

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION EARNs
ADMIRERS IN THE WELS

1964-1984

Church History
Prof. Fredrich

Tom Jeske

June 1984

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library

11801 N. Seminary Drive. 65W

Mequon, Wisconsin

1984: the Senior Isagogics class at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was surveying Ezekiel. To a man, the class had been confirmed learning catechism passages from the King James Version of the Bible. Now, Bibles were open on every desk. Not one was the familiar KJV. 1984: a 53-year veteran of the WELS ministry reads before bed in his Bible. He yawns, sets the New International Version on the nightstand, and turns out the light.

What have we here? The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has not been noted for its reckless or feverish pursuit to adopt new policy nor to toss aside tradition. It is a legitimate question, then, how a translation of the Bible which is a new kid on the block could meet rapid acceptance in such a body. Even harder to understand would be a contemporary work actually displacing the consensus sentimental favorite.

Just how did the NIV "infiltrate" the WELS? What is the tale behind its rapid rise to prominence at the lectern, in the pulpit, on the desks, and in the printed material of our fellowship? Just how does a new translation break down old habits, ears attuned to older melodies? How does it glide past prejudices, and conquer the collective unease of 1000 congregations? How does it elbow above the criticism?

THE NIV EARNS ADMIRERS IN THE WELS, 1964-1984

- I. Strides Made at the Seminary Level, 1964-1973
- II. Strides Made at the Synod Level, 1974-1983

I. Strides Made at the Seminary Level, 1964-1973

A. The RSV and sentiment for a contemporary translation

To some it may appear that the WELS sympathy with recent Bible translations and with the NIV in particular is a late development. The NIV has been published as a complete Bible only since 1978. Is six years the extent of our familiarity with it? Could this Bible translation interest be a fad? Are we sure a new version was wanted, needed? And oughtn't a translation of the Holy Scriptures to earn its stripes, to prove itself over long years, to "start in the mail-room?"

Our people and pastors have been raising questions about the reliability and the recommend-ability of the new translations ever since the advent of the New Testament of the RSV in 1946. The proliferation of translations in recent years together with the sometimes indiscriminate use of untested and unreliable translations makes the answering of these questions a matter of increasing urgency. 1

What events prior to 1946 gave rise to this "Golden Age of Bible Translations?"

...first, the change in English usage from Shakespeare's day to ours; second, the development of what may be called both a science and an art in the theological discipline of New Testament text criticism...finally, the growing awareness during the last half-century that the Greek of the New Testament is the Koine, the common Greek which was spoken and understood practically everywhere through the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era. 2

On the basis of these factors, the WELS felt its hand forced as early as 1952.

"A committee on the RSV" has been appointed by Pres. Brenner. It consists of the faculty of the Thiensville seminary and Professors Kowalke and Schumann of Northwestern College...it will report from time to time. 3

The following news item is lifted from the Proceedings of the 32nd Convention of the WELS, 1953:

REPORT OF BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

Your committee, consisting of the Thiensville faculty and the Professors E. Kowalke and W. Schumann of Northwestern College, appointed by President Brenner last fall to study the newly published Revised Standard Version of the Bible and to act as clearing house for opinions on the same within our circles, herewith submits the following report:

We have to date held three meetings, at which carefully prepared studies of deviations in translation and of footnotes appearing in the new Bible version were heard and discussed and also correspondence relating to the same was read and filed.

Several articles on the new translation written by members of the committee have been published in the *Northwestern Lutheran* and *Quartalschrift*:

Since the appearance of the Revised Standard Version has incited anew the study of Bible translations, also among us, and made us conscious anew of weaknesses in the Authorized Version, which has been in general use in our Synod; and since suggestions have again been made that we proceed with a revision of the Authorized Version: the Synodical Committee at its May meeting adopted the following resolution:

"We suggest that the assignment of the Committee on the Revised Standard Version be extended to include a study of some book of the New Testament (e.g. Galatians), that the Committee be encouraged to solicit the cooperation and comment of the members of the Synod and then to publish the book studied in the *Quartalschrift*, so that thereby the translation may be rather widely tested as to readability and theological correctness."

Your committee concurs in this recommendation, with the understanding that it be in the nature of a revision of the Authorized Version, and suggests its adoption by the Synod.

Synod Action: The report is adopted.

What became of the RSV in WELS circles? Was there ever the possibility that the WELS might have "adopted" this translation in the 1950's? What was seminary and synod sentiment about this post-World War II attempt to bring the "King" up-to-date? On the basis of the Quartalschrift writings of the period, chances were slim. Aside from a poor treatment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies, Professor Frederic Blume lamented what he felt were dishonest publicity tactics employed, in particular the use of the term "Authorized;" "Authorized" ...means here no more than (a reiteration that) it is authorized by the King of England for use in his churches." 4

He appears sensitive from the outset, however, to the need for an "updated" translation:

...this writer has become increasingly convinced that no answer to our people's inquiries will be completely satisfactory to them or to us until we have given them a version of the New Testament that will do for our generation

what Luther's New Testament of 1522 did for the Germans of his day. 5

And at the same time, he recognized the immense difficulty of introducing a different English translation into the hearts, minds, and mouths of his synod's lay Christians:

...to them the stateliness, the austerity, and the (to us) antique quality peculiar to the KJV, even when there is nothing stately, austere, or antique about the original, lend to this version a certain emotional value. 6

It is Professor Blume's undersigned name to watch for in the Quartalschrift and Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly throughout the following twenty years as the writer who most sharply emphasized the need for a contemporary set of Scriptures.

As for the RSV,

Is the RSV really the "New Testament in modern American speech" and is it the "best that modern scholarship can produce?" Our reply shall have to be "As we can see it now, the answer is NO to both counts." (1953) 7

The 1953 Synod convention at Northwestern College in August moved that the Synod begin work on a homegrown translation. The book to be thus handled was Galatians.

(1954) The reasons most frequently advanced for urging at least a trial translation of the Bible are: 1. that existing translations contain archaic words or phrases; 2. that they reveal a Calvinistic influence or otherwise reflect the theological bias of the translators...

The committee (Wisconsin Synod Committee on Bible Translation, Gerald Hoenecke, Secretary) invited comment and asked that this be of a specific nature. 8

(1955-1956) Five installments of the trial translation of Galatians appeared in the Quartalschrift: Vol 52:211.273; Vol 53:62.97.213 under the title "Galatians--a Trial Translation" and over the signature of "Wisconsin Synod Committee on Bible Translation, Gerald Hoenecke, Secretary." In 1957, a concluding article to the series,

also under the heading "Galatians--A Trial Translation" appeared in Vol 54:205 of the Quartalschrift. It represents the committee's final work on the entire epistle to the Galatians and incorporates certain revisions suggested by the synod's ministerium.

