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## True Presbyterianism: A Rejoinder

WITH DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF THE RECENTLY DISTRIBUTED  
ANSWERS TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE FREE PRESS

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Our little church stands at the parting of the ways. Will it go forward in a direction which leads to weakness, and eventual stagnation, or will it return to the direction which God has blessed in the past?

I wrote a series of articles in the first issue of *The Free Press*, pointing out what true Presbyterianism is, and urging that our church continue in that direction instead of going in the direction toward which a sharp turn was made at the last Synod. A number of letters have been received since, and some articles have appeared opposing what I had written. Some of these contain reasonable and careful consideration of the problems involved. Unfortunately the majority are not of this type. They throw stones at me for having written and call my view congregationalism, as if such name-calling settled the matter.

Let's not get confused about names. Let's look at the real situation. Let's see where we are, and where we are going. The Bible Presbyterian Church might be compared to a group of men who are carrying a big piece of lumber. Each of thirty men has his hands on it, and they are moving southward through the states of the Atlantic seaboard. One says, "Let us veer right, toward the mountains." Another says, "Let us turn left toward the ocean." The group is going forward, but some are pulling hard in the direction of the mountain, and others are pulling hard in the direction of the ocean. As a result, little is accomplished. Each finds himself hampered by the pressure exerted by the other, and there is an inevitable tendency to call the other names and say he is not loyal to the cause, instead of soberly facing the question, "In which direction should we go?"

There are in our church two basic viewpoints. There is the viewpoint that says that the Presbyterian Church is a church in which all power is in the hands of the Synod. The Synod determines what should be done. The Presbyteries carry out the commands of the

Synod, the individual churches carry out the commands of the Presbytery, and the

On the last day of the 18th General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church, meeting in St. Louis, Mo., there was formed, independent of the Synod, a Committee for True Presbyterianism, by a number of brethren who were seriously concerned by the events of the Synod and the change which had taken place in the Bible Presbyterian Church.

These men included the following: California—R. V. Dickerson, L. G. Gordon, J. E. Janbaz, C. L. Kennedy, J. W. Ludlow, C. M. Worley; Kentucky—F. B. Toms; Maryland—A. G. Slaght; Michigan—C. W. Brogan; Missouri—E. E. Ganz, R. I. Hatch; New Jersey—P. du B. Arcularius, R. E. Baker, C. A. Bancroft, B. J. Bashaw, R. L. Boertzel, J. F. Misicka, A. W. Oldham, E. A. Peters, C. E. Richter, R. S. Wigfield; New Mexico—W. M. Irving, Jr.; North Dakota—E. E. Matteson; Ohio—A. F. Faucette; Pennsylvania—W. H. Clinton, J. G. Holdcroft, A. A. MacRae, J. M. Norris; Tennessee—J. U. S. Toms; Washington—A. B. Hunter.

The purpose of this Committee is to bring information to the members of the Bible Presbyterian Church.

A subcommittee was appointed composed of Allan A. MacRae, Carl McIntire, Albert W. Oldham, Adam B. Hunter, and Arthur G. Slaght.

This publication is issued in pursuance of plans to bring information to the church.

All communications may be addressed to the secretary-treasurer of the Committee, the Rev. Arthur G. Slaght, 1630 S. Hanover St., Baltimore 30, Md.

individual members must do what the ministers and elders tell them to do. Few would express it as baldly as this, but quite a number are moving in this direction. They speak of someone's being "unwilling to accept Synod's decision," as if Synod was the final authority in everything. The other view holds that Synod has the function which it has always had in Presbyterian history. They consider it as a court, not as a legislative or administrative body, and believe that its function is to examine matters brought to it which present dangers of the entrance of false doctrine into the church. They hold that the individual is responsible before God for serving Him to the best of his ability, that the local church has the duty of performing the sacraments and preaching pure doctrine, that the ministers of the local churches and the representative elders should gather together in order to consider how the doctrine of the church can be preserved from the entrance of infidelity, and how to stir one another up to good deeds and loyalty to Christ, and that representatives of the presbyteries should come together in a synod in order that the greater wisdom of the whole group can be focused on this vital matter of guarding the doctrinal teaching of the church.

According to this view, the outreach of the church is carried on by those men whom God raises up for the purpose. Synods and Councils may recommend their work and may take up collections for it; they should examine it carefully to be sure that it is not characterized by apostasy or in danger of leading the church into unbelief; but they should not attempt to direct its details or to control its administration.

For eighteen years independent agencies directed most of the missionary and educational work of the Bible Presbyterian Church, with the exception of one specific area. There were small committees in other fields, none of which employed full-time trained workers, but there was nothing which could remotely be compared to a Synod-controlled

Board or Agency, except for the one agency of National Missions.

#### WHAT ABOUT SOCIALISM?

When a community is anxious to improve its standard of living, it would seem very logical that the members of the community should decide which of them should be designated to raise the cows and supply the milk for the community, which should be assigned to the growing of vegetables, which should spend his time distributing these products, and thus to apportion out to the individuals of the community the various tasks that need to be done.

This all sounds very logical, and in contrast with it it seems rather illogical to suggest that each member of the community should be left free to decide for himself whether he wanted to raise cows, to grow vegetables, or to go into the business of distribution, leaving it up to him to save the money to enter his desired field, or to persuade others to make him the necessary loans. Much waste would seem to be involved in a system of competition and free enterprise. How much easier simply to have everything controlled by the whole community!

Yet it has been proven by experience that the community in which individuals are free to seek out the type of work that seems most suited to them, so that some succeed and others fail, and competition determines who gets ahead, actually produces a far greater amount of goods for all, than the type which leaves these matters to the decision of the community as a whole. In experience it always seems to work out that competition and free enterprise accomplish more for the whole community.

In a true democracy the government is selected by the people, not in order to direct the activities of the members of the community, but to protect each of them from interference by others. Its function is primarily protective. Far more is accomplished for all, when each is free to direct his own life. Government should not compete with the activities of its citizens, but should watch over them as an umpire, punishing malefactors, and confining its positive activities to those few matters in which united action is a necessity.

Exactly the same thing applies in the field of religion. Local churches preach the Word, perform the sacraments, and seek to help their members to grow in grace. Presbyteries and synods have the vital function of protecting the individual churches from the entrance of false doctrine, and from the intrusion of unworthy men into the ministry. They exercise a general oversight, to make sure that all is done in orderly fashion.

It might sound very logical to commit to assemblies and synods the entire work of carrying on missions, of preparing publications, and of educating men for the ministry. It might seem very reasonable to say that the representatives of the churches, meeting together, should decide by vote who should perform each task and how it should be carried on. Yet in actual practice far more is accomplished if individuals make their own decisions as to what type of work they wish to undertake, or if groups of individuals interested in a particular type of work band together in a voluntary society for the purpose of carrying on this work.

The analogy between socialism in secular affairs and synod-controlled boards in religion is exact and complete. Both lead, in the end, to stagnation. Shall our church forever remain small, becoming ingrown and futile, with our attention constantly centered on ourselves, or shall we go forward to do great things for God? We stand today at a vital crossroads.

It is not, of course, our contention that everyone in our Synod is committed to one of these two opposing views. There are many who are trying to straddle. Some, like the ostrich, bury their heads in the sand, and try to believe that no vital change of direction was taken at the last Synod meeting. Some say that our church was in exactly the right position as regards this matter during its history so far. The fact is that practically all the missionary and educational work of the church, until very recently, was in the hands of voluntary agencies, except for the one field of National Missions, and that now a whole series of other areas have been entered by Synod-controlled agencies.

If one takes the socialistic view of the powers of presbyteries and synods, he should logically hold that presbyteries should say who should preach where, who should go into missionary work, who should become an educator, and should simply move their men around like someone moving chessmen on a board. Such a statement might be made as the following:

"There can be no doubt that, according to the system of our Church, the control of ecclesiastical persons rests with ecclesiastical courts. Every licentiate and minister is under the direction of his own presbytery, and is bound to go where they send him, and to stay where they place him. It is to them he is responsible for the right discharge of his official duties, and to them he is bound to report. For any set of men to assume this direction, supervision and control of

such licentiates and ministers, is a direct interference with the rights of presbyteries."

It is readily seen that this is an authoritarian view according to which all the religious work of the members of the church should be under direct commands and supervision of the officials of the presbyteries and synods. On the basis of such a view it must naturally be insisted that all missionary and educational work should be in the hands of synod-controlled agencies. If, however, one does not accept the premises laid down above as to the powers of presbyteries and synods, but holds the attitude which has historically been characteristic of the Presbyterian churches, then there is no valid argument for the necessity of synod-controlled boards and agencies, and the question of whether they are desirable is one to be examined on a basis of experience and general principle, as we did in the first issue of *The Free Press*.

Someone may say that the statement quoted above is so extreme that no one in our church would even think of making it. As a matter of fact, however, it has been copied verbatim from a statement that is currently being circulated among ministers of the church. The fact that such a statement might be quoted from a highly-honored leader should make it no more palatable to freedom-loving Presbyterians. If such a leader makes such a statement, we must say that in the emotion of arguing against an opponent he has allowed himself to take a position which he has not thought through, particularly if he makes statements quite at variance with it in other writings. Yet it is upon such statements as this that the argument must rest, that synod-controlled agencies are required in a Presbyterian system. In the first issue of this paper we have clearly demonstrated that there is no scriptural statement or example for them, and that on a basis of experience and of reason they are undesirable.

