

Mormon Membership Trends in Europe Among People of Color: Present and Future Assessment

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"For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul."

D&C 4:4

I HOPE I'M NOT EXTENDING the metaphor too far, but it seems apparent the field is less white and more colorful as the church moves into the twenty-first century. Most church members are aware (although some along the Wasatch Front have a hard time visualizing it) that rapid growth rates in Latin America, Africa, and the Philippines are essentially among people of color. However, it is my contention that future growth of the church even in the bastions of Nordic, Teutonic, British, and Celtic Europe—a region which supplied membership and leadership during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—will increasingly be among people of color not native to the European continent.

"BLOOD OF ISRAEL" AND EUROPE

An interesting philosophical/theological backdrop for current and future church growth and activity in Europe is the revival of a widely held nineteenth and early twentieth century view—one with which many of us who grew up in the church are familiar—that Europeans, especially northern Europeans, are literal descendants of the House of Israel and hence heirs to the Kingdom. It is surprising to discover that this "Blood of Israel" theology, relating to the Lost Ten Tribes, is being taken seriously again as it pertains to the indigenous populations of Europe. It is remarkably similar to theories of John Wilson's "British-Israel Millen-

nialism" popular from 1835–1840, and to the 1885 views of Edward Hine on "British Israelism," which claimed that the British were superior to others and were true Israelites while Jews might actually be imposters. While not as extreme, some church leaders continue to promote similar views regarding the role of "true Israel" in the future of the LDS church in Europe. There have been prophetic pronouncements made by church leaders over the past five years suggesting the miraculous growth awaiting the church in Europe. At a seminar for stake and mission presidents of Western Europe held in Paris in November 1995, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland made the following remarks:

The Church in Europe must live again. The work of the Church has run on the backs of its European saints since the beginning. Don't think that you are just minding the shop waiting for the Savior to come. Don't think that the great days of gathering in Europe are over. This is our time. Europe is the richest composition of the *blood of Israel* we've known. The *blood of Israel* out of these lands saved the Church. They left behind family members, children, grandchildren, and friends. They are still here. And we must find them. The *blood of Israel* is here.

Brethren, the spirit of the work is urgent and we must imbue our missionaries and members with the spirit of now. NOW! We are not just waiting for natural slow growth. We must move more rapidly. We must take things up a notch. If we have to call down miracles or angels, then call them down. . . I feel an incredible burden of urgency, I feel a sense of urgency in my chest. I can hardly breathe! The gifts of heaven are there. That we should have miracles, revelations, help from the Lord is known intellectually, but it is not enough practiced and remembered.¹

Two years later at a similar meeting in Rome, Elder Henry B. Eyring, referring to the early success of Paul in that great city, said:

I testify to you that your day has come. I have had a witness in the last few hours that the promise is coming. The promise is in force. . . the miracle that will come will not just be statistic, but a change of heart, which change is most critical. You will see an increase in both the number and the proportion of those who will join the Church and stay as active members. . . I'm willing to make you a promise, because as the miracle of retention takes place the Church will grow. Preserve the precious harvest.

Those new members of the Church are his children. He has known them and they have known Him in the world before this one.²

1. Hoit W. Brewster, *The Promise. The Prophesied Growth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Netherlands and Belgium and Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Netherlands Amsterdam Mission, 1998), 4.

2. *Ibid.*, 6.

At a missionary conference in England, President Hinckley made the following observation regarding the future of the Swedish church to missionaries Leif and Hans Mattsson who were serving missions in Britain:

Let me say a few words to you that I want you to take home to Sweden. Sweden has for many years been like this glass of water—not much action. In the middle 1800s when the first missionaries came to Sweden, thousands of people joined the Church. It was a great and mighty harvest. When you go home I want you to tell the members that there will be a new harvest, a second harvest in Sweden, that will bring thousands of Swedes into the Church.³

Such pronouncements at missionary-oriented conferences must exert severe pressure on missionaries and mission presidents alike to baptize new members. While a missionary's zeal and spirit are hard to break, it is apparent that many European missionaries are discouraged when they hear of conversion successes in Chile, Brazil, Mexico, and the Philippines, especially in light of the favorite missionary scripture in D&C 18:15: "And if it so be that you should labour all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father."