The next years swept the WELS into the sound and fury of the Missouri problem. The subject of Bible translations was not the foremost in any mind or on any desk.

B. The seeds of the NIV are planted

Unknown to our synod at the time, God was at work unseen, half a continent away from Milwaukee or St. Louis. A consistory of the Christian Reformed Church in Seattle submitted a proposal to its synod. The year was 1956.

...that the Christian Reformed Church endeavor to join other conservative churches in sponsoring or facilitating the early production of a faithful translation of the Scriptures in the common language of the American people.⁹

The following year, the Commission on Education of the National Association of Evangelicals appointed a committee to study "the question of the NAE's participation in the possible project of a new English translation of the Old and New Testaments." They met together in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1961, and for the purposes of this paper we may say that a steering committee proceeded. For a fuller treatment of the details, see "The Story of the New International Version," New York International Bible Society, 1978.

In 1965 a conference in Palos Heights, Illinois, appointed a "Committee of Fifteen" which would later go by the name "Committee on Bible Translation ." Included on its roster was Robert Preus, president of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois. Circumstances in the LC-MS and his school's subsequent move to Ft. Wayne effectively

removed Preus from active participation in the project, although his name can be found on the project's letterheads of the era.

As to its initial responsibilities,

...make a digest of the conference and distribute it to leaders of evangelical denominations and educational institutions and to other responsible parties, to solicit their comments...10

The Committee met in Nashville in December, 1965, and in Chicago, in March of 1966. All signs point to a subsequent conference as the initial step taken by the faculty of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to involve itself in the translation project. In August of that year, the General Conference on Bible Translation met in the Windy City. Present were eighty "denominational leaders and representatives of Christian organizations and Bible scholars." It is likely that Professors FE Blume and President CJ Lawrenz were in attendance. Prof. Lawrenz recalls "going down to a meeting with Professor Blume before the project was even known as the NIV."¹¹ The WLQ lists Blume's participation in the project as going back to 1966. ¹²

1967 saw the New York International Bible Society underwrite the Bible project financially:

The support of the society not only made it possible to enlist the support of many scholars who would otherwise not have participated; (it) also provided for the many translation sessions, some of them extending for weeks and months. ¹³

Finally, in 1968, Dr. Edwin H. Palmer of Wayne, New Jersey agreed to sign on as Executive Secretary of ACT: A Contemporary Translation. Dr. Palmer's respect for the faculty of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was to bear much fruit for all concerned in the years ahead. Actual translation work began in 1968 by four-man teams working together in specified geographical areas. Both Blume and Lawrenz were invited to participate; Lawrenz handed responsibility over to Blume

...because of Prof. Blume's knowledge both of the New Testament Greek and his knowledge of the text criticism. 14

At this stage, Prof. Blume's job was to review the translation work done by the four-man "pod" translation teams. He was known by the title "translation consultant." In his words:

Under the guidance of an executive secretary the several books of the New Testament were assigned each to a team of about four men geographically not too far removed from each other. The teams commonly consisted of two translators, a language stylist, and a translation consultant.

As a rule one of the translators, who was also the chairman of the group, would make his first draft of a translation and submit that for review to the other translators. The second draft was then given to the language stylist and the translation consultant. The stylist was to take care that a certain uniformity of language was maintained in accordance with an elaborately developed manual of style put out by the executive secretary. The translation consultant was to watch over matters like the basic Greek text being translated, the proper rendering of individual words, adequate treatment of the idioms of New Testament syntactic usage, and other such technical matters.

When the stylist and translation consultant had each done their work, their comments were incorporated into a further draft, which was then submitted for criticism and comment to all the members of the original team...guiding and making final decisions on all the details of this work was the Committee on Bible Translation under the leadership of its executive secretary.

Once all the work of translating, language polishing, and textual and grammatical criticism had been completed and all comments were in, the large Committee on Bible Translation went through the entire work to put it into shape for publication. Word has it that the Committee spent last summer somewhere in the Black Forest of Germany concentrating on this final revision.

The above matters have been spelled out in detail lest any of our readers have the idea that new versions of the Bible like the NIB (sic) come easily or painlessly or cheaply.¹⁵

The New International "machine" was being built from the ground up.

C. The Seminary faculty Report on Translations

The New English Bible was published in 1970. The New American

Standard Bible, as well as Kenneth Taylor's Living Bible, were published in 1971. Prof. JC Gerlach reported in the 1971 WLQ much the same news that Prof. Blume had reported 19 years earlier. The substantial difference is in the motivating agency, in this case the WELS Commission on Christian Literature:

...the CCL addressed an overture to the Conference of Presidents requesting an opinion on the subject of Bible translations. Specifically, the Commission requested an opinion regarding an attempt to produce a translation of our own as well as a critique of existing translations which might prove helpful to our people. The Conference of Presidents considered the Commission's request and answered as follows:

SUBJECT: Bible Translation

The CCL has addressed a letter to the COP requesting advice on initiating a study of various Bible translations with a view to pinpointing the weaknesses and the strengths of each and with the hope of retaining uniform use of the best available translation throughout our synod. The Commission further asks "Are we able and is it advisable to produce our own translation?"

Your committee deems it impractical for our synod to produce its own translation because of the high cost involved and because of the limited field of distribution.

(To this point Prof. Lawrenz added: Galatians back in the 1950's had not been eagerly received by the ministerium. This translation of our own was psychologically not a good thing. When we appeal to a Bible, it should be one that is widely known. I believe the Roman Catholic's Douay Bible has always been suspect in this regard.) 16

The COP recommended, point "d", CRITIQUE OF PRESENT BIBLE TRANSLATIONS, that the faculty present a progress report to the CCL prior to the convention of the synod in August 1971. 17

The matter was referred to the Seminary faculty in March, 1971. Professors Becker, Blume, and Gerlach were to head up the project. The translations to be studied were a) RSV b) NEB c) NASB d) KJV e) Berkeley f) TEV g) ACT. The last two were not yet complete Bibles. Criteria for determining the acceptability of a translation

were: 1. Is the translation doctrinally acceptable? 2. Is it faithful to the original? 3. Is the quality of the receptor language acceptable? 4. Is the original text an appropriate one?

Seven touchstones were set down for determining doctrinal acceptability. They are: messianic prophecy, the deity of Christ, the vicarious atonement, justification, reference to the term "blood", creation, and finally, inspiration. 18

The conclusion to Gerlach's article read

In all of the passages to which consideration was given, the version which consistently proved itself most accurate was the New American Standard Bible...the Lockman Foundation of La Habra, California...has indicated to the faculty committee that it would welcome critical evaluation from our faculty, and that suggestions for variant readings, in places where they are warranted, could be included in the marginal notes in a future edition.