#### THE TWO ARTICLES

An extensive critique of my articles in *The Free Press* has recently appeared. It consists of two articles which were published in a special issue of *The Bible Press*, the parish paper of the First Bible Presbyterian Church of St. Louis. According to the letter which accompanied this special issue, it was sent to all ministers of the Bible Presbyterian Church, and in addition, bundles were sent to all the various churches with the request that they be distributed among their people.

Since all the articles in *The Free Press* which were thus criticized came from

my own pen, and since one of the critiques accused me of "unconscionable distortion of the facts," "extreme naïvete," utter unfairness in using terms, ignorance of the meaning of words, etc., it is my hope that those who distributed these critiques to the members of their congregations will be sufficiently concerned about fair play to give this issue of *The Free Press* an equally wide distribution.

It was the thought of the Committee for True Presbyterianism to reprint both of these articles in full in this issue of *The Free Press*, along with my rejoinder. On figuring up their length, I find that this would of necessity produce a very large and expensive issue. Since these articles have already been so widely distributed I have decided only to include extracts from them here, since funds are far from limitless. In doing so, there is inevitably the danger of giving a false impression by quoting something out of context. I shall do my best to avoid such an error, and hope that my readers will check my quotations in the original to see whether I have succeeded.

I take up the task of answering these two articles with distinct reluctance. They are signed by honored names. Their authors are men of standing and scholarship. Both are friends of mine, whom I would hate to hurt in any way. I wish they had not taken up the cudgels against me. But they have done so, and it is necessary to examine their statements which have been so widely circulated.

There is a still more important reason why I dislike answering these particular articles. It is the fact that they are not really representative of the position which I am opposing. Both of the authors have been active in the support and extension of Boards and agencies which are not Synod-controlled. Both have expressed themselves as well satisfied with the past attitude of our Church, which was very far from the situation toward which so great a turn has now been made. Instead of saying that they favor the turn, and the ultimate Synod control of all agencies, toward which the Church is now heading, they minimize the change. Being actually very near my own position, as far as the rights and desirability of independent agencies is concerned, they try to pick flaws in my historical statements and to undermine my definitions. All this could be disregarded if it were not for the fact that it leads many to think that these honored men are against the truly Presbyterian position that I espouse, and in favor of the authoritarian position which is actually much further from their desire.

The shorter of the two articles is entitled, THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN POSITION ON BOARDS AND AGENCIES, and is written by my esteemed colleague, Dr. R. Laird Harris.

It is unfortunate that Dr. Harris should have written this particular article. He is a man of fine scholarship and very splendid Christian attitude. Yet sometimes he reacts strongly on small phases of questions, and it impresses me that this is what he has done at this time. I wish he had not, for I hate to have to oppose him in any way, but it is necessary, lest people be misled by some of the statements in his article.

Dr. Harris is a fine scholar, but he is here very definitely outside of his field. While the present writer does not have Church History as his main field of study, he has taught the entire area of Church History a number of times, and has worked into many sections of it, including American Presbyterian History, though this latter is not his main study by any means. Nevertheless, I have gained a number of insights into the nature of material in this field, and consequently am able to unearth the true situation much more rapidly than one whose work has been so largely in other fields.

In dealing with this subject, one who is not at home in this field is under a special difficulty. That is the fact that development of Synod-controlled boards and agencies took place so gradually that its real nature was not realized. About 1800 there was a great increase of action by Presbyterians in a truly Presbyterian and democratic way. Individuals, or groups of individuals in this country and elsewhere started great works for God. Thus independent boards and agencies began. Gradually the idea developed that such boards and agencies should be brought under ecclesiastical control. The development of Synod-controlled boards and agencies was so gradual that people hardly realized what was happening. By the latter part of the 19th century it had become widely accepted, and books of Church History written at that time quite generally use the terminology which was common in their day in speaking of the developments of a century earlier. Reading these books it is very easy for a man like Dr. Harris who has not worked extensively in this field to get the idea that they show that the attitude which had become prevalent in some of our large Presbyterian denominations by the end of the 19th century, and which developed much further in the 20th century, was actually in existence previous to the period around 1800.

Dr. Harris quotes from a book which

he calls Hodge, *What is Presbyterian Law?*, and then refers to it simply as "Hodge." This would not be serious except for the fact that in the other article in the same publication, Dr. Buswell says on page 5,

"Charles Hodge, author of the famous three-volume Systematic Theology, is our greatest authority on Presbyterian Church polity."

Charles Hodge is indeed our greatest American authority on Systematic Theology. It is highly questionable, however, whether he is properly to be entitled our greatest authority on Church Polity. It is true that, after he completed his Systematic Theology, Hodge wished he were able to write a book on this subject, developing the notes that he had used in his lectures. However, he was then too advanced in years and too feeble to attempt it. After his death his representatives decided not to publish the notes of his lectures on this subject, "from the conviction that they have no right to publish in his name that which his own judgment regarded as too imperfectly elaborated." However, a minister in Albany, New York, named Rev. William Durant, went through articles which Hodge had written for the Princeton Review during a period of more than thirty years. From these Durant selected sections dealing with various subjects in order thus to make a book out of them.

It is hardly fair to Charles Hodge to consider this work as a book on the subject of Church Government. The articles in question were mostly dealing with the particular acts of the General Assemblies during a period of heated discussion and controversy over many different issues. Hodge wrote the articles dealing with different issues as they arose, and had no thought as he wrote them of trying to give a general picture of the subject of Church Government. Often in opposing one particular view which he considers wrong, he would seem to take an extreme stand in an opposite direction, such as he certainly would not take, if he were writing a comprehensive work on the subject. Charles Hodge is a man of great excellence, but for proper evaluation of many of the articles in the book entitled *Church Polity*, it would be necessary to make a detailed study of the particular situation in each year, and to read the particular articles or speeches to which he was reacting.

JOHN ASPINWALL HODGE

It should be pointed out, however, that when Dr. Harris refers to "Hodge," he is not speaking of the great theologian at all, but is referring to a John Aspinwall Hodge, who was pastor of the First

Presbyterian Church of Hartford, Connecticut. Whether he was related at all to the famous Princeton Hodges, I do not know. It is possible that he may have been some kind of a cousin.

His book, written in the latter part of the last century, is very typical of the type of book to which I have referred above. In brief references to the 18th century, he often uses terminology which can easily lead one to think that conditions then were exactly the same as in the later 19th century. Examination of more detailed books, however, shows very quickly that this was not the case at all.

The article by Dr. Harris begins with the following words:

"It is currently being said that Synod controlled agencies are 'contrary to original Presbyterianism, being practically unknown before 1790' and that this type of doing missionary work, etc. is 'a new theory as to the purpose of the Courts of the Church' having developed only 'during the past 150 years.' (*The Free Press*, June 30, 1955, pp. 9 and 2.)

"Two remarks may be made at once concerning this construction of Presbyterian history. First, 150 years is a long time. . . . We should remember that the General Assembly is only 167 years old and if it had Boards and Agencies for 150 years of this time it seems rather strange to condemn them at this late date. . . . If Assembly controlled Agencies were all right for 150 years, why are they so terrible now?"

These words give the impression that I said that the system of Synod-controlled boards and agencies had been in full bloom during the last 150 years. Actually this is far from the case. These organizations developed very gradually during that period. They were almost entirely non-existent 150 years ago. They never reached their present octopus-like extension in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. until well within the present century. It should also be noted that though the General Assembly was not formed until 167 years ago, there were one or more Synods in existence for 72 years before that.

"Secondly, however, the facts of history dispute the claim that Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies were 'practically unknown before 1790.' . . . These banded together in a Presbytery in 1705. . . . at this first meeting the responsibility of ministers supplying 'neighboring desolate places' was recognized."

Surely it is very far from having a a Synod-controlled board or agency simply to say that Presbytery recognizes the responsibility of ministers to supply neighboring desolate places. He continues:

"Eleven years later, 1716, the infant Church had formed a Synod and almost at its first meeting (in 1719), a collection was taken—18 pounds—given into the hands of Rev. Jedidiah Andrews and an appropriation made to the 'Presbyterian congregation of New York toward the support of the Gospel among them.' (Hodge 'What is Presbyterian Law' p. 415.)"

The taking up of a collection for a worthy cause is surely very far from the establishment of a Synod-controlled board or agency. It would be just as reasonable to say that when our Synod takes up a collection, and turns it over to some missionary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, this is proof that the Independent Board is a Synod-controlled agency. The article continues:

"Three home missionaries were appointed in 1722 (ib. p. 416)."

This general statement in the book by the Connecticut pastor gives a reader of today an impression very different from what actually was done. Fuller details are found in another book which I will here designate simply as Baird, *Acts*, since Dr. Harris gives the full title just a few lines down. The action which the Connecticut pastor summarizes as the appointment of three home missionaries is described in full by Baird (p. 326 as follows:

"§26. *First appointment of itinerant missionaries.*

"1722, p. 74. A representation being made by some of our members of the earnest desires of some Protestant dissenting families in Virginia, together with a comfortable prospect of the increase there, the Synod have appointed that Mr. Hugh Conn, Mr. John Orme, and Mr. William Stewart, do each of them severally visit said people, and preach four Sabbaths to them, between this and the next Synod."

To ask three ministers to go on a preaching trip for one month each is a far cry from having a Synod-controlled Board. Dr. Harris continues:

"The attitude of the members was so far from a loose organization that in 1738 the members of Synod unanimously agreed either to take up an annual collection 'or oblige themselves to pay out of their own proper estates

ten shillings to the fund' for Home Missions (Hodge op. cit. p. 416)."