Somehow between the ideal and the possible lie the real and the practical. While the remarks by Elders Holland and Eyring specifically address the issue of gathering the blood of Israel, which must still be present in Europe albeit mingled with the "gentile curse," there have been other pronouncements suggesting that future church growth in Europe may include many non-indigenous Europeans. Speaking in Denmark in the summer of 1996, President Gordon B. Hinckley himself issued a challenge to the members of the church in Western Europe to double church membership in five years *by whatever righteous means necessary*.

I believe that you could double the membership of the Church here in five years. I really believe that if you would work, pray, and pray and work and concentrate on it, doing it at every opportunity and go forward in faith and without fear.⁴

Those five years are almost up and it seems all but certain there will be no doubling of membership, be it among people of color or indigenous Europeans.

CHANGING ETHNIC LANDSCAPE OF EUROPE

As is the case in the United States—where recent and massive immigration has been from less developed, adjacent countries such as Mexico,

3. Erik Nilsson, "Goteborg, Sweden: A Second Harvest," *Ensign* 30, no. 7 (July 2000): 77.

4. Brewster, *The Promise*, 6.

Guatemala, and El Salvador—immigration in Europe has also grown exponentially from nearby poorer countries over the past two decades. Similarities between the United States's interface with Mesoamerica and Europe's similar relationship with bordering Asia and Africa have not escaped comparisons by scholars and politicians. By focusing on the European Union, with its fifteen member states, it is possible to amass data for comparison with the United States and for an analysis of those sectors in European society which might contribute to the overall growth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the European continent.

With a population of nearly 375 million—107 million more than the U.S.—the European Union occupies a territory only one-third as large as the United States, contributing to high population densities. Socio-economic characteristics are, however, remarkably similar. When adjusted for purchasing power standards (PPS), the gross domestic product (GDP) in the two areas is almost identical.⁵

Nevertheless, there are important demographic and cultural differences. With an indigenous population growth rate slower than any region on the planet, a geriatric population which is expanding percentage-wise, and a socio-political environment that contributes to an early retirement age for workers (only one in three men aged 55-65 now holds a job in the Netherlands),⁶ the E.U. sees immigration in a somewhat different light than we do in the U.S. As a region with considerable affluence, a well developed industrial sector, and remarkably low unemployment (1.5 to 3 percent in northern European countries and 8 percent for the entire E.U.), the E.U. is even more of a magnet for immigrants than is the U.S., if we assume that economic reasons motivate most migration decisions.

THE BORDERLANDS

Some journalistic and scholarly articles can't resist comparing the Rio Grande River and Gulf of Mexico with the Mediterranean Sea. The term "wetback" has even been used to describe immigrants from Africa who have entered southern Europe across the Mediterranean. As in the U.S., European immigrants also come from more distant locations in shipping containers and as stowaways on ferries, trucks, planes, and

5. European Commission, Office of Official Publications, *USA and the European Union* (Brussels, 1999).

6. Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, "Do We Have to Open the Border? The European Debate" (paper presented at conference, "In Migration: Immigration, Racism and Policy in Europe and California," Scripps College, Claremont, Calif., March 30-April 1, 2000).

trains from China and Southeast Asia. Once ashore in southern Europe, whether legal or not, they participate in a diaspora that takes them all the way to Scandinavia and Iceland. Two nights and a day are all the time required to travel from Sicily to Stockholm by train. Those who are issued work permits equivalent to the U.S. green card are also issued E.U. passports, which allow them to cross any national border within the Union.

THE SOURCE

The connection between European "empires"—involving European countries and their former colonies in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas—and European immigration is obvious. There are a number of former colonies which now enjoy nation state status as if they were physically part of the European continent: Madeira (Portugal), the Canary Islands (Spain), the Dutch West Indies (Curaçao, Bon Air, Aruba, and St. Martin), the French West Indies (Guadeloupe and Martinique), as well as Guyane (France) in northern South America. All residents of these overseas territories, most of whom are people of color, are issued E.U. passports.