From our vantage point at this time we are cautiously optimistic that this study may lead to the approval of a contemporary translation which will present God's Word faithfully ... 19

D. The Seminary and the NASB

And so it was that a different translation from the one about which this paper is written came to be the early favorite. Some of the writing on the subject in the early Seventies spoke to the point. Here is a statement from Gerlach's "Update on Bible Translations," Vol 69, p. 85:

In conclusion we are still favorably impressed with the NASB, at least more so than with any other version...much editing needs to be done...the format also leaves something to be desired.

Professor AJ Panning, then of Northwestern College, writes:

Lest we think that Bible translation is only a current fad, it might be well to remind ourselves that our beloved King James Version was in itself a revision... It might be noted in passing that updating the obsolete words and outmoded expressions in a translation is one of the easier weaknesses to correct. Almost every contemporary translation does a good job of removing these. It is in other areas that they in turn show weaknesses...

Changing to a new translation has some marked parallels to launching a space shot. There may be bank upon bank of green lights, but as long as there is one red warning light, one cannot fairly say "all systems are go." So too with the NASB. I think our examination, brief and sketchy as it necessarily had to be, has shown a preponderance of "green lights." There are many things that one likes about this translation. As he works with it, one senses a growing confidence within himself that the next passage and the one after that will also check out adequately...

...so I would answer without reservation: Yes, the NASB is a Bible translation you should be looking at...there remains the distinct possibility that the NASB may indeed be the contemporary English translation for which we have been waiting. 20

CJ Lawrenz recollects "The men were quite taken up with the NASB." 21

In retrospect then, where did the Seminary stand in 1973?

The faculty completed their work (of translation review) during the third quarter of the school year... it is apparent that each of the versions under consideration has strengths and certain weaknesses. The same is true of the KJV. Everything considered, it appears that there is no contemporary translation completely acceptable...As our committee chairman has observed about the many modern translations, "If they are beautiful, they aren't faithful; and if they are faithful, they aren't beautiful."

A warning note:

the adoption of a contemporary translation for use in publications of our synod would involve us in the use of copyrighted material. In all probability royalties would have to be paid to the publishers...the payment of royalties for the privilege of quoting one or another translation in a new edition of the Small Catechism would involve considerable sums of money, another factor with which we may have to reckon. 22

The options with which the faculty was faced were these: a) do nothing at the present time. b) go for a homegrown translation. Prof. Lawrenz' comments above clue us in on how that idea was received. c) Go with the NASB, and chance the consequences. d) Use an eclectic translation in the catechism and other materials, using the best possible translation of any given passage.

The faculty decided to hold out.

II. Strides Made at the Synod Level, 1974-1983

A. The Seminar on Bible Translations

In July of 1973, some 20 years after his article on the RSV had been published in the Quartalschrift, Prof. Blume spoke to the synod from the pages of the Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly:

These days when almost every mail brings some discussion of Bible translation--be it the urgent demand for a "truly accurate rendering of the original text into language we can understand," or the passionate denial that such is necessary; be it the announcement of plans that project a new work, or promotional efforts to sell a version or revision already in existence--it will be quite a relief to have in hand some tangible results from a widely-known translation project that has been in the works during the past decade. In the not too distant future we may expect to receive the New Testament portion of the New York Bible Society's undertaking to put out a Bible in the contemporary idiom and produced by a large number of Bible-believing scholars from a number of English-speaking countries. The plan was that this new translation be international in scope, in the personnel of its translation teams, and yet be the product of a group of men who have individually declared their conviction that the Scriptures are the verbally inspired Word of God.

The New York Bible Society's project got underway as the ACT: A Contemporary Translation. The name has, however, been changed, and the work will come out as NIB: the New International Bible. The appearance of the Old Testament lies some years in the future; the New Testament is announced for later this year. 23

The New International Version was published in hardcover New Testament by Zondervan of Grand Rapids in late 1973.

Just two days into the new year, an event of great significance for the WELS took place. This was the Seminar on Bible Translations, and again it was the synod's Commission on Christian Literature which called it. Forty-five members of the synod (including praesidium, publishing and editorial boards, language instructors, and seminary faculty) met for two days in Mequon. The question of "What to make of all this translation business" could be put off no longer.

Personnel

Rev. Harold Wicke	Prof. Heinrich Vogel	Prof. James Fricke
Prof. Luther Spaude	Prof. Armin Schuetze	Prof. Theo. Hartwig
Rev. Gordon Snyder	Prof. Martin Albrecht	Prof. T. Kuster
Mr. Kurt Petermann	Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch	Rev. James Schaefer
Dr. Elmer Kiessling	Prof. Irwin Habeck	Dr. Wayne Schmidt
Rev. Siegfried Fenske	Prof. Siegbert Becker	Prof. Carlton Toppe
Mr. Walter Bunge	Prof. John Jeske	Prof. Erwin Schroeder
Rev. Hogeby Bergholz	Prof. Edward Fredrich	Rev. Victor Prange
Rev. Donald Bitter	Prof. Joel Gerlach	Mr. Adolph Fehlauer
Rev. Lyle Albrecht	Prof. Richard Balge	Rev. William Fischer
Prof. Carl Lawrenz	Prof. Martin Westerhaus	Pres. Oscar Naumann
Prof. Frederic Blume	Prof. David Kuske	Pres. Carl Mischke
Prof. Gerald Hoenecke	Prof. Paul Eickmann	Rev. Julian Anderson
	Prof. Cyril Spaude	Rev. Iver Johnson
	Prof. Armin Panning	Rev. Wayne Borgwardt

TIMETABLE

Wed. 9:45 Devotion & Introduction

Reports highlighting the accuracy or inaccuracy of the various translations

10:00 - 11:00 - Report and summarization of findings of the Seminary faculty

11:00 - 12:00 - Genesis - Lawrenz, Jeske (*Pentateuch ?*)

12:00 - 1:30 - Noon Recess

1:30 - 2:30 - Psalms and Major Prophets, -Vogel, Gawrisch

2:30 - 3:30 - Minor Prophets - Eickmann, Spaude

3:30 - 3:45 - Recess

3:45 - 4:45 - Gospels - Panning, Becker

4:45 - 5:45 - Epistles - Hoenecke, Blume

5:45 - 7:00 - Dinner hour

7:00 - 9:00 - General discussion of accuracy or inaccuracy of various translations