I have never said that the attitude of the members was "that of a loose organization." These were true Presbyterians. Their presbyteries and their Synod fulfilled their proper functions, but there is no evidence that they went into the un-Presbyterian business of erecting Synod-controlled boards and agencies of the type which has developed into such an octopus in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and in other bodies. The men simply agreed to take up an annual collection for a worthy cause. Surely every church does this. It proves nothing as to whether it is a loose organization or not. Even the statement that they agreed to oblige themselves each to pay a couple of dollars a year to the fund is only a voluntary action on the part of a group of ministers. It is very far from taxation or from evidence of Synod-controlled agencies. Dr. Harris continues:

"The great impetus to foreign missions had not come as yet as Europe itself was still in the age of discovery and conquest. But already the needs of the American Indian were recognized by the infant church. In 1742 Azariah Horton was ordained as a Missionary to the Indians (Samuel J. Baird, a collection of the Acts, Deliverances and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church from its Origin in America to the Present Time, 1855, p. 329)."

Azariah Horton was a missionary to the Indians. Similarly our Presbyteries have ordained missionaries to Peru, Chile, India, Africa, etc., who are working under the direction of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. Under whose direction did Azariah Horton work? We shall soon see the answer to this question. Dr. Harris continues:

"In 1755 'Mr. Gilbert Tennent reported to the Synod that he has lately received a bill for two hundred pounds sterling, generously given for the propagation of the Gospel among the Indians, and to be under the direction of this Synod.' (Hodge op. cit. p. 461 italics ours.) Baird (op. cit. p. 330) mentions this contribution received from abroad, likely Scotland, but says it was in 1756."

Examination of further detail in Baird's *Acts* on pages 330 to 332 shows that what was kept under the direction of the Synod was some money, not the details of propagation of the Gospel among the Indians. The money was invested with the Trustees of an independent Presbyterian college, and

the interest from it was given each year to such independent boards or individual missionaries as the Synod might choose for the purpose. To fully document this would require quite a bit of space, but evidence for it in Baird is quite complete. Moreover, Baird shows on page 334 that in 1768 the Synod appointed a committee to draw up a plan for a missionary work among the Indians, but that in 1769 this committee reported "That it appeared to them as yet inexpedient to enter on that important work." J. Aspinwall Hodge summarizes the matter by saying, "Nothing, however, was done" (p. 462). Dr. Harris continues:

"Hodge (p. 462) remarks that 'the first Missionary seems to have been Rev. David Brainerd, who labored among the Indians in New Jersey.' Comparison with Baird's Digest indicates that the Missionary referred to may have been David's brother John Brainerd, but in any case this Indian Mission, though supported in part by friends from Scotland, was under the direction of the Synod from 1742 to 1781."

Such statements as Dr. Harris makes here are what might be expected from one who is not working in the particular field. The statement by the Connecticut minister also is that of a man a century later who is working in a different field and has not gone into details of this at all fully. However, the evidence is abundant as to what actually happened.

#### DAVID BRAINERD

Did David Brainerd work as a missionary under the direction of Synod? Did his brother John work under the direction of the Synod? Was this Indian Mission under the direction of the Synod from 1742 to 1781?

Before examining the facts about this, we need a little background, which we shall secure from J. Aspinwall Hodge, who gives sufficient facts on pp. 460-461 to provide a rather vivid picture of the way in which British Presbyterian foreign missions started with independent boards doing the work, while the formation of Assembly-controlled agencies did not come until a much later time. He says:

"The Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge was formed in 1709, and labored chiefly among the American Indians . . . In 1795 the 'London Missionary Society' was formed, its members belonging to four different denominations, and twenty-nine young men were sent to its first mission-field, the islands of the Pacific . . . A 'Scotch Missionary Society' was formed in 1796. But the General Assembly the same year declared the

idea of sending missionaries among the pagans to be folly. This was, however, reversed in 1824, and the Assembly in 1829 sent Dr. Duff, *its first missionary to India.*" (italics mine).

Now let us see what happened in America. The statements above should already show the answer.

The actual situation about the Brainerds is clearly indicated in *Flagellant on Horseback, The Life Story of David Brainerd*, by Richard Ellsworth Day, Philadelphia, 1950. He says on page 89:

"Just at this time, it is proper to detain the narrative, that you may no longer be denied an account of the SSPCK. This missionary society was one of the several organizations instituted by British Christians during early days to evangelize the Colonies. A careful study of the entire matter would make a worthy student thesis. There was, for instance: 'The Society for the Evangelization and Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,' founded in London, 1701; 'The Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England'; and the SSPCK (The Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge) which was launched in the City of Edinburgh, 1709.

"In the year 1740, 'several distinguished ministers of the Colonies petitioned the SSPCK to do something about the deplorable and perishing state of the Indians in the Provinces of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.' Among these 'distinguished ministers' were Ebenezer Pemberton of New York, and Jonathan Dickinson and Aaron Burr of New Jersey.

"The SSPCK promptly responded. 'They made an appropriation for two missionaries and appointed Correspondents to direct and inspect the work.' The Correspondents organized; elected Pemberton secretary, Burr treasurer; and shortly thereafter Azariah Horton was commissioned to labor among the Indians at Montauk on Long Island.

"The Correspondents then began looking about for a second man. Aaron Burr presented the name of David Brainerd; spoke warmly of the young man's obliging humility, deep piety, fine scholarship."

We find the names of Ebenezer Pemberton, Jonathan Dickinson and Aaron Burr listed among the members of the Presbytery of New York at this time. The above statement shows that in these relations with Brainerd they were act-

ing as the representatives of an independent missionary board in Scotland. They also show that Azariah Horton, ordained by the Presbytery as a missionary to the Indians, actually served under the direction of the same independent board.

Day tells on p. 91-2 about the examination of David Brainerd by the representatives of this Society, and their decision to appoint him. Instead of having him start his work in the severe winter season, they sent him to Long Island to confer with Mr. Horton. Day mentions in a footnote that within a year ill health forced Horton to resign.

For the next step we shall quote from another life of Brainerd: Jesse Page, *David Brainerd, The Apostle to the North American Indians*, London, 1891, 3rd edition (references here to reprint edition, Kilmarnock). Page tells us on p. 46 what happened the next spring:

"At the last moment, the instructions from the Society, of which he was now the representative, were not to go to Fort Delaware, but to proceed to a place called Kaunameck, in the province of New York, hidden away among the dense woods between Stockbridge and Albany, and inhabited almost entirely by the Indians."

Speaking of a time about a year later, Page says on p. 52:

"In obedience to orders which reached him from the Society, Brainerd now journeyed to Newark, in New Jersey, where the Presbytery were waiting to ordain him. . . . His old friend, Rev. Mr. Pemberton, gave the ordination charge. . . . The official statement written to the Society in Scotland declares, 'We can, with pleasure, say that Mr. Brainerd passed through his ordination trial to the universal approbation of the Presbytery, and appeared uncommonly qualified for the work of the ministry. . . .'"

Thus it is true to say that David Brainerd was ordained as a missionary to the Indians by the Presbytery of New York. It is, however, untrue to say that he was a missionary under a synod-controlled agency. He worked under the independent society for foreign missions in Scotland, which directed the work through its representatives in New York, some of which representatives were included among the members of the Presbytery of New York.

For further evidence on this point, compare the note in David Brainerd's Diary, edited by Jonathan Edwards, Chicago, Moody Press, 1949, p. 105, which reads:

"These gentlemen who examined Mr. Brainerd, were the correspondents

in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania of the Honorable Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge; to whom was committed the management of their affairs in those parts, and who were now met at New York. J. E."

Compare also footnote on page 163.

What happened after David Brainerd's death is well shown in a pastoral letter of 1760 which is quoted in Baird's *Acts* on page 331:

"1760, p. 299. It is known to many in the bounds of this Synod, that some Ministers, moved with an holy zeal to promote the kingdom of Christ among the Indian tribes, applied to the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and obtained a grant of a certain sum of money yearly, to support two missionaries to to promote the conversion of the savage nations; they employed Mr. David Brainerd, whose praise is in the Churches of Christ, and whose endeavors were blessed with remarkable success in this great work of bringing the Indians to the knowledge of Christ.

"It pleased God soon to remove him from his useful labour on earth to the joys of his heavenly kingdom; as the name of Brainerd was dear to these poor tribes, his brother was chosen to succeed him in the mission, in which station he continued for seven or eight years, but as the prospect of a troublesome war made the mission dangerous and disagreeable, the Commissioners who employed him dismissed him from his care of the Indians, and he was employed to preach the gospel at Newark."

It would be interesting to trace events in the later part of John Brainerd's life, but we must not devote too much space to this point. Enough has been said already to show how far from correct the statement is that, "This Indian mission, though supported in part by friends from Scotland, was under the direction of the Synod from 1742 to 1781." Dr. Harris continues:

#### PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

"Likewise in the field of education. Hodge says (op. cit. p. 431), 'When was the College of New Jersey founded? In 1746 at Elizabethtown by the Synod of New York. . . . It was removed to Princeton in 1757.' Baird does not give details as to the founding of the College but mentions the collections and appeal which Synod urged upon its congregations and on the mother countries."

If one is familiar with the history

of the United States in the 18th century it is easy for him to understand why Baird did not give details of the founding of the College of New Jersey, which later changed its name to Princeton University. It is because Baird is simply telling of the acts of the judicatories of the Presbyterian Church, and the College of New Jersey, to which Harris refers a number of times in succeeding paragraphs as "the official Presbyterian College," was not founded by the Synod but by a group of ministers and laymen acting as an independent society. Evidence for this is abundant. We might cite the article by Professor John De Witt, "The Planting of Princeton College," in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for April, 1897. Or we might quote the *Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Philadelphia, 1884, which states on page 717:

"Thus the Presbyterian College was founded, not by the Presbyterian Church, but simply by four Presbyterian ministers, Jonathan Dickinson, John Pierson, Ebenezer Pemberton and Aaron Burr, who with eight other gentlemen were its trustees."