Former colonies maintain important ties, cultural as well as economic, to their European colonizing country. "Commonwealth people" are easily identified, well represented, and often denigrated in the U.K., but British cities are not included in my study sample. However, a recent visit to a sacrament meeting in the Hyde Park Ward in London was an amazingly rich multicultural experience: an Afghan woman, covered in black from head to toe, took the sacrament through an opening near her mouth. French cities are not part of the study sample, but there, too, a recent visit to a suburban ward in northern Paris found an African bishop from Ivory Coast and many black members.

Italy, with only modest and recent colonies in Africa, would be a fascinating area to study membership trends. The church presence there, as in Spain and Portugal, is relatively recent, and indigenous Italians are the most likely to be overwhelmed by immigrants from Ethiopia, Euretia, Somalia, and all parts of Africa. Foreign nationals now number 1,250,000 in Italy, triple the 1985 statistics, while the number of indigenous Italians has grown at a rate near ZPG (zero population growth).

While the adage "We are here because you were there" definitely holds true for immigrants to the U.K., France, Portugal, and for Indonesians in the Netherlands, it is much less important for countries like Italy, Germany, Spain, and Scandinavia. Since the vast majority of recent immigrants have come to Europe for economic reasons, they tend to go where employment possibilities exist regardless of language and former

political ties. The large population of Turks in Germany, estimated at 2,107,400 in 1997,⁷ is composed mainly of economic refugees. Political refugees are important, too, but make up a small percentage of the total. Germany's liberal policy regarding refugee status has resulted in significant immigration from strife-torn areas of West Africa while the ICODO (National Institute for Victims of War) created in the Netherlands in 1980 has also sponsored political refugees immigrating to Holland.

Although Europe has not historically considered itself a culture of immigrants, as have the United States and Canada, large numbers of non-Europeans in what had previously been a homogeneous society are becoming a conspicuous and vital economic minority throughout the E.U. (see Table 1). Large-scale legal immigration of people of color began in the late 1980s and led to record numbers in 1999 (a total for the entire E.U. of 650,000). Germany, with almost 7 million foreign nationals (2 million of whom are Turks), has by far the largest number.

Table 1
Total Legal Immigration by Selected Countries in 1999⁸

Germany	200,000
UK	180,000
Italy	125,000
France	48,000
Netherlands	45,000
Portugal	20,000
Belgium	12,000
Denmark	10,000

Spain was very active during the nineties, with 107,000 foreign nationals in 1990, growing to 196,705 by 1995.⁹

The Republic of Ireland has also become hot with a 50 percent increase in foreign nationals since 1990.¹⁰

Overall percentages of immigrants range from 2 percent in Finland to 34 percent in the Netherlands,¹¹ and in every case the concentrations are almost entirely urban. The majority of the Netherlands' 34 percent

7. Federal Statistical Office of Germany, *Immigration Report* (Berlin: 1999).

8. Julie Watts, "Passport to Unity: European Immigration Policy from Schengen to Amsterdam," *Working Paper 00-1, University of Southern California Center for International Studies* (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Center for International Studies, 2000).

9. Spanish Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, *Caritas di Roma* (Rome, 1998), 4.

10. Withol de Wenden, "Do We Have to?"

11. Watts, "Passport to Unity."

reside in Amsterdam. During the course of researching this paper, the author heard many indigenous Europeans make statements such as, "The real Germany exists only in the countryside" or "I hear Dutch spoken now only in the villages."

Not all immigrants arrive poor, and certainly not all remain poor. However, as a result of exclusionary practices by strong labor unions in socialist and social democratic Europe (especially in Italy), most immigrants have turned to service and entrepreneurial pursuits. A large number of immigrants in the Netherlands, 273,000, were reported as self-employed in 1999, and the number is also high in Belgium.¹² Some are highly successful.