Thurs. 9:45 Devotion

Reports highlighting the matters of English diction and style

10:00 - 11:00 - General reaction - Kiessling, Fricke

11:00 - 12:00 - Genesis and Minor Prophets - Fredrich, Gerlach

12:00 - 1:30 - Noon Recess

1:30 - 2:30 - Psalms and Major Prophets - Hartwig, Kuster

2:30 - 3:30 - Gospels - Schaefer, Schmidt

3:30 - 3:45 - Recess

3:45 - 4:45 - Epistles - Toppe, ~~Schroeder~~ *Sullivan*

4:45 - 5:45 - The Legitimate Use of Paraphrases - Johnson

5:45 - 7:00 - Dinner Hour

7:00 - 9:00 - "California Questionnaire" - Prange
 General discussion of English diction and style

Fri. 9:45 Devotion

10:00 - 11:00 - Summarization and analysis of translation accuracies or inaccuracies - Schuetze

11:00 - 12:00 - Summarization and analysis of translation diction and style - Habeck

12:00 - 1:30 - Lunch

1:30 - Close - Group conclusions or decisions
 Individual questionnaire

Iver Johnson, classicist, skilled linguist, and a man who had an intense interest in contemporary Bible translation, made this comment to the assembly: "It's the popularity of the paraphrases that has made this seminar necessary." The implication is that although our seminary and synod policy-setting bodies could hold off on a move toward a "new" translation, our people would not. In 1974 the version of the Bible which was selling best was not a translation, but a paraphrase. To him, at least, the option of "doing nothing" for the time-being was no longer an option:

The job of a teacher is to help the pupil get along without the teacher. That's the job of a parent, too. Many raised on KJV can't use it as they'd like, and they're embarrassed. Their interest in the paraphrases (Phillips, LB) is a hand signaling to us. Keep an eye on the American language and on the American ignorance. 24

Prof. AW Schuetze, commenting on the options available to the seminar, stated four:

1) do nothing; continue with the KJV. (this is foot-noted with the statement "we'd be remiss if we as a church continued in something recognized as deficient")

2) choose several translations, say 3, or freely use any translation

3) make our own translation

4) choose one existing version for our corporate use (we're not committing a synod to a version for the next 100 years, just for the foreseeable future)

Prof. WR Gawrisch added a fifth option:

We have a short-term need and a long-term need: Give NIV more thorough study, come to district convention with a recommendation that perhaps in the very near future we use it corporately. Until the NIV-OT comes out we have no choice but to use KJV.

long-term need: we should begin to produce our own translation. Pilot project would be on selected books of the Holy Scriptures, (say, Luke, Genesis, and an OT book.) 25

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Closing Resolution passed by Seminary on Bible Translations
(held at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Jan 2-4, 1974)

- A WHEREAS, the Holy Scriptures are written to make us wise unto salvation; and
- B WHEREAS, the King James Version presents communication problems because it increasingly fails to speak to the people of our day; and
- C WHEREAS, our members and pastors are making ever wider use of various modern translations; and
- D WHEREAS, inadequacies of content and/or style rule out an unqualified endorsement of these translations for use in corporate worship and in our publications; and
- E WHEREAS, the recently published New International Version New Testament gives promise of being an acceptable contemporary translation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1. We request that the Seminary faculty proceed with an intensive study of the New International Version of the New Testament with a view to its possible use in the publications and corporate worship of our Synod; and communicate its findings to the CCL for consideration by the Districts in the summer of 1974; and be it further resolved that
2. We offer the services of our Old Testament scholars to the translators of the New International Version; and be it further resolved that
3. We embark on our own translation and publication of portions of the Bible as a pilot project, beginning possibly with Genesis in the Old Testament and Luke and Acts in the New Testament; and be it further resolved that
4. We publish tracts to alert our people to the doctrinal weaknesses and errors of various translations, e.g., in the areas of Creation, Messianic prophecies, Justification, the Sacraments, Millennium; and be it finally resolved that
5. The implementation of these projects rest with the CCL, which shall have the responsibility for appointing the committees and coordinating the work.

Four months later, after the seminary faculty had completed its exhaustive study of the NIV-NT, they reported:

On the basis of the best critical texts available, the rendering of this new version was studied in its entirety with regard to a proper understanding of the apostolic Word and an adequate translation of that understanding into the language of our time. The considered judgment of the Seminary's faculty is that the NIV-NT surpasses by far any other published rendering as an adequate contemporary translation. 26

The following brief is taken from the WLQ, Vol 71:225.

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THE NIV-NT: AN UP-DATE

A copy of the Seminary faculty's review of the New International Version — New Testament was, as planned, sent to Dr. Edwin H. Palmer of Wayne, New Jersey, Executive Secretary of the Committee on Bible Translation for the New York Bible Society. He was also informed that the Synod's Commission on Christian Literature had acted favorably on the faculty's suggestion that members of the Mequon faculty be asked to present in person our suggestions for changes in the translation and the reasons for them.

Dr. Palmer's answer reads in part:

As to meeting with members of your faculty to hear in person their reasons for the suggested changes, I would find that helpful and profitable. I do not want to mislead you into thinking that the top committee would accept all these suggestions, but they would seriously consider them, and they welcome them. Enclosed is a list of improvements that they have already adopted for the official text and which will appear in the next editions. My personal opinion is that they will not adopt many more changes if any between now and the appearance of the Old Testament. But at that time they will certainly give full consideration to all suggestions that you have made. And they may do it before then.

The Seminary faculty delegated to its New Testament department the respon-

sibility for conveying our suggestions to the "top committee." Three of its members will meet with Dr. Palmer some time in October. It was impossible to arrange a meeting date before then. At present Dr. Palmer is engaged in ten weeks of "editorial work" at St. Andrews, Scotland. I am sure that the readers of this journal wish him, who is also a subscriber and reader, much joy and success in this taxing undertaking!

In a letter of May 2, 1974, Mr. Y. R. Kindberg, President of the New York Bible Society International, 5 East 48th Street, New York, New York 10017, addressed the translators and editors of the NIV Translation Project in order to inform them of the extreme pressure in the financing faced by the Society. Burgeoning inflation in every area has greatly increased the cost of the translation project, one that used the four-tiered committee approach with meticulous checking and cross-checking, a method never attempted but one which in the opinion of reviewers has paid off magnificently.

President Kindberg makes two appeals: the one for contributions toward the translation project by individuals who want to see this work carried through; the other, for demand loans bearing interest at seven percent.

Within the scope of the first appeal lies an approach that bears the name of the Executive Secretary. It is called "The 450 Club." Interested persons can obtain materials on this project directly from: Dr. Edwin H. Palmer, 28 White Oak Lane, Wayne, N.J. 07470.