The Synod took a great interest in this College, sent letters to Europe to urge contributions for it, and received great benefit from it. But it was not a Synod-controlled college. Trinterud, *The Forming of an American Tradition*, Philadelphia, 1949, says on page 125: "The School was founded on a broad liberal arts foundation, and, though it was solidly in control of Presbyterians, it was wholly independent of any Church judicature, and open to students of all denominations on equal terms."

After telling about the little Newark academy, which is described by the Synod as being "under our care," Dr. Harris continues:

"We do not argue that no independent work was done at this early time. In the early days with communications difficult, the mere situation would favor independent action. Perhaps the most notable case of such was the Log College founded by William Tennent, Sr., at Neshaminy, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1727. This school, probably originally founded for Tennent's four famous sons, fulfilled a real need for those early days, graduating numbers of the leading lights of early Presbyterianism from its one room, 20 by 20 feet square! The four Tenents, two Blairs, John Rodgers and Samuel Davis may be mentioned."

The Log College has rightly been called, "the Cradle of American Presbyterianism." Dr. Harris' words indicate

its great influence in American Presbyterianism in the 18th century—an influence which came entirely from an independent college. Dr. Harris is right in waxing eloquent over the glory of its accomplishments. His next two paragraphs, which give the erroneous impression that its successor, Princeton College, was founded as a Synod-controlled agency, need to be corrected in the light of the references given above. Dr. Harris says (p. 13, col. 2):

"The establishment of the official Presbyterian College made possible the enlargement to satisfactory proportions of the educational work of the infant Presbyterian Church. It should be remembered that this College of New Jersey was started to be a training school for Presbyterian ministers."

This is all true, except the phrase, "the official Presbyterian College." The enlargement to satisfactory proportions of the educational work of the infant Presbyterian Church came about, as we have noticed above, not through a Synod-controlled agency, but through an independent agency.

Dr. Harris continues with a paragraph about the Assembly-controlled magazine which began in 1804. Actually this is getting into a period well beyond 1790. It should be noted, moreover, that this was the magazine of a mission committee, rather than actually directed by the Assembly. It lasted only five years, and then was succeeded by an effort which failed almost immediately. Nineteen years later another small monthly magazine was attempted. Baird says of it: "It was sustained for three or four years and then suspended."

Dr. Harris began this portion of his article with the statement that "The facts of history dispute the claim that Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies were 'practically unknown before 1790.'" In the light of the above examination of his specific evidence, surely everyone will agree that my original statement was really extremely conservative. I might safely have said that Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies were "almost non-existent before 1790." Their origin and growth was slow and gradual. They were not normal procedure in early Presbyterianism. This part of the article ends with the words:

"These random facts gleaned after a quick survey of scanty records surely show that in American Presbyterianism from the very beginning assembly controlled projects, agencies, funds, committees, etc., were a perfectly normal and accepted manner of doing the Church's work of missions, education, etc."

## DANGER OF "RANDOM FACTS"

The examination we have made of the "random facts gleaned after a quick survey" should be enough to warn us of the danger of hastily accepting "random facts" in any field, without carefully checking into their accuracy. Dr. Harris is doubly excusable for his errors, in that he was brought up in a day when assembly-controlled agencies had come to be taken for granted, and it was customary to think of David Brainerd as "Synod's missionary" and of Princeton University as "the official Presbyterian college." Thus does folklore come to be accepted as fact, until we take the trouble to examine the evidence and see what the facts really are.

The article continues:

"That the boards and agencies of the Presbyterian Church finally went bad is admitted by all. That the Korean mission had to fight its parent board in this century is true. But this is the century of Modernism. And the Foreign Board, like McCormick Seminary, Union Seminary, and others, just were not doctrinally sound at the turn of the century. . . . But it is not in accord with the facts to say that the new development of Assembly Boards was what gave Modernism its strangle hold and dragged the church prematurely down."

Why is it not in accord with the facts to say that the new development of Assembly Boards was what gave Modernism its strangle hold and dragged the church prematurely down? Which went bad first, the church or the boards? There can be no doubt of the answer. Modernism entered the boards first, and through them it wrecked the church. Shortly before 1900 the General Assembly took measures to keep students from attending the independent Union Seminary, because of its departure from the faith. No such action was taken against Auburn Seminary, or McCormick, or Western, as these seminaries, one by one, turned against the complete dependability of the Bible. Our departure from the church came to pass as a result of our protest against the Modernism of the Board of Foreign Missions, but it is generally recognized that the Boards of National Missions and Christian Education went into Modernism sooner and further than that of Foreign Missions. The Boards went bad first and ruined the church, not the reverse. If the Church had continued to stand on a platform of true Presbyterianism, instead of going into the un-Presbyterian development of Assembly-controlled Boards and Agencies, its councils might have done their proper work of guarding the church against the entrance of false

doctrine. Forsaking its proper function, and devoting its time instead to building up Assembly-controlled Boards and Agencies, the Church in time lost its witness altogether, and proved the truth of the arguments advanced in my article on pp. 9-10 of the first issue of *The Free Press*, where I pointed out that the diversion of Synod's attention to the running of Boards and Agencies greatly cuts down its effectiveness in the areas of work which properly belong to it. If such Agencies are to be at all successful, they find it necessary to develop ecclesiastical machines. Otherwise they will utterly fail, as did the attempts to carry on an Assembly magazine in the years following 1804. They have to develop an ecclesiastical machine to ensure that the Assembly will pay their deficits and elect the right people to their membership. In the end it is they who control the Assembly, rather than the reverse. It was the Boards of the Church which led the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. into apostasy. Machen did not attack the Boards because they were Assembly-controlled, but because they were what they were. What they were was the result of the system of having Assembly-controlled boards and agencies. It is exactly in accord with the facts to say that it was the Boards of the church that gave Modernism its strangle hold and dragged the Church prematurely down.

## THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Further on in this paragraph Dr. Harris refers to the Southern Presbyterian Church. It is a well known fact that the Boards and the educational institutions of the Southern Presbyterian Church are today, and have been for a long time, much more liberal than the rank and file of the church. It is not the Church which is ruining the Boards, but the Boards which are leading the Church into apostasy. Under a system of Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies a situation develops in which eventually the Synod is controlled by its agencies, through the machines which they have been compelled to build up.

As long as Dr. Machen dealt only with doctrine, no charges were brought against him in the church courts. When he began to attack the Boards of the Church, he was put on trial. It was his refusal to obey men rather than God, by giving loyal support to the Boards of the Church, that led to his being expelled from its ministry.

The latter part of Dr. Harris's article makes me fear that I have failed to make clear my real attitude on this matter. I certainly never intended to say that we left the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. on the ground that it had Assembly-controlled agencies, or that

this was the issue on which we attacked it. The issue was Modernism. But it was the development of Assembly-controlled Boards and Agencies which allowed Modernism to gain its strangle hold, first by promoting the development of ecclesiastical machines, which made it easy for the boards, once they went modernistic, to turn the whole Church in that direction, and secondly, because it turned the Assembly away from its proper work, that of guarding the ministry from the entrance of unbelievers. To perform this function, a Synod should keep a watchful eye on all Boards and Agencies with which it cooperates, to make sure that no taint of Modernism escapes detection. It should not allow this vital duty to be complicated by any effort to control their administration. If the Synod will encourage the establishment of free and even competing agencies, and keep a watchful eye on them for soundness of doctrine, both the agencies and the Church will stay sound far longer than under a system of Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies. Dr. Harris continues:

"The first area of our country to fall was Congregational New England. If anything, Modernism entered first through this New England and New York cooperation with Congregational churches and the independent Union Seminary."

Did Congregationalism fall a prey to Modernism more quickly than Presbyterianism did? Actually, Congregationalism was thriving in New England very soon after 1630. Whole towns in England came over en masse to New England, and large and flourishing churches were established all over that region. After nearly two hundred years Congregationalism was still strongly evangelical enough to produce Andover Seminary, which for more than sixty years carried on a world-wide witness to the Gospel that would be hard to surpass anywhere. (See the account in Ernest Gordon, *The Leaven of the Sadducees*, Chicago, 1926.) About 1800 the Congregationalists had lost much of the wealth of the denomination when the Unitarians pulled out, taking with them Harvard University, and most of the large and wealthy churches. But the evangelicals pulled themselves together and continued a solid Christian work for another century, before falling a prey to Modernism. Dr. Harris says that Presbyterianism began on this continent with a very small Presbytery in 1705, and had its first Synod in 1716, and a General Assembly beginning in 1788. Its history in this country is far shorter than that of Congregationalism, and it fell a victim to Modernism only a few years later than Congregationalism.

alism did, after a considerably shorter period of existence as a strong church.

Actually one would expect Presbyterianism to resist the onslaughts of Modernism a great deal longer than Congregationalism did. The pride of Presbyterianism is its system of graded courts, with ministers and elders acting together to guard the pulpits of the denomination from the entrance of apostasy and unbelief. With this great scriptural system of government, why did its pulpits not remain sound and true for double the length of time in which Congregationalism remained evangelical? The answer is obvious. In the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. the courts of the Church forsook their proper function, of guarding the pulpits from the entrance of unbelief, by introducing a new and un-Presbyterian principle of Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies. Taking on a legislative and administrative task for which the church courts are unsuited, they were so hindered in carrying on their true purpose, for which they are suited, that they came themselves to be controlled by the Boards which they claimed to be controlling, and Modernism, coming into their midst, was protected by these Boards and Agencies until it became so dominant that the evangelicals were forced to leave.