THE MODERN CULTURE OF INDIGENOUS EUROPEANS

The rise of rationality and atheism, plus a growing cynicism and nihilism (especially among young people)—attitudes which are the result of two destructive world wars, fascism, communism, and genocides—have combined with rampant materialism to create a modern culture among indigenous Europeans which is not conducive to acceptance of the Mormon message. In interviews conducted during the fall of 1999 with missionaries, ex-missionaries, mission presidents, ex-mission presidents, and European members associated with five sample cities (Lisbon, Brussels, Amsterdam, Hamburg, and Copenhagen),¹³ a litany of reasons emerged to explain the lack of interest in the LDS church and in religion in general among native Europeans. Common concerns expressed by LDS members in all study areas included atheism, a decline in the importance of traditional family life and values, a preoccupation with materialism and eroticism, recreational drug use (cannabis products are now freely traded in the Dutch "coffee shops"), and alcohol abuse.

In Sweden, marriage is definitely out of vogue even after children are born: One-half of all babies born in 1999 were to unwed mothers, 60 percent greater than in the U.S. Nevertheless, 80 percent of small children live with both biological parents, even though most children don't know whether their parents are married—not conventional family values by Mormon standards, yet seemingly successful familial relationships. The Social Democrats have created a situation in Sweden "where a woman would have to be stupid not to realize that she is better off not

12. European Union, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Report* (Brussels, 2000).

13. Formal interviews with mission presidents were conducted by the author, his son, David Lobb, and daughter-in-law, Mindy Curtis-Lobb. Notes are available from the author on request. Interviews with members and missionaries were informal discussions which took place in various locations.

married."¹⁴ Ebb Witt Brattstroem, a sociologist at Stockholm University, in a recent interview with Carol J. Williams of the *Los Angeles Times* lamented, "Traditional family values are not important to us anymore. They are something we do research on like a fossil."¹⁵ This definitely does not sound like Mormon Country.

During an interview with the author in September of 1999, the Hamburg Germany mission president, Wayne E. Kuehne, condemned the German government as being anti-family and far too pro-immigration: "The country is selling out to foreigners." The president, himself of German descent and a former missionary in Hamburg during the 1950s, was open in his condemnation of modern German values. He complained that his neighbor in an affluent neighborhood of Hamburg "walks" her dog each morning while holding the leash out the window of her cruising Mercedes 500S. "German men and women," he said, "take long and frequent vacations to Thailand to have sex with teenage boys and girls" or "to sunny areas of southern Europe and the Atlantic Islands to sunbath nude and have sex orgies." Realistic, but somewhat bitter, he complained about slow missionary success among indigenous Germans. Regarding the large immigrant population in Hamburg who were much more receptive to missionary calls, even seeking missionaries out, he had high praise for the Islamic Turks, who are still committed to strong families. "They love their families but they also love their God, Allah," he said. In fact, he suggested that "strong," young Mormon families among German members were leaving the country for the United States, Canada, and even Brazil.

On a recent visit to Germany, Elder Richard G. Scott of the Council of the Twelve asked this same mission president, "President, why aren't you bringing us more Germans?" The president explained the difficulty missionaries were having contacting indigenous Germans whereupon Elder Scott suggested slick TV spots such as those seen on CNN International and other networks. However, with a limited budget, the Hamburg Germany Mission could only afford spots on second-tier channels. One spot, featuring a talk by President Hinckley, aired between two programs emphasizing lesbian eroticism.

Other religious leaders share the concern over decadence as well. In his remarks to German bishops from the east in March 2000, Pope John Paul II called for Roman Catholic leaders in Germany to "speak out for the Church and its values in an increasingly godless society where

14. Paulette Kurzer, "The Politics of Sin: The Emerging Conflict over Cultural Autonomy in the European Union," *Working Paper 99, Scripps College* (Claremont, Calif.: Scripps College, 2000) 2.

15. Carol J. Williams, *Los Angeles Times*, March 31, 2000, Record edition, p. 1.

communism has been replaced by consumerism."¹⁶ Churches all over northern Europe are nearly empty on Sundays, including some Mormon churches. It is hard not to compare my recent visit to a thriving ward in Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico (where there are two stakes and a new temple), with the sparse turnout at the only ward in Amsterdam. However, the Catholic regions of southern Belgium seem more pious, and Portugal and Spain still have large populations of believing, practicing, formal Catholics who in some ways seem prudish compared to the people of northern Europe. In fact, the racy Brazilian films and literature which make their way to Portugal are considered shocking by many there.