Frederic E. Blume

A correspondence began in March of 1974 between Prof. JC Jeske of the seminary faculty and Dr. Palmer. This consisted initially of

requests by the WLS men for the Old Testament manuscripts which had been translated by the NIV committees to that point. Dr. Palmer graciously complied, and Prof. Jeske was appointed chairman and correspondent in the faculty's current intensive program of studying these initial drafts.

The NIV's Committee on Bible Translation and translators met during the summer of 1974 for the first of three annual "retreats." The idea was this:

It is cheaper to meet (overseas) than in Chicago or St. Louis. The much lower cost of living more than pays the air fare to those countries. In addition, we are free from distractions--in a monastery atmosphere. 27

The 1974 summer session was held at St. Andrews in Scotland, where the oldest of Scottish universities was founded.

Dr. Palmer had agreed to receive the three New Testament men from WLS upon his return from Scotland. Plane tickets had been purchased for Professors Hoenecke, Becker, and Blume. Then an unusual turn of events took place. Dr. Palmer informed the faculty of WLS that he would come to Mequon instead. In retrospect, the reason for that decision may be clearer than it was at the time. Perhaps Palmer and his colleagues were wondering just who the irrepressible seminary represented, and just what sort of a program they had in the unknown spot called Mequon, Wisconsin. At any rate, he and another NIV translator, ^(Dr. Ralph Earle) arrived in Mequon in September. By all accounts, Dr. Palmer got more than he bargained for.

Prof. Blume had done some planning. The red carpet was rolled out for the men, and they received a long guided tour of the seminary. Here they were impressed at the amount of attention paid to the original languages of Holy Scripture. Blume then took them on a tour

of Milwaukee and its sights. This was followed by a jaunt west to Watertown and Northwestern College, where the men professed to be astounded at a language program which demanded Hebrew in the third year as a requirement.

Before Dr. Palmer returned to the East Coast, he was taken to dinner at Alpine Village in Mequon. Present were the three New Testament men who had planned to travel to New York, plus President Lawrenz, and Prof. Jeske. The men were seated in such a way that Dr. Palmer had no one to talk to during the meal but Prof. Jeske. One gets the distinct impression that Frederic Blume had something up his sleeve.

Later in Fall Prof. Jeske received a letter from Dr. Palmer inquiring as to the possibility of Jeske's joining the translation team the following summer for another intensive translation session.

B. WELS policy welcomes the NIV

In a confessionally-minded church body such as WELS, one might expect reaction to such an offer as Dr. Palmer extended. He represented an ecumenical grouping of Christian men, but men who all were outside the fellowship of the WELS. This question was taken up in faculty meetings at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, and the question was to rise occasionally from interested parties throughout the synod. Jeske wrote in a WLQ:

The participation of our men in a transdenominational Bible translation project has on occasion raised questions. The writer has been asked 'Was your participation as a member of translation teams a purely professional exercise?' It could hardly be that for any Christian Bible student. The next question was: 'If your participation was an exercise of your faith, is such action in conformity with the synod's stated position on church fellowship?'...faculty and board were convinced there was no conflict, as long as (there were) no devotions. 28

document 1: Lawrenz letter to WLS on of control & etc
" #2: Resolution of Seminar on Bible Translations Jan 2-4, 1974

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

Office of the President

Prof. Carl J. Lawrenz

Tel. Office: (414) 242-2330
Residence: (414) 242-3857

11831 N Seminary Drive 65 W
Mequon, Wisconsin 53092

December 3, 1974

The Board of Control
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Pastor Waldemar O. Pless, Chairman

Commission on Christian Literature
Pastor Hogey W. Bergholz, Chairman

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed is a copy of the closing resolution passed by the Seminar on Bible Translations, held under the auspices of the Commission on Christian Literature, January 2-4, 1974. You will notice that point 2 of the resolution states that: "We offer the services of our Old Testament scholars to the translators of the New International Version."

An opportunity to implement this particular point of the resolution has recently presented itself in an invitation which Dr. Edwin Palmer extended to Professor John Jeske. Professor Jeske is serving as the chairman and correspondent in our Seminary Faculty's current intensive program of studying the initial drafts of the NIV translations of individual Old Testament books as they are being sent to us by Dr. Palmer.

The invitation, in Professor Jeske's own words, involves the following:

On November 15, 1974, Dr. Edwin Palmer, Executive Secretary of the committee for the New International Version of the Bible, asked me to join an Old Testament translation team overseas for a period from June 16 to August 22, 1975. The site for the summer translation program has not yet been determined; at the moment, Athens seems most probable.

I do not have final information about the financial implications of this appointment. It is my understanding that the Committee, besides providing air transportation, pays translators \$5.00 per hour for work done in committee, but that each individual pays for his room and board.

On December 2, 1974, Dr. Palmer sent me the attached agreement, which all of its translators are asked to sign.

In describing this specific assignment, Dr. Palmer explained that the new translation of the Old Testament begins on the elementary committee level. The work of those committees goes to a second level of committees concerned primarily with style. The revised translation then goes to a

December 3, 1974

third level of translation committee (to one of which I have been appointed). In Dr. Palmer's words this third level of committee "takes the translation apart and puts it together again word for word." From this group the translation goes to the top committee of ten for final review and approval.

Since Professor Jeske was aware of the fact that at previous overseas summer translation gatherings of this kind daily devotions had been held, he informed Dr. Palmer that confessional convictions would not make it possible for him to participate in such joint devotions with men with whom he was not in full doctrinal agreement. Dr. Palmer assured him that without prejudice his convictions in this matter would be fully honored and respected by the group, and stressed that this matter should not keep him from joining the translation team.

Professor Jeske has notified Dr. Palmer that the Seminary Faculty has recommended that he accept the appointment, but that the final acceptance awaits the endorsement of this recommendation by the Seminary Board of Control and by the Commission on Christian Literature. I am also enclosing a copy of the agreement which Professor Jeske is asked to sign in accepting the above-mentioned assignment.

In transmitting this information it is left to the respective chairmen of the Seminary Board of Control and the Commission on Christian Literature to decide how and how soon they will be able to relay the response of their bodies to the faculty recommendation concerning Professor Jeske's service on next summer's NIV Old Testament overseas translation team. Since Professor Jeske was scheduled to teach a course in the 1975 Summer Quarter at the Seminary, an early decision is, however, very desirable, so that an adjustment could also be made at the proper time in this respect.

Fraternally,

(signed) Professor Carl Lawrenz

President
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

CL:ll
enclosures

A G R E E M E N T

I hereby agree with the Committee on Bible Translation ("Committee") to serve as a participant in the Bible translation project being carried on by the Committee, for which I will be paid at the rate of \$5.00 per hour. Assignments will be given to me by the Committee as it sees fit and an estimate made of the number of hours to be expended on each assignment. Approval will be obtained in each case from the Committee prior to expending additional time on an assignment.