We did not leave the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. because it had a system of Assembly-controlled Boards and Agencies. We left it because this system had produced its natural result, and had rendered the church courts powerless to resist the encroachment of Modernism.

In the remaining portion of his article, Dr. Harris very properly stresses many of the great issues which were involved in our departure from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and later from the Presbyterian Church of America. He gives the impression, however, that refusal to submit to the church machine and to support the official Boards and Agencies had nothing to do with these matters. Actually it was the very issue which the modernists brought to the fore, and upon which they expelled our leaders from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. This was made clear in the Mandate and in the various charges brought against the members of the Independent Board. There is no need for me to present detailed evidence on this point, since Dr. McIntire has given abundant documented evidence for it in the second issue of *The Free Press*.

#### DR. BUSWELL'S ARTICLE

Dr. Buswell's article is more than three times as long as that of Dr. Harris. It

deals with a wide variety of subjects. A number of its points overlap matters already discussed in connection with Dr. Harris's article. It will be necessary, for both of these reasons, to deal with it somewhat more briefly than I did with the former, and to quote less extensively from it. Since the article appeared soon after the appearance of the first issue of *The Free Press*, which was entirely written by me, all references in it to material put forward by the Committee for True Presbyterianism refer, of course, to what I have written.

I have had long and happy association with Dr. Buswell. He had me as Baccalaureate speaker at Shelton College a year ago, and had Dr. Carl McIntire as Commencement speaker. When I spoke he lavished upon me words of praise for my scholarship, and for my clear logic. When Dr. McIntire spoke, Dr. Buswell lauded him to the skies for his brilliant leadership, and for his great devotion to the cause of Christ. The memory of these events is in strange contrast to the expressions which I find in this article. In fact, it is hard for me to reconcile the article with the Dr. Buswell whom I have known for so many years. Dr. Buswell has always been most enthusiastic about my logic, about my accuracy, and about my loyalty to facts. While we have sometimes differed on particular points, he has always spoken in the finest terms of my sincerity, and of my clear thinking. In view of these experiences in the past, it was quite a shock to me to read what he said about my article.

The very first sentence of Dr. Buswell's answer brands my whole statement as "unfortunately erroneous." Twice I am told that my ideas are "quite erroneous." My definitions of terms are "quite incorrect." Twice it is stated that my ideas on one page contradict those on another (I hope some readers will take the trouble to read the two passages indicated, and see how baseless this assertion really is). On p. 5 he says: "Yet it is quite amazing that the author of these articles has construed the word ministerial in a sense totally contrary to its historical meaning in this context." My use of terms is said to be "an extreme example of naivete" (p. 6), and the next paragraph introduces another alleged error of definition on my part with the words, "The naive attitude . . . is further illustrated in the statement . . ." On the same page I am assured that my ideas are "completely contrary to fact." The next page asserts that my exegesis can be seen to "fly directly in the face of all the facts set forth in the Scriptural record." On page 8 I am accused of "unconscionable distortion of the facts," a most violent charge indeed. On page 9 I

am told that "The main difficulty here is that you have forgotten the meaning of republican government in a great democracy," and my words are said to be "exactly what I heard Hitler say over the radio." The "open letter" reaches a crescendo in its concluding statements:

"I sometimes blush for shame at the leadership which sponsors erroneous opinions in place of historical facts, and appeals for personal sympathy. I am irresistibly reminded of Paul's warning (Acts 20) of leaders who would speak distorted things in order to draw away followers after themselves. . . . Let us remind ourselves of the law (Exodus 21) about the ox that was 'wont to push with his horn.'"

If one-third of the things said about my scholarship, my knowledge of history, my sincerity, or my honesty in this article are true, I ought to have been fired from my position as a teacher of young ministers long ago. I never heard Dr. Buswell say anything at all like this about me before. His words are especially strange as coming from one who has been known for his insistence that charges against a person must only be made before a body competent to call witnesses, examine facts, and fairly determine their truth. The article is so unlike the man whom I have known and loved that the only interpretation I can give is that he is overtired and overwrought. I would like to let the attack pass in silence, and thought at first that I would do so, but I have been told that it has been influential, and that some are taking its aspersions upon my intelligence and honesty at their face value. Consequently, it is necessary that I defend myself, much as I hate to do so.

Time and space do not allow the full discussion of everything in this long article. I shall begin an examination of Dr. Buswell's statements that my definitions are incorrect. The first of these is comparatively minor. Dr. Buswell says on p. 4, col. 2:

"Independency corresponds to extreme democracy. It is quite incorrect to say, 'strict independency means that every man is a law unto himself.' (*The Free Press*, page 1, col. 1). The word independency has a well established usage in church history and it is not legitimate to give it another usage when the subject under discussion is church government. Under independency the power in the church belongs to the people in the local congregation. There is no appeal from a decision of a local congregation to any presbytery or synod or higher church court of any kind."

This impresses me as the merest of quibbling. I did not say, "the type of

church government often called Independence means that every man is a law unto himself." I spoke of a tendency, the extreme opposite of prelacy. The word "strict" used before "independency" should have been enough to indicate this to most readers. The next instance is on p. 5, col. 2, where Dr. Buswell says:

"The *Free Press* quite erroneously says, 'Prelacy is that system in which a group of clergy dictate the policies and activities of the church.' (Page 1, col. 1). No recognized authority on historical ecclesiastical terminology could support such a definition. The word prelate comes from the past participle of the Latin verb *praeferre*, *praelatus*. A prelate is 'preferred' above others; that is to say, he claims apostolic authority and has the office of a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, or some officer supposed to be superior to the rest of the clergy. Prelacy in church government is defined by Webster's *Unabridged Dictionary* as 'chiefly a hostile term for episcopacy.' Prelacy is exactly the opposite of the Presbyterian doctrine of the 'parity' (equality) of the clergy."

Dr. Buswell quotes Webster's *Unabridged Dictionary* as defining prelacy in church government as "chiefly a hostile term for episcopacy." Now what does episcopacy mean? Is it not the system in which a group of clergymen called bishops, etc., dictate the policies and activities of the church?

Dr. Buswell says no recognized authority would support such a definition as I have given. The fact is that it is hard to find definitions of the word prelacy when used to describe a type of church government, since no group accepts the term as a designation of its own system. As Webster says, it is chiefly a hostile term, used by those who opposed episcopacy. Now why did people oppose episcopacy? Was it simply from a disinclination to see one or more clergymen elevated above other clergymen, as Dr. Buswell seems to think, or was it because the bishops claimed power to dictate the policies and activities of the church? There can be no doubt that the latter is the case.

Surely Dr. Buswell will admit the right of M'Clintock and Strong, *Theological and Ecclesiastical Cyclopedia* to be considered as a recognized authority. Its article on Prelacy (Vol. VIII, p. 506 ff.) does not give a definition, but would seem clearly to support the statement of mine which has been attacked. In the course of the article it says:

"Prelacy also gained great power from the church by controlling the election of the clergy. The sovereign rights of the people in their free elec-

tive franchise began at an early period to be invaded. The final result of these changes was a total disfranchisement of the laity and the substitution of an ecclesiastical despotism... Above all, the doctrine of the divine right of the priesthood aimed a fatal blow at the liberties of the people."

Presbyterians have always opposed all doctrines of any divine right of the priesthood. They have believed in the universal priesthood of believers. They have believed that the power in the church belongs to the people, who exercise it through their representatives. Their strong and constant opposition to prelacy has flowed, not simply from the claim of a prelatical group to be "superior to the rest of the clergy," but from its claim to be lifted up over the members of the church, and entitled to dictate its policies and activities.

#### DOES MINISTERIAL MEAN ADMINISTRATIVE?

The next criticism (p. 5, col. 2), is worded even more strongly. It reads:

"True, the constitution of our church, which in this respect is identical with the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. since 1788, is quoted as follows: 'That all church power, whether exercised by the body in general, or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative...' (the *Free Press*, page 2, col. 1, quoted from our 'Form of Government,' chapter 1, paragraph 7). Yet it is quite amazing that the author of these articles has construed the word ministerial in a sense totally contrary to its historical meaning in this context. The word ministerial means administrative, and nothing else, in such a setting. The *Oxford Dictionary*, our greatest authority on the usage of English words, defines ministerial as follows: '1. Pertaining to, or entrusted with, the execution of the law, or of the commands of a superior; pertaining to, or possessing delegated executive authority.' To say that synod's functions are ministerial, but not administrative is an extreme example of naivete."

The word ministerial, in its most natural interpretation, would certainly mean, that which pertains to, or is characteristic of, a minister. The *Oxford Dictionary*, from which Dr. Buswell has quoted the first definition under ministerial, gives another definition of the word, as follows: "3. Pertaining to the office, function, or character of a minister of religion." The primary function of a minister is to preach the Word of God. When our Form of Government says that all church power is ministerial

and declarative, surely the most natural interpretation is to take the two words as synonyms. The minister declares the Word of God. The Council declares its opinion as to what the Word of God means. That is what was done by the Council at Jerusalem, as described in Acts 15. That is what this passage in its most natural interpretation certainly means.