WHO IS LISTENING?

The church appropriately keeps no records of a member's ethnicity,¹⁷ and as a result, assessment of minority membership in Europe is subjective, inductive, and often anecdotal. During interviews with missionaries and mission presidents in all five of the study sample cities, much greater acceptance of the gospel message by minority immigrant groups was reported. Almost all agreed that African immigrants were by far the most accepting of visits, church attendance, and conversion. Tracting is difficult or even futile among indigenous Europeans. Immigrants are, of course, more accessible since they live in unguarded and unrestricted apartments and tenements in poorer areas of the cities studied.

In Hamburg, some missionaries reported teaching *only* Africans, many of whom came to them on the street or attended meetings uninvited. It is important to note that African immigrants are not of one monolithic culture. They are Sudanese, Bantu, Yoruba, and Swahili. They speak mainly English, French, and Portuguese, and in cities such as Hamburg, Amsterdam, and Copenhagen, they are taught only in English. More than one missionary expressed concern about becoming fluent in the language of his mission country: "I don't really have an opportunity to use my Danish."¹⁸

Attitudes and policies toward proselytizing immigrants varied from mission to mission, and there were often changes every time a new mission president arrived. Some missionaries (for example, those in Sevilla, Spain) were discouraged from teaching all immigrants, who were con-

16. Associated Press, *Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 2000, Record edition, 2.

17. However, the author remembers writing "Blood of Cain" on membership records as a missionary in Central America in the late 1950s.

18. Most church members in Denmark speak English, as do most Danes, leading to concern over the survival of the Danish-language church publication *Den Danske Stjerne*.

sidered "transient," and were told to be polite but not to visit Gypsies a second time. (This sounds all too similar to the policy regarding blacks in my Central American mission in 1957–60.) The Spain Sevilla president was also reportedly concerned that minority converts would not be assimilated well. A returned missionary from Sevilla remarked, "I don't want to use the word racist to describe the Spanish people, but they are prejudiced." There is no known "official" church policy on who should be taught and who should be politely ignored, and there is some evidence that many transient converts do remain active in the church as they travel from city to city or when they return to Africa.

The greatest acceptance of minority members seems to come from the Portuguese. A long history of miscegenation involving European and African peoples has apparently led to more tolerance of racial differences in that country. The church is growing faster in Portugal than in any other E.U. country (see Appendix). An impressive characteristic of African converts in Lisbon was the unusually large number of young missionary-age men and women. There is clearly an age factor present here. Idealistic young Africans from the former Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and Cabo Verde were serving as missionaries, both elders and sisters. A recent president of the Lisbon Portugal South Mission was himself an African-Brazilian from Fôrtaleza, Ceará, Brazil. Baptizing Portuguese-speaking blacks is not without its problems, however. Two Utah missionaries in the small southern Portuguese city of Évora (with a history of Roman, Moorish, and re-conquest Catholic cultures) were discouraged with the "very Catholic" practices of the Portuguese and because the once larger congregation of the Évora Branch had dwindled due to the fact that many converts were Cape Verdians who lacked leadership experience and who fell into inactivity after returning to their island homeland.

In October of 1999, the president of the Netherlands Amsterdam Mission, Thomas C. Anderson, said that in Holland there are minorities and there are "minorities." For example, Indonesians, many of whom have lived in the Netherlands for generations, are not thought of in the same way as recent African immigrants. The wife of the The Hague Stake President is Indonesian and their son is president of the Almere Branch, south of Amsterdam. There are now third-generation Dutch-Indonesian church members. "The Indonesians are treated as if they were Dutch," the president said. General Authority Emeritus Jacob de Jaeger, who is Dutch, had a long career of business dealings in Indonesia and lived in Jakarta with his family for many years.

While there have been successful "blendings" of Africans and Portuguese, and Indonesians and Dutch, situations in the other study samples seem more volatile. In a recent European area conference, Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy used a metaphor of the meeting of the waters

in Brazilian Amazônia—the Rio Negro and the white Solimões to form the blended Amazon River—to describe future church ethnicity. This is indeed a reminder of a passage from the Book of Mormon: “. . .and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white. . .and all are alike unto God” (2 Nephi 26:33).