While engaged on an assignment, and for at least one year thereafter, I will

- (a) not cause or permit anything to be published which relates in any way to the Bible translation project without first obtaining the approval of the Committee;
- (b) not become associated in any way, or do any work in connection with, any other translation of the Scriptures which has been or may be undertaken by others unless a specific waiver has been granted by the Committee.

I represent and warrant that no portion of any work prepared by me for the Committee will infringe any copyright of any third party.

Worldwide copyright to the translation in which I participate and any part or revision thereof, will be the sole property of New York Bible Society, and I will execute any and all assignments as may be deemed necessary by the Committee in order to vest all right and title in such translation and any part or revision thereof in the Society.

In accordance with the constitution of the Committee on Bible Translation, I subscribe to the following affirmation: "The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written, and is therefore inerrant in the autographs"; or to the statements of Scripture in the Westminster Confession, the Belgic Confession, the New Hampshire Confession, or the creedal basis of the National Association of Evangelicals, or to some other comparable statement. (If the last, please specify: This We Believe).

I enter into this agreement as an independent contractor and acknowledge and understand that by so doing I shall not become or be deemed to be an employee or agent of the Committee or the New York Bible Society.

By _____

John C. J. J. J.

AGREED TO this day of

19

COMMITTEE ON BIBLE TRANSLATION

In December of 1974, Prof. Blume died. He was teaching class. It had been a near obsession with him to see his synod get a good contemporary Bible into the hands of the layman. The importance, the critical significance of his participation in the conferences, the seminars, on the committees, and in his writings can not be overstated. The average synod member may never hear his name mentioned in the context of the Bible being read from his lectern, but Prof. Blume was absolutely instrumental in the NIV project, at least from the perspective of a WELS member. As the project gathered steam, he kept the faculty and the men "out there" informed, served as a translation consultant, and finally saw to it that one of our men would have a fighting chance to become deeply involved. He bemusedly wrote:

A large ^{r/}cops of Bible scholars worked on the translation...the Committee number fifteen men. The number of those who have participated or are still at work (now in the Old Testament) runs well over a hundred...plus a goodly number who lent their aid in criticism of the productions along the line but are not listed on the published roster of participants. 29

Professor Blume was one of the "unlisted." But the gratitude of an entire synod is owed him.

At the 1975 convention, the committees noted

the NIV might receive primary use in the synod's liturgical, catechetical, and educational materials. Since the entire Bible has not yet been translated, the convention said that it would refrain at this time from giving official endorsement to the NIV. But it did permit continued studies necessary for the planning of liturgical, catechetical, and educational materials using the NIV translation. 30

The summer of 1975 for Prof. Jeske meant ten weeks in Athens. In a major move to speed up the project, he and 27 other Hebrew technicians worked $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours in committee per day, plus evening preparation work, for 10 weeks running. Here he "happened to be a

member of a general editorial committee." The pace was slow--about seven verses an hour.

It is this careful editorial process which characterizes the NIV translation procedure...before any passage is finally approved, at least 25 to 30 translators have examined it for faithfulness to the original and its English style...together with I don't know how many consultants...before the NIV is completed, more than 200,000 man-hours of scholarly effort will be expended in the translation--about 170 man-hours per chapter. This translation will take twice as long and involve twice as many scholars as did the King James Version. 31

The same technique was followed in summer, 1976. Salamanca, Spain, was the site chosen for the laborers. Colegio Montellano and its Catholic sisters provided the cloistered atmosphere they needed.

By the summer of 1977, there was only final revision to be completed. Money was running out; estimated total debt for the NIV project was approaching one million dollars, and the New York International Bible Society had to mortgage its buildings, plus lay off help. Only the top committee worked overseas during the summer of 1977; they met in Heverlee, Belgium.

Meanwhile, back in America, the 1977 WELS Convention went on record: "...that we commend the New International Version-New Testament to our people as a faithful contemporary translation that may be used with a high degree of confidence." The theme of the convention was "Publish and Conceal Not." Keynote essays were delivered at the August New Ulm meeting by Rev. Arnold Koelpin, "Preparing A New Translation in Luther's Day," and Prof. Jeske, "Preparing a New Bible Translation Today." From this essay:

"Do we need another one?" The question was probably asked of Martin Luther, too. At least 18 different German editions existed when he began...It's natural for

us to think of a contemporary Bible translation in terms of ourselves. "Do I like this new translation? Do I need a new translation? But is this the only question we should be asking? Have we been called to be Christians only for our own sake? Will the translation help to meet the spiritual needs also of those outside God's family? ...We must make a choice...32

The translators met once more as a group in December, over the Christmas break, in Boca Raton, Florida. This was the CBT (now 13 men) and two groups of four translators. Prof. Jeske was again asked to participate. This was to be the final time the body of translators met.

* * * * *

As this article is written on a bright July day, the news has just been received that the New International Version of the Bible will be dedicated in New York on September 30, 1978, and that the new translation will have been distributed to bookstores all over the country by October 30. 33

The initial press run of the complete Bible (1,200,000 copies) was sold out in pre-publication sales.

A comment might be in place about the package in which this new translation comes to us. Every effort has been made to make the outward appearance of the NIV as pleasing as possible. The text is printed in paragraph format, with headings for larger units. To enhance readability, the publishers asked a well-known book designer to create a page design that would have dignity and character, in addition to clarity. Various editions are planned... 34

Even the paper on which the NIV was printed was the product of scrutiny and concern. It was a special recipe, a fine blend to incorporate the best qualities of durable and easy-on-the-eyes stock.

Thus was the NIV project completed. Its history was some 20 years long, with the actual translation work covering a span of 11 years. All over America, interested Christians were sliding the big book out of its wrapper and sitting down at the kitchen table to hold it and read through favorite passages. It truly was a gem.

The following report comes from the Book of Reports and Memorials of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1979, pp 196-197:

REPORT ON
THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

The seminary faculty has completed its review of the New International Version of the Bible, an assignment which it undertook at the direction of the Synod. It herewith submits its evaluation.

After the publication of the NIV Bible, the NIV New Testament was again reviewed, with special attention given to those passages concerning which the faculty had submitted suggestions for change. It was noted that quite a few of the faculty's suggestions were included in the 1978 NIV New Testament. On the other hand, in a number of instances, the faculty was unsuccessful in convincing the NIV Committee on Bible Translation of the validity of our concern. Dr. Edwin Palmer, Executive Secretary of the NIV, has informed us that no further revision of the NIV is contemplated until 1983, when the entire NIV Bible will have received the five-year field testing that the NIV New Testament has received. Until then, the faculty intends to continue to submit its suggestions for change to the secretary. Members of the Synod who have concerns about the translation of certain passages in the NIV are invited to share them with the faculty.