Ask any thousand educated people, who have not read Dr. Buswell's article, to define ministerial. If one of them were to say, "It means administrative," I would be tremendously surprised. Yet I am called naive not to know that it "means administrative, and nothing else, in such a setting." Mark 10:45 says: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Does this mean that He came to be an administrator? Acts 13:5 tells us that Barnabas and Saul had John Mark for "their minister." Does this mean that Mark was their administrator? I really question whether ministerial ever means administrative. Dr. Buswell quotes the first definition from the *Oxford Dictionary*, but quite misinterprets its emphasis. The *Oxford Dictionary* definitely does not say that it means administrative. I wish he had gone on to quote the very next statement of this great dictionary:

"Ministerial act: an act which is a necessary part of a person's official duty, or which is required by law in a given state of circumstances, so that the agent is exempt from responsibility for its propriety or consequences."

Thus we see that ministerial, in the definition quoted by Dr. Buswell from the *Oxford Dictionary*, does not describe one with the discretion and authority of an administrator. Quite the contrary. Its emphasis is on the subordinate character of the activity. It is one in which a man has no discretion, but merely does what he is told. Ministerial means, in this context, simply carrying out or explaining what is clearly set forth in God's Word. It is far from meaning administrative.

If Dr. Buswell should desire to make an argument for a new interpretation of the word in this setting, that is his right. But to call my ignorance of his new interpretation "an extreme example of naivete" is hardly cricket. Even if he should succeed in proving his ideas to be correct, of which I greatly doubt the possibility, such language would still be quite untrue and improper.

#### SOCIALISM

Dr. Buswell again disputes one of my definitions on p. 9, col. 2, alleging that my analogy to socialism is incorrect. In the early part of this rejoinder I pointed

out how exact the analogy is (see p. 1, col. 3). Dr. Buswell says:

"The very essence of socialism is the theory that *human society* shall control economic activity. Neither a Presbyterian church nor an independent agency for home missions is human society. Both are free voluntary associations."

Let us examine this for a minute. Dr. Buswell seems to put a Presbyterian church and an independent agency in exactly the same category. Any student of Presbyterian church government must shudder at such a statement. A church, in the religious sphere, is exactly like a community, in the general political sphere. One joins the church through credible evidence of having been born into God's kingdom through simple faith. He attends its services, receives its sacraments, may even be elected one of its officers. To say that this is the same as an independent mission board is quite confusing. The church is "human society" in the religious sphere. The democratic theory is that the whole society protects its members from the entrance of false doctrine, and acts as an impartial arbiter to make it easier for its members to carry on their activities without interfering with each other's rights, but makes no effort to control or direct those activities. According to this truly Presbyterian and democratic view the body as a whole undertakes only such activities as can be done far better by it than by any voluntary association. According to the socialistic view, the body as a whole undertakes to encroach more and more on the activities of its members, doing more and more for them, and reducing them more and more to the position of its underlings. The analogy to socialism is *exact, and it is quibbling to deny it.*

Next we shall examine another case where a definition is involved. On p. 7, col. 2, we find Dr. Buswell, who has so vociferously accused me of ignorance of the meaning of words, making a strange slip in this regard. It is so marked that I cannot imagine how he came to do it, except that he had become overtired and overwrought, and allowed his emotions to build up to such a point that his mind became confused. He says:

"The statement in the '*Free Press*' (page 4, col. 1) to the effect that, 'The immediate occasion which led to the founding of the Bible Presbyterian Church was the various attacks which were made against the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions,' is quite erroneous. The occasion was the gross modernism in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. from which we came out."

How anyone could make such a statement as this is quite beyond my comprehension. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines occasion as:

"3.b. Something that contributes to produce an effect, by providing the opportunity for the efficient cause to operate; a subsidiary or incidental cause. Distinguished from *cause*—'efficient cause.' . . . DeQuincey: 'Such were the causes, but the immediate occasion of his departure . . . was the favorable opportunity of emigrating in a pleasant way.'"

To say that the immediate occasion which led to our leaving the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. was "its gross modernism" would be utter nonsense. If words are used in the sense in which they have always been used, my statement was the exact truth. So long as we merely attacked modernism in the abstract, no church courts instituted proceedings against us. Dr. Buswell was not expelled from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. because he had attacked modernism. The leaders of that church even denied that modernism entered into the matter at all. It was his membership in the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions that was the basis of all the charges against Dr. Buswell and the others. My statement about "the immediate occasion" was the simple and exact truth. Modernism was the cause, but certainly not "the immediate occasion."

#### DOES THE POWER IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BELONG TO THE PEOPLE?

A very important point is raised by Dr. Buswell on p. 4-5 (beginning near end of p. 4), where he says:

"It is quite incorrect to say that 'Presbyterians have always insisted that the power in the church belongs to the people.' (The *Free Press*, page 1, col. 1). It is true that our Bible Presbyterian constitution has very wisely enunciated a new declaration of residual powers. 'All powers not in this Constitution specifically granted to the courts of the Church are reserved to the congregations respectively, or to the people.' (Form of Government, chap. 1, para. 9). This statement had never occurred in the constitution of any Presbyterian body prior to the organization of the Bible Presbyterian Church. It should be regarded as a new step forward in the clarification of Presbyterian doctrine. Most emphatically this statement does not tell us that 'the power in the church belongs to the people.' The '*Free Press*' is correct when it says

that the word Presbyterian means 'rule by elders.' It is incorrect when it contradicts this statement."

I am unable to see how I can be accused of making two contradictory statements in saying that the word Presbyterian means "rule by elders," and in saying that "the power in the church belongs to the people." Why should not the people, to whom the power belongs, exercise it through elders whom they have elected. That is exactly the principle of representative democracy. We elect men to represent us in Congress, but the power belongs to us, and is only exercised by them as our representatives. Under a monarchical or an oligarchical system, a king, or a particular class, think of themselves as inherently superior to us and entitled to rule over us, whether we desire it or not. In a democracy the representatives work out many matters in accordance with their own best judgment, and their constituency judges them by the results. But the people are always entitled to be consulted on major issues, and have the right to withdraw the power they have lent, or to choose to exercise it through other representatives. In this regard historic Presbyterianism is exactly analogous to representative democracy. The power belongs to the people. Most writers on Presbyterianism either express this, or at least imply it. Dr. Buswell speaks of Charles Hodge as "our greatest authority on Presbyterian Church polity." A. A. Hodge, in his *Commentary on the Confession of Faith*, p. 500, quotes his father, Charles Hodge, as follows:

"The powers, therefore, exercised by our ruling elders are powers which belong to the lay members of the Church." "They are chosen by them to act in their name in the government of the Church. A representative is one chosen by others to do in their name what they are entitled to do in their own persons; or rather to exercise the powers which radically inhere in those for whom they act. The members of a State Legislature or of Congress, for example, can exercise only those powers which are inherent in the people."

In the passage just quoted from Dr. Buswell, he said that the new statement in the Bible Presbyterian Form of Government "should be regarded as a step forward in the clarification of Presbyterian doctrine." This very statement, however, says that powers not specifically granted are reserved to the people. You can't possibly grant something you do not already have. You can't reserve something you do not already have. Dr. Buswell says that this statement "very wisely enunciated a new declaration of residual powers." A residual power is

one that remains, after something has been granted. How can it remain, if it is not already there? It impresses me as rather nonsensical to say, "Most emphatically this statement does not tell us that 'the power in the church belongs to the people.'" If it did not belong there it could not be granted to representatives, nor could any of it be reserved.

Elsewhere in this same article, Dr. Buswell himself contradicts his implication that the Presbyterian Church is an oligarchy (rule by a few) instead of a democracy. He says on p. 10, col. 1: "On the other hand if the people of the Bible Presbyterian Church become dissatisfied with an agency or their Synod, they have power through their elders, and their ministers have power, to elect other individuals to their boards of control." Since he says here so strongly that the power belongs to the people, why does he criticize me for saying the same thing?

All this is very unlike Dr. Buswell. He has always stood for democracy and for true Presbyterianism. Yet he is giving support to those who would establish an authoritarian control, far removed from historic Presbyterianism, by this unfortunate criticism of my correct statement that "Presbyterians have always insisted that the power in the church belongs to the people."

#### THINLY VEILED INSINUATIONS AND PERSONAL ATTACKS

Under the heading, "Dangers of Independence," Dr. Buswell devotes almost six full columns to matters which seem to have little or no connection with the problem under consideration. Thus he says on p. 10:

"There is, however, a turn to this saying which seems to me quite sinister. This turn is quite similar to the doctrines of prelacy. True, none of our Bible Presbyterian men would profess to believe in the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, but nevertheless, in the case of the great Dr. Machen, there was a tendency on the part of his followers to regard him as a prelate (preferred) and to regard any disagreement with him of any kind whatsoever as a personal attack upon a God-given leader, and thus an attack upon the cause itself.

"At the last, I had some very sad experiences with Dr. Machen which I should never publicize except that I believe we have a lesson to learn from them. A young man by the name of Carl McIntire had shown remarkable ability and initiative. He had succeeded in popularizing a paper which ably handled the important issues which confronted us all. By letter and

by personal conference I vigorously defended the right of Carl McIntire to publish his own paper in his own way. Finally Dr. Machen said to me, 'I had thought that it would be possible for you and me to belong to the same church, but now I see that it is impossible.' And he invited me to leave the Church!

"Of course I did not leave the church, and of course I bore no resentment, recognizing the greatness of the man, who did, nevertheless, in a way take the attitude of a prelate, one preferred above the rest of the clergy."

This attack on the memory of Dr. Machen seems hardly called for, nearly twenty years after his death. Dr. Machen was a very great man. Nearly every great man has the experience of finding some of his followers taking toward him the attitude of near-idolatry that Dr. Buswell describes. It is an unfortunate defect in fallen human nature that this is so. An even worse defect, however, and one that I have frequently observed, is the tendency, when one discovers that a man whom he has idolized is after all only human, and has faults, some of which may even be rather bad, not simply to depart from the attitude of idolizing him, but to substitute for it a far more unreasonable attitude of hatred and detestation. This is a snare into which I have seen a number of good men fall.