In interviews, missionaries who were present at Danish missionary conference sessions presided over by President Thomas S. Monson in 1998 referred to a talk given by President Monson to the saints in Copenhagen in which he challenged native Danish members to be willing to accept all into membership and full fellowship, specifically mentioning recent African and Inuit converts.¹⁹

REACTION TO IMMIGRATION

There are economic and political currents operating within the E.U. which tend to marginalize the immigrant population. Most minorities occupy poorly paying service jobs and live in segregated neighborhoods in the large cities. It is even possible that membership in the LDS church contributes to further discrimination against them while at the same time holding out hope and a sense of community within the church. For example, a university colleague of mine from New Zealand conveyed his perception that while the church was present in New Zealand, the only members were poor, uneducated, minority Maori.

Immigration remains a volatile economic and social issue throughout the E.U. With falling birth rates among native Europeans, there are projections of huge labor shortfalls. Indeed, at a recent conference on migration held at Claremont College in April 2000, one presenter estimated that 1.7 million immigrants would be needed in Europe over the next two years while a staggering 150 million migrants would be needed over the next twenty-five years to prevent a fall in productivity which could total \$375 billion.²⁰

Overt racism is becoming more common. Phenomena such as the Spanish rampage against Africans in Almeria and the soaring popularity of Denmark's populist Danish People's Party foreshadow racist reactions, which could be directed toward different ethnicities and religions.

19. The author has been unable to document President Monson's talk with a written account. Attempts to see a copy of the text were denied by the Church Historians Office because the talk also included the re-dedication of Denmark for the preaching of the gospel on June 7, 1998. I was informed that the church never releases the text of dedicatory prayers. His remarks were related to the author by Anthonette Pearson, returned Danish missionary, Chatsworth, California.

20. Wihtol de Wenden, "Do We Have to?"

This is reflected in slogans such as these on billboards in Copenhagen: "When I become a Muslim the government will give me a house"; in Germany: "Kinder statt Inder" ("Children, not Indians," referring to the need for Germany to increase its indigenous birthrate); and even in Portugal: "A criança e o melhor imigrante" ("the child is the best immigrant"). In March 2000, Denmark made an attempt to seal its borders and restrict immigration.

It seems unlikely, however, that the tide will turn. Immigration will continue. In fact, it is very much needed. A well-known geographer of the late eighteenth century, Carl Ritter, who was a strong supporter of European superiority, described Europe as a "peninsula of peninsulas" with an extremely long coastline for such a small continent. Even if the E.U. had the will to stop immigration, and it does not, no single nation—nor the E.U. as a whole—has the wherewithal to close the Mediterranean to immigrants. As in the United States, especially in California, some residents decry the system of illegal workers while nearly all use it! The cost of policing the vast coastal border of the Mediterranean would be astronomical and perhaps altogether counterproductive to the interests of both the E.U. and the LDS church.

CONCLUSION

While there has been an overall steady increase in church membership throughout Europe (the church has doubled its membership since 1976), most of the growth has occurred in Portugal and Spain. Some countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany have actually lost membership. Other areas have plateaued. For example, Denmark had 4,486 members in 1980 and 4,600 in 1999, with only 27 convert baptisms in 1998. The increases have been largely in urban areas, with some wards and branches in rural areas shut down since 1964. Germany still has the largest Mormon community, with 36,000 members in 1999, but this will surely change as rapid growth in Spain and Portugal push the numbers in each country above 36,000 in the next three to five years.²¹ Even in relatively fast-growing Portugal there seems to be a kind of mission "lore" that a temple had been planned for Lisbon, but the site was switched to Madrid even though fewer members reside in Spain, due to marital infidelity among Portuguese church members.

The number of church members in all western European countries represents only .03 to .07 percent of the total population of each country. Activity levels of European members vary from 20 to 30 percent.²² Given these remarkably low numbers, it is unlikely indeed that one might

21. *LDS Church Almanacs*, 1976-2000.