The faculty had had opportunity to review the translations of about half of the Old Testament books prior to publication of the NIV in October 1978. Many suggestions for change were submitted, and a high proportion of these found their way into print. In the six months since publication, the faculty has reviewed the rest of the Old Testament books.

In general, the faculty found the NIV to be a readable translation, appropriate for both devotional and liturgical use, faithful to the original, and doctrinally sound. While reviewing the Old Testament, the faculty gave special attention to Messianic prophecies, and found them to have been translated in a way that

(ADMINISTRATION)

clearly points to the Messiah. In a number of instances, the NIV is demonstrably more faithful to the original than is the King James Version.

The faculty recognizes that no translation is perfect. No translation can ever fully capture the meaning of the original. (Within the faculty there was sometimes disagreement on the best rendering of a given passage.) As long as a translation is doctrinally sound, it can be used with profit by God's people.

It is the opinion of the faculty that what it said five years ago about the NIV New Testament can now be affirmed of the translation of the NIV Old Testament as well:

Outranking other factors in an evaluation of the NIV is the fact that it is the result of the painstaking labors of many men each of whom has declared his acceptance of the divine origin and verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. A high view of the Bible is in evidence, one that by definition rejects the modern radical, unbelieving historical-critical approach, ... The New International Version is a translation which may be used with a high degree of confidence.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Faculty

From the WELS Proceedings of the same year:

Reference: BoRaM - pp. 196, 197
 Subject: New International Version of the Bible

Resolution No. 5

- WHEREAS 1) the desire for a contemporary translation of the Bible continues to be expressed in our Synod; and
- WHEREAS 2) our Synod, in its 1977 convention resolved, "That if the WLS faculty finds also the Old Testament of the NIV, upon its completion, to be acceptable, the BPE may use the NIV in the preparation of instructional material," and, "That this action be reviewed by the 1979 convention of our Synod" (1977 Synod Proceedings, p. 74); and
- WHEREAS 3) the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary faculty has completed its review of the NIV of the Bible, the Old Testament as well as the New Testament again; and

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(WORKER TRAINING)

- WHEREAS 4) "In general, the faculty found the NIV to be a readable translation, appropriate for both devotional and liturgical use, faithful to the original and doctrinally sound" (BoRaM p. 196); and
- WHEREAS 5) "The Synod never adopted any translation as the official Bible of the Synod" (1977 Synod Proceedings p. 74); and
- WHEREAS 6) in the interest of uniformity of text for Scripture quotations and memorization some agreed-upon translation is both expedient and necessary; therefore, be it
- Resolved, a) that as a Synod we still concur with the 1977 resolution of the Synod, namely, "That we commend the New Testament of the NIV to our people as a faithful contemporary translation that may be used with a high degree of confidence" (1977 Synod Proceedings, p. 74); and be it further
- Resolved, b) that we also commend the Old Testament of the NIV to our people as a faithful contemporary translation that may be used with a high degree of confidence; and be it further
- Resolved, c) that the BPE may use the Old Testament as well as the New Testament of the NIV in its instructional material; and be it further
- Resolved, d) that for the sake of uniformity the publishing agencies of the Synod choose the New International Version for their new printed material; and be it finally
- Resolved, e) that we still concur with the 1977 resolution, "That this action should not be construed as the adoption of the NIV as the Synod's official Bible" (1977 Synod Proceedings, p. 74).

C. The WELS people welcome the NIV

Professor Blume had spoken 25 years earlier about the difficulties waiting for a synod which would incorporate a new trans-

lation. Now that a contemporary version, and a good one, was on the bookshelves, these problems rapidly took center stage. With the bankruptcy of the New York International Bible Society averted, and all the scholarly deskwork behind, it was left to committed men to avoid the temptation to relax. One job was completed. Another, just as critical, remained. How to get the layman to accept a book which called man's Creator and Redeemer and Holy Spirit "You" instead of "Thou"?

Prof. AJ Panning had put his finger on a parallel difficulty in an article from WLO in the early Seventies:

...as to the difficulty of reading the KJV--
I think it is fair to say that outmoded words and expressions are not the only thing that causes difficulty in reading the AV...not the least of which is a general lack of practice and diligence in reading the Scriptures. 35

It was now the task of professor and pastor to get their people to read and hear the Word according to the NIV. Many labored hard and faithfully at this task. Prof. Jeske alone presented some 75 lectures in the years 1975-1977, often speaking to conferences and congregations as often as once every two weeks. At the time of the writing of this paper, he unofficially tallied 109 speaking engagements on the NIV. Many thousands of people in state after state heard for the first time information on the project: text criticism, the mechanics involved in translating the Scriptures, a history of the Bible translation boom, and especially the unheard-of statement that the beloved King James Version was itself both a revision and a translation!

Nor is this to suggest that all pastors were immediately enamored of the volume which would provide the Scriptures for catechism and Meditations. Opposition from some quarters was fierce, and came

in various forms. "The Textus Receptus was not used." "Anybody who wants to find his Savior in the KJV can do so." "It is unnecessary... what we have is good enough...difficult language is the job of the teacher."

Questions were aimed at the translators themselves. "There were predominantly Reformed scholars doing the work." It became a common task to remind pastors that the KJV itself was translated not by Lutherans.

Questions of principle and theory: "Are you suggesting that we need a new translation because God's revelation is progressive?" "What does this say about God over all these years? That he gave us something unsatisfactory?"

Most criticism came from souls who had never had to grapple with the question "Where did our Bible come from?" Because AV had always been there for them, there was a nebulous sentiment that the King James had plainly "always been around."

God removed the autographs. Instead he gave us three sorts of documents (copies of the original, copies of copies, and translations of copies). We're in conscience bound to use everything he has given us to establish the original text (even though, like the Qumran Isaiah manuscript, it comes to light as late as the 20th century. 36

Intense criticism found a voice in Illinois, where a "false prophet" charge arose against users of the NIV, and in the Manitowoc Conference of the Northern Wisconsin District.

There remained strong feelings for the NASB. This question really became a moot point at the hand of the Lockman Foundation itself. Recall that it was the WELS Commission on Christian Literature that had called on the WLS faculty to come up with results concerning the "Which version?" query sounded by pastors and laymen. Had the NASB

been "adopted," the WELS could have published a certain number of catechisms without royalty; after that, for each use, money would travel from Milwaukee to La Habra, California. Prof. Habeck of the seminary faculty computed that the Lockman Foundation would receive more money by the publication of our new catechism than would our own publishing arm. This could be a fate worse than William Tyndale's.