Let us not idolize anyone. Both Dr. Machen and Dr. McIntire have been proven in my experience to be, like Elijah, "men of like passions with ourselves." Yet God has used both of them in remarkable ways. When God gives us a great leader, let us follow him in everything that he does which is good. When he makes a mistake, even if it be a bad one, let us pray for him, but let us not talk and act in such a way as to give aid and comfort to the enemies of the cause of Christ.

After these criticisms of Dr. Machen, Dr. Buswell proceeds to say that there are men in the Bible Presbyterian Church who are almost as bad. In paragraph after paragraph he tells of events which he says have occurred, giving no names, but making a number of specific statements, and condemning unnamed individuals in the strongest manner.

It is hard for me to believe that a man of Dr. Buswell's stature would engage in this sort of thing. Anonymous letters are bad. Surely anonymous charges are even worse. Of course, every reader will try to guess who is intended, and may sometimes guess quite wrongly. Thus people come to be suspected of actions of which no one has ever accused them. Moreover, the veiled hints and

slams can easily be magnified in people's minds to something far beyond what the writer intended. If it is wrong publicly to criticize another man's motives or attitudes without first submitting the material to a judicial body which can examine the facts and judge truly, surely this sort of irresponsible writing is even worse. Again I can only say, This is so unlike the Dr. Buswell whom I have so loved and admired that I can only judge that he is overtired and overwrought and not himself. May God speedily bring him out of this frame of mind, and restore him to his normal attitude.

One paragraph on p. 11 needs to be quoted to bring out a vital point:

"In 1953-54, a missionary under the Independent Board circulated letters critical of a leader in our church and in the Independent Board. That missionary has recently resigned. In this instance I believe I am familiar with all the relevant facts. I believe that the missionary's business relationships with the Board and its leaders were of such a nature that his voluntary resignation was inevitable. However, the Independent Board is, unfortunately, being regarded by many as having been dominated by prelacy. In this case I know that the charge is not true. My point is that the charge would have no influence whatever if there were not other examples of prelatical retaliation."

It is a strange circumstance, that, there might perhaps be more members of the St. Louis Synod who would think that this was a case where wrong had been done than in any other of the matters to which Dr. Buswell refers. Yet Dr. Buswell, who claims to know all the relevant facts about this particular case, asserts positively: "In this case I know that the charge is not true." He says that in this case the charge would have no influence whatever if it were not for the other cases. Is it not at least possible that those who know the true facts in each of the other cases might say that the charge is not true in them, as positively as Dr. Buswell does in this case? Once a person takes an antagonistic attitude toward someone else, he can believe the worst of him in everything. Satan is anxious to divide us up and destroy us individually. Why can't we forget these unproved assertions and put our emphasis on the work of the Lord?

#### AMERICAN COUNCIL

I must take time to refer briefly to one other statement in this rather irrelevant section of the discussion of my articles. Dr. Buswell says on p. 12:

"Similar to this is the claim that the officers of the American Council have a right to 'commit' the Council in matters in which neither the Council nor the Executive Committee has taken action. Certainly any individual has a right to express his opinion and has a right to say that he believes that he represents the opinions of certain groups, but to 'commit' an organization to a position on which it has actually taken no stand is the taking of a 'preferred' position intolerable to those who believe in the equality of the clergy."

Granted the premises that Dr. Buswell gives, his conclusions are undeniable. But where is the evidence that anyone has ever claimed that the officers of the American Council have a right to commit the Council in matters in which neither the Council nor the Executive Committee has taken action? As far as I know the only pertinent evidence consists in the fact that Article VI, Section 2, of the Constitution of the American Council says:

"Sec. 2. No officer of the American Council of Christian Churches shall commit the Council on any matter except under the instruction of the Council or its Executive Committee, or as he possesses evidence of the Council's position."

This provision does not give any officer a right actually to commit the Council. It forbids it. It merely allows officers to take action when particular events occur which are so clearly against the policy of the American Council that it is altogether right and proper that a strong protest should immediately be made. In any case of doubt, the members of the Executive Committee would, of course, be consulted before anything was done. Otherwise the officers would be breaking this provision of the Constitution, which forbids them to commit the Council except as they have evidence of its position. Dr. Buswell's statement gives an unfortunate impression that is really quite unwarranted.

I wish Dr. Buswell had not written these last six columns at all. Why can't we go forward to serve the Lord and to lead souls into His Kingdom without frittering away our strength in fighting other Christians?

#### A DRASTIC CHANGE

Dr. Buswell devotes considerable space to denial of the statements in my article on "The Crucial Importance of the Eighteenth General Synod." In that article I pointed out that "the actions of the Synod embarked the Bible Presbyterian Church in a new direction, and in-

creased by 300 per cent the spheres of activity to be conducted by synod-controlled agencies" (p. 5, col. 2). The establishment of a Committee on Christian Education, with a full-time paid Secretary, the establishment of an official synod magazine, and the action providing that a committee be authorized, as soon as it secures agreement of two-thirds of the presbyteries, to set up an official synod-controlled college, represent a drastic change in the character of our church. It would be only a slight further step, which could easily be taken at the next synod or the following one, to withdraw approval from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions and from Faith Theological Seminary, and to set up synod-controlled agencies in both of these areas. Once this is done the church will be in a position paralleling that which the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. reached after a gradual development of a century and a half. "A course has been begun which, if continued, must inevitably mean a complete change in the nature of our church" (p. 5, col. 3).

It is quite surprising to see how Dr. Buswell has reacted to this simple presentation of the actions of the Eighteenth General Synod. On p. 8 he says: "I for one cannot keep silence in the light of this unconscionable distortion of the facts." After this blast he proceeds to give a most amazing argument, which he concludes with the words: "The fact is that the consolidation of these agencies has *materially reduced* the number of agencies under the control of the Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church."

The nature of the argument may be easily shown by an analogy. Suppose that a man were to complain that his next door neighbor, who had previously kept one cow, had now purchased three additional ones, and that this residential district was consequently well on the way to becoming a farm area, only to be told that, after all, the man's livestock had been decreased instead of increased, since he had already had a dozen canaries in his living room, and four of the canaries had been disposed of when the cows were purchased!

Let us look at the facts. Dr. Buswell asserts that there were fourteen agencies already established and functioning before the action of the last Synod.

One of the agencies he lists is the Committee on National Missions. This is a Synod-controlled Board or Agency in the proper sense. It has ministers working under its supervision. It has full-time paid employees. Its budget has in the past been several times as great as that of all the other thirteen agencies

he lists, added together. It is the type of agency about which we are talking. Three new agencies of this type were established by the last Synod.

No one of the other thirteen that he lists is in this category at all. First, he names the Trustees of Synod. It has no employees, and, so far as I know, has never had a meeting or done anything. Once or twice I have been elected to it for a year, but have never even been notified that a meeting was under consideration. It has been merely a name, and nothing else.

The second that he lists is the Committee on Chaplains. The function of this committee is simply to certify to the ministerial standing of such of our ministers as apply to the Armed Forces for employment as chaplains, and to maintain liaison with them after they are appointed. This committee has no full-time employees. It does not assign anyone to any position or dictate where he shall perform his service. It has no control over the activities of our chaplains. To compare such a committee to a Synod-controlled Board is strange logic indeed.

The third committee listed is the Committee on Children's Work. This has been a committee which endorsed the work of the independent agency, Children for Christ. It consisted of a few members of Synod who discussed the general problem of children's work, and talked of ways of making the work of the various churches more effective in this sphere. Like practically all the other agencies listed, it is as far as possible removed from a Synod-controlled Board or Agency in the sense in which we have been using the term.

Another agency that he lists is the Committee on Visitation and Accreditation. The function of this committee is to examine the various voluntary agencies which appeal to our people for support, in order to determine whether their doctrine is such as to make them worthy of confidence. This is directly in line with the true work of the Synod, that of protecting its members from the inroads of unbelief and apostasy. Sometimes the committee has gone outside its proper sphere, and made inquiries about details of administration of such agencies. On more than one occasion the committee has recommended that it should itself be disbanded. I have always opined such a recommendation, feeling that Synod's proper function involves constant watchfulness for any channel through which modernism or apostasy might enter our church.

Dr. Buswell also lists the Finance Committee. This committee simply

handles the funds to pay the expenses of holding the synod meeting. To list it in the same category with a Board of National Missions approaches the ridiculous. To suggest that my opposition to Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies means that I would be opposed to a Finance Committee to handle necessary expenses of the Synod meeting is fantastic.

Another such agency that Dr. Buswell lists is the Judicial Commission. As evidence that it belongs here he states that it "has resolved a number of administrative cases." If a court handles the type of case technically described as an "administrative case," does it thereby cease to be a judicial body and become an administrative agency? It is not its function to carry on missionary or educational work, but to assist the synod in its proper function of acting as the impartial umpire in connection with the activities of its members. Most of its cases, if not all, deal with problems in connection with the oversight of the pulpits and the protection of the churches from injury through irregularities. It is very strange that Dr. Buswell should have listed it here.

The analogy of the three new cows and the dozen canaries is exact. It is surprising that Dr. Buswell should have made such an argument. I have known and admired him for years, and refuse to believe that he deliberately misrepresented the situation. I am unwilling to say that he has unconscionably distorted the facts. I have too much confidence in his Christian character even to think of such a thing. Consequently I am compelled to conclude that the reason for his statement is that he did not read my *Free Press* articles carefully, and consequently received an entirely false idea of the nature of my arguments.