22. See www.lds-europe.org.

encounter an active Mormon on the S-Bahn in Hamburg or in Tivoli amusement park in Copenhagen.

The perception that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is essentially an "American" religion is probably an impediment to church growth among indigenous Europeans, but may be an asset in the conversion of economic and political refugees who are now coming to Europe in large numbers.

Given the current culture of affluence and skepticism among indigenous Europeans, it would be miraculous indeed if there were an acceleration of conversions among this "Blood of Israel" indigenous population, as predicted by Holland and Eyring. That church membership appeals more to immigrant groups than to indigenous Europeans is obvious. Moreover, there is some evidence that this conversion phenomenon is also occurring outside the European continent. A recent piece in the *Church News* referred to the perception among Costa Rican Mormon leaders that immigrants from neighboring and poorer Nicaragua and Panamá were vital to church growth in that Central American country.²³ Missionaries in Japan now have to learn some Spanish and Portuguese in order to teach immigrants, legal and illegal, from Brazil and Perú. Perhaps the future of church growth in Europe, as elsewhere, lies in a more liberal and practical interpretation of Israel's blood.

APPENDIX

Wards and Branches in Sample Cities: 1962, 1971, and 1999²⁴

COPENHAGEN METROPOLITAN AREA

1962. *Copenhagen District*. Three Units: North Copenhagen Branch, South Copenhagen Branch, Amager Branch.

1971. *Copenhagen District*. Two Units: Copenhagen Branch, Amager Branch.

1999. *Copenhagen Stake*. Five Units: Copenhagen First Ward, Copenhagen Third Ward, Fredriksberg Ward, Taastrup Ward, Amager Branch.

HAMBURG METROPOLITAN AREA

1962. *Hamburg Stake*. Five Units: Altona Ward, Eppendorf Ward, Hamburg Ward, Wilhelmsburg Ward, Bergedorf Branch.

23. *Church News*, July 8, 2000, 10.

24. Requests for information on stake and ward locations from several divisions at church headquarters in Salt Lake City were all denied. Information was taken from *Directory, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: General Authorities and Officers* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1962, 1971, and 1999 editions).

1971. *Hamburg Stake*. Seven Units: Altona Ward, Eppendorf Ward, Hamburg Ward, Wilhemsburg Ward, Pinneberg Ward, Wedel Ward, Bergedorf Branch.

1999. *Hamburg Stake*. Four Units: Altona Ward, Hamburg Ward, Wilhemsburg Ward, Bergedorf Branch.

AMSTERDAM METROPOLITAN AREA

1962. *Holland Stake*. Two Units: Amsterdam East Ward, Amsterdam West Ward.

1971. *Holland Stake*. One Unit: Amsterdam Ward.

1999. *Den Haag Stake*: Three Units: Amsterdam Ward, Almere Branch, Lelystad Branch.

BRUSSELS METROPOLITAN AREA

1962. *Belgium District*. One Unit: Brussels Branch.

1971. *Brussels District*. One Unit: Brussels Branch.

1999. *Brussels Stake*. Three Units: Brussels Ward (French), International Ward (English), Bruxelles Branch (Flemish, Antwerpen Stake).

LISBON METROPOLITAN AREA

1962. Zero Units.

1971. Zero Units.

1999. *Lisboa Stake*. Ten Units: Lisboa First Ward, Lisboa Second Ward, Lisboa Third Ward, Lisboa Fourth Ward, Lisboa Fifth Ward, Linda a Velha Ward, Saçavém Ward, Alverca Branch, Loures Branch, Vila Franca de Xira Branch

Lisboa Oeiras Stake. Eight Units: Amadora Ward, Estoril Ward, Caxias Ward, Oeiras Ward, Cascais Branch, Paço de Arcos Branch, Quelúz Branch, Sintra Branch.

Lisboa Setúbal Stake. Eleven Units: Setúbal First Ward, Setúbal Second Ward, Miratejo Ward, Barreiro Ward, Alcochete Branch, Moita Branch, Montijo Branch, Palmela Branch, Alcácer do Sal Branch, Outão Branch, Cast Branch.