is destined to be a future leader, and a year or more among Baptists on this side will be most valuable for him and for Norwegian Baptists.

If, and when, he comes to this country next year, he will be 32 years of age. He and Karin have a son, born a year ago. Reidar is a very good musician and has a more than ordinary beautiful singing voice.

He will close his temporary work with the Seminary in June. He will then be without income. In order to prevent his going

back to the pastorate then, and thus interrupting his studies once more, I am going to assist the family to carry on for another semester while he finishes at the University.

I do not know whether I told you that I have two sons studying at universities in this country, and I shall have to support them for two or three years ahead at least. It is therefore difficult to say what I can provide to help Reidar and Karin in case they come to the U.S.A. I can definitely promise to pay the transportation of the family from Oslo to their destination over here next summer. I am also counting on paying for their journey back to Norway again. Whether, in addition to that, I could provide any substantial sum towards their living expenses here, I cannot for the moment say.

Let me say that I should probably not have guaranteed the entire ocean travel, etc. for Reidar and family if he were not my son-in-law. But otherwise I should have written about him in the way I have. I certainly went even further in supporting the cause of Mr. and Mrs. Engelsen.

I think I have placed the matter clearly before you. If it works out the way I hope, I shall be very happy. If it does not, I shall not worry about it. The Lord may have quite different plans for Reidar.

With the warmest good wishes, I am

Yours most cordially,

Amund T. O. Amundsen

ATO/JRF

Copy to Dr. M. T. Rankin
Richmond, Virginia

Dr. E. A. Fuller
Louisville, Kentucky

Baptist World Alliance

PRESIDENT:
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ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

GENERAL SECRETARY:
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THE HON. ALBERT MATTHEWS, LL. D.
TORONTO, ONTARIO
CANADA

April 26, 1949

Dr. M. T. Rankin
2037 Monument Avenue
Richmond 20, Virginia

RECEIVED
APR 27 1949

Dear Dr. Rankin:

Thanks very much for your letter concerning Mr. Taichito Fujii. It is true, as you point out, that Mr. Fujii's trip from Louisville to Washington would not be overseas, but the point is this, that the rule of the Executive Committee has been that the traveling expenses of proxies are not paid at all. I think the reason for this decision was that so many members in other parts of the world appointed proxies in Canada or the United States who had to travel a long distance, and the expenses of the Executive Committee mounted unduly.

Personally, I think in the case of Mr. Fujii it would be perfectly fair to make an exception since he is a Japanese national, and Japan would otherwise not be represented. But I should prefer to accept your kind offer to reimburse our committee rather than to place this matter before the Executive Committee on May 2nd for a new ruling.

Thanking you very much for your most gracious co-operation, I am

Yours most cordially,

ATO/JRF

Arnold T. Ohn

April 28, 1949

Miss Jessie Ford
Baptist World Alliance
1628 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, 9, D. C.

Dear Miss Ford:

We have taken no steps to invite Mr. Fujii to attend the Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance. That is a matter for the Baptist World Alliance to handle direct with Mr. Fujii as representative of Japanese Baptists. I am assuming, therefore, that you have sent him the notices. According to our latest information, he is ill and I doubt seriously if he will be able to attend the meeting.

We will be glad to provide to the Baptist World Alliance the amount of his travel if he does come. If he is able to travel, you might find that it is necessary for you to advance the money for him to buy his ticket. I think, however, that these arrangements should be made by the Baptist World Alliance rather than by the Foreign Mission Board.

Sincerely yours,

M. Theron Rankin

MTR/mef

Baptist World Alliance

RECEIVED

MAY 2 1949

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THE HON. ALBERT MATTHEWS, LL. D.
TORONTO, ONTARIO
CANADA

April 29, 1949

Dr. M. T. Rankin
2037 Monument Avenue
Richmond 20, Virginia

Dear Dr. Rankin:

In reply to your letter of April 28th regarding the coming of Mr. Fujii to our Executive Committee meeting on May 2nd, Dr. Ohrn has already written Mr. Fujii and has told him that we would reimburse him for the expense of his trip. We can then let you know what the amount is.

I am sorry to hear that he has been sick. I hope that he will be well enough to come.

Regretting that you cannot be with us, and with best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Jessie R. Ford
Secretary to Dr. Ohrn

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