Add to this that the Lockman Foundation expressed its feeling to our WLS faculty that the NASB text was pretty well frozen, and good, sound suggestions they might receive from WELS might receive footnote status.

Compare these terms with the gracious acknowledgments of Dr. Palmer to the WLS faculty, taken from personal correspondence between him and Prof. Jeske:

The suggestions of your faculty continue to help us to have a tighter translation...I have brought to CBT's attention your comments...and they have bought quite a few. Naturally, not all, but your faculty has a pretty good batting average, and I'm very grateful for the assistance. Keep it up. 37

From a letter dated April 17, 1978:

Dear John...we have only 4 more review days of the OT...I have been working **over** the suggestions of your faculty for the past two months of review, and have seen one after the other adopted--not all by any stretch of the imagination, as you can well envision in our editorial process, but a large percentage. So I thought the least I could do would be to thank the faculty for the aid given. The suggestions really helped us to tighten up the translation. I'm so grateful to you and your faculty for what you have done for us--also financially.

Finally,

We have received more constructive criticism from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod than from any other church. 38

This statement, interestingly enough, was made in 1976 to the entire

assembly of translators in Salamanca, Spain. Dr. Palmer went out of his way to throw bouquets to the WLS faculty on the basis of the 5000 man-hours they spent in review of the NIV Bible. He stated that "had he known" about the scholarship of the Mequon faculty earlier, he would have seen to it that a faculty man accompanied the project to St. Andrews, Scotland, in 1974. He also personally acknowledged the many monetary boosts sent from corners of the WELS which came thankfully from people who heard the NIV stumpings by pastor and professor alike.

Dr. Palmer died in 1980, and WLS as well as WELS lost a kindly and dignified friend. With Dr. Palmer's death also vanished his proposal to have Prof. Jeske serve as an editor of a proposed NIV-Study Bible. We can thank a gracious Lord for placing Edwin Palmer at the head of the NIV project in 1968. 160 copies of the NIV are used daily in the seminary chapel, placed there at the personal expense of Dr. Palmer and his wife.

* * * * *

EPILOGUE

As of this date, the NIV is in use all over the WELS. The lectures, according to Prof. Jeske, have dwindled. People have dog-eared copies, and the beat-up Skivertex cover is a common sight in the sem student's briefcase. Not all use it from pulpit to pulpit, but then this was never the goal, was it?

Beauty is subjectively determined; fidelity is objectively determined. Where subjective judgment is involved, agreement is unlikely. Thus any modern version which may ultimately be recommended for use in our churches and publications will be one which contains features with which we shall have to live. In that respect it will be no different from the KJV. 39

It is obvious to all that NIV is not a perfect translation. Neither is any other of the translations

presently available to us. That alternative God has withheld from us, and for us to wait before taking any decisive action until a perfect translation appears would be unrealistic...It may be too early to tell whether NIV will be for the coming generation what KJV was for the present generation and what the Lutherbibel was for a previous generation. But with a few necessary revisions, the NIV will be a distinct blessing to God's people. 40

Koelpin's 1977 Convention essay included some words from the great scholar/translator/professor/reformer himself in the 16th century:

In seeking a readable^{a/} text, he especially had the people in mind. He could rightfully boast how smoothly the story of Job reads in the German, even though he sometimes looked three weeks for one word. 'One now runs his eyes over three or four pages and does not stumble once--without realizing what boulders and clods had once lain there where he now goes along as over a smoothly planed board.'

Now you have the translated Bible. Only use it well also after my death. 41

Really, the only legitimate reason for going to the immense expense in man-hours and money is the hope that people will learn to know their Savior from NIV pages. We take no gleeful pleasure in the fact that the NIV has dislodged the KJV from its former place among our fellowship. The KJV was a faithful and proven servant. We can only pray that the NIV can do for youngsters and "those outside" God's family what the "King" has been doing for almost 375 years.

* * * * *

An Incomplete Timeline of Bible Translation
Highlights from the Perspective of WELS

- 1898 English Revised Version published
1901 American Standard edition of Revised Version published
1946 RSV-NT published February 11
1952 complete RSV published September 30
WELS praesidium appoints committee to study RSV
1953 Synod Proceedings reports on RSV
Synod moves to produce "homegrown" translation
1955 installments of Galatians begin appearing in WLS Quartalschrift
1956 Seattle proposal to Christian Reformed Church re new translation
1961 NAE convention in Grand Rapids; discussed new version with CRC
1964 statements, conferences, plans, steering committee proposals
preliminary guidelines asked from leaders of evangelical churches
1966 General Conference on Bible Translation meets in Chicago...
Lawrenz, Blume in attendance?
1967 NYIBS agrees to financial responsibility for the project
1968 FE Blume begins serving as translation consultant for ACT
Dr. Edwin H. Palmer named full-time ex. sec'y of project
actual translation of NT begins
1970 Gospel of John published after field testing by ACT
NEB is published
1971 NASB is published
ACT enlarges name to NIV: A Contemporary Translation
Kenneth Taylor's Living Bible is published
1973 NIV-NT is published in hardcover by Zondervan
1974 WELS Seminar on Bible Translations January 2-4
OT manuscripts requested from Dr. Palmer by WLS faculty
initial Jeske-Palmer correspondence
CCL asks for NIV-NT review in time for summer district conventions
summer at St. Andrew, Scotland, for NIV scholars
plane tickets bought for 3 WLS NT men to visit NYC with proposals
Palmer visits Mequon
Jeske asked to join NIV team
Prof. FE Blume dies
1975 first NIV lecture (of 109) presented by Jeske
summer in Athens for 28 NIV scholars
WELS Convention states NIV "MIGHT" receive primary use in synod
1976 summer in Salamanca, Spain for the translators
AAT published
TEV published (Good News Bible)
NIV project makes pages of Northwestern Lutheran, twice
1977 translators spend Christmas break in Boca Raton, Florida
WELS Convention theme "Publish and Conceal Not"
Convention essays on Bible Translation by Koelpin, Jeske
1978 NIV first printing of 1,200,000 sold out in pre-publication sales
1979 WELS Proceedings: "NIV-OT may also be used with a high degree of
confidence"
BPE to use NIV in instructional matter
publishing agencies of synod choose NIV for new printed material
1980 Dr. Edwin H. Palmer dies
1984 new leatherbound KJV goes for \$2 at WLS student book auction

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13. "The Story of the New International Version," pp 9-10
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27. Schaefer, "God's Word in Athens," p. 40
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32. Jeske, "Preparing a New Bible Translation Today," p. 2
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40. Jeske, "New International Version Completed," p. 305
41. Koelpin, "Preparing a New Bible Translation in Luther's Day," pp 15+17

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