His frequent use of the term "administrative" in this section of his article would fit with this interpretation. On pages 5-6 of his article, Dr. Buswell spent two columns erecting and destroying the straw man that "the synods of the church have no administrative powers." As we see below (in our discussion of his third argument), I never made such a statement. Nevertheless, I believe that he sincerely thought I had done so. I shall pray that he and the others who have reacted against the presentation in the first issue of *The Free Press* may go back to it again, read it through calmly and carefully, see what I really did say, and come to recognize the truth of my statements and arguments. Our church stands at a crossroads. Let us pray that it will decide to follow in the path of God's appointing.

## THE STATE OF THE ARGUMENT

Having examined these various criticisms of my statements, it is proper to ask the question, Where are we? After the two articles have been examined, what remains of the position that I took in my articles in the first issue of *The Free Press*?

I hope that by this time it is clear to everyone what that position is. True Presbyterianism involves a system of graded courts, which protect the members of the denomination from the entrance of false doctrine, and guard the entrance to the sacred ministry. These courts should perform their proper Presbyterian function, but should not attempt to issue commands to the people, to order the details of their missionary or educational work, or to set up Boards and Agencies. In support of this position I pointed out that in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. the development of assembly-controlled Boards and Agencies resulted in the development of an ecclesiastical machine which gave Modernism a strangle-hold on the church, and directly led to its becoming necessary for us to separate from it. Both of the articles written in criticism of mine discussed this point at some length, but I do not believe that either of them disproved it.

My second argument was that this development is a definite step in the direction of prelacy. Dr. Buswell's answer was to question my definition of prelacy, and to say that it is not prelacy if a group of clergy dictate the policies and activities of the church, but only if some members of the clergy assume a position superior to that of others. If a group of one hundred clergymen assume to make drastic sweeping changes in the policies and activities which condition the religious life of eight thousand people, it impresses me as a large step in the direction of prelacy. Some improvement in this situation might be secured by providing a fairer ratio of representation of the people of the church, and by making some change in synod arrangements so as to ensure a much larger representation of elders than the thirty who registered at this last meeting. Real improvement, however, requires that the Synod confine itself to the ministerial and declarative functions for which it is fitted, instead of attempting to perform functions for which it is by its make-up quite unsuited.

My third argument was that this development is contrary to original Presbyterianism, being practically unknown before 1790, and without any real warrant in the Westminster Confession or Form of Government, or in the original

Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

This has been more attacked than any other of my arguments. Dr. Harris attempted to show that Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies represent a development which was common before 1790. We have examined the evidences he gave, and found them mostly to be founded on incorrect generalizations of a century later, or on unproved assumptions which altogether disappear as soon as the evidence is really examined.

Dr. Buswell took up the statements in the Form of Government, and built an argument on the assertion that "ministerial" can only mean "administrative" in such a context. We examined this assertion, and found it incorrect.

## NOT A LEGISLATURE

It should be noticed how thoroughly Dr. Buswell supported my statement that Synod is not a legislative body. It is vital that we notice a few of his remarks on this point. On p. 3, col. 1-2, he says:

"The functions of church synods are . . . not legislative. . . . Presbyterians have historically held . . . that the office of the apostles ceased in the church when the New Testament was completed, and that no church officer or church body in all the world has any authority to add to the Word of God by passing legislation in any way binding upon church members. . . . I can assure our good friends in the 'Committee for True Presbyterianism' that it is agreed that the synod is 'not a legislature.' (*The Free Press*, page 7, col. 2). 'Our synods and councils have no power to make laws.' (*Ibid.*)"

By means of these strong statements Dr. Buswell takes a position solidly against those who think that the Synod has power to legislate for the church. It is strange that he does not realize that setting up a Synod-controlled Board for missions or education is a legislative act. If the Synod has no power to legislate, it is hard to imagine where it could derive power to set up such agencies.

Dr. Buswell seems to take the view that the Synod is an administrative body, though not a legislature, and that it is therefore entitled to set up and control such Boards and Agencies. On pp. 6-8 of the first issue of *The Free Press* I showed that the make-up of the Synod is quite unsuited to perform the functions of either a legislature or an administrative body, though well-suited to perform the function for which it was established, that of a learned body acting as a court. The reason it is not fitted to act as a legislature is that it is

not a truly representative body. The reason it is not fitted to undertake administration of Boards and Agencies is that it is large and unwieldy, and meets only for a few days each year. No one has made any attempt, so far as I know, to answer either of these points. However, Dr. Buswell spends considerable space trying to prove that the Synod is an administrative body (p. 5-7). His arguments may be summarized as follows: 1. He avers that I have misunderstood the word "ministerial." This I have considered above. 2. He says that the Synod has power to handle administrative cases. It is a new type of logic that says that a court, by hearing administrative cases, becomes an administrative body itself. 3. He says that the Westminster Confession of Faith states that the work of gathering and perfecting the saints in this life is committed "unto this catholic, visible church." Just how this proves that the Synod is a body suited to administer boards and agencies is not explained. 4. He erects a straw man, claiming that I have taken an extreme position, and then proceeding to knock it down. Thus he says on p. 5, col. 2:

#### THE STRAW MAN

"The 'Free Press' repeatedly makes the statement that synods are not properly administrative bodies and have no administrative powers (page 1, col. 3 and throughout the ten pages of material)."

Again, he says on p. 6, col. 2:

"These evidences make it abundantly clear that the statement that the synods of the church have no administrative powers is completely contrary to fact."

I was quite amazed when I read these sentences. Of course, such a statement would be contrary to fact. I went through *The Free Press* carefully, to see what queer slip I might have made, but did not find any such statement. At the very place referred to by Dr. Buswell (p. 1, col. 3), I found instead the following words:

"Presbyteries and synods have uniformly been designated as 'courts' or 'judicatories,' never as legislative assemblies or administrative bodies. Such legislative or administrative powers as they have assumed have historically been restricted to matters dealing with the safeguarding of the ministry from the entrance or continuance of unworthy or unbelieving members."

On page 2, speaking of the seventh provision in the first chapter of our Form of Government, which is almost identi-

cal with the similar provision that has been in the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. since 1788, I said:

"It is to be noticed that this speaks of any claim of making laws beyond what is already taught in the Word of God as a usurped claim, and limits the work of synods and councils to judging cases on the basis of laws already found in God's Word and 'common to all who profess the gospel.' In other words, it makes it clear that the power of synods and councils over the members is a judicial power, not a legislative or an administrative one, and that legislative or administrative actions can properly be exercised by these bodies only for the purpose of safeguarding the preaching from the entrance of unbelief."

How far these quotations are from the alleged position "that the synods of the church have no administrative powers," I leave it to the reader to judge.

All this arguing over words is interesting, but the fact remains that the Synod is by its make-up definitely unsuited to the work of administering Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies. I wish that it were possible to reprint the three pages which were devoted to this in the first issue of *The Free Press*. To my knowledge no attempt has been made to answer the arguments contained in them.

#### WHAT ABOUT THE BIBLE?

My fourth argument was that the Bible nowhere commands such agencies, nor does it give evidence of the existence of similar procedures in apostolic times.

No attempt has been made to show any scriptural command upon which the establishment of such agencies could properly be based. The only way that such a thing could be done would be to insist, as some do (though probably none in our church) that the Great Commission is addressed only to the church in its organized capacity, and that it is wrong for anyone to carry on evangelistic or missionary work, except under the direct control and oversight of an ecclesiastical body. It is hardly conceivable that this is what Dr. Buswell had in mind when he said at the end of p. 6:

"Christ committed the missionary program for this age to the visible church at the Galilee mountain Synod."

As to the absence of similar procedures in apostolic times, Dr. Buswell presents an argument on pp. 6-7. Most of the material in it is already fully discussed and answered in the first issue of *The Free Press* on pp. 3-4, but three rather tenuous additional arguments are

presented. The first of these reads as follows:

"Certainly we believe that all Christians scattered abroad everywhere should always preach the Word wherever they go, but to deny that the action of the apostles at Jerusalem and of Peter and John in Samaria (Acts 8) was in the nature of missionary administration is to fly directly in the face of all the facts set forth in the Scriptural record."

Exactly what are the facts in Acts 8? There is no evidence there or elsewhere of action by any council in Jerusalem sending Philip to Samaria on missionary work, or directing any other missionaries as to where they should go and how they should work. After the missionary work was well under way, the apostles sent Peter and John to look into the new church and to determine whether it was worthy of reception. Their work was directly in line with the true work of a graded court, and very different from that of a mission board. If, however, it were to be demonstrated that Peter and John and the other apostles did perform work of the nature of missionary administration, this would prove nothing whatever about the activity of a church court, for Dr. Buswell would be the very first to assure us that the apostles had special functions and powers which were not passed on to any successors.

The next paragraph deals with Paul's address to the Ephesian elders, pointing out that Paul called on these elders to protect the people of God from injury. This is exactly in line with the proper work of a church court. There is nothing whatever in Paul's speech that would give the slightest warrant for erection of a Synod-controlled Board or Agency for carrying on missionary or educational work.

The final paragraph of this section states that Paul declared the church to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." Again we wonder what this has to do with the question of Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies.

Thus we see how unassailable is the position that I took in the first issue of *The Free Press* that the Bible nowhere commands the establishment of anything comparable to Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies, nor does it give evidence of similar procedures in apostolic times.

This, of course, would not prove that such organizations are wrong or unscriptural. I have never suggested such a position. I merely tried to rebut the attitude of those who say that the whole missionary and educational work of the church is committed to church councils,

and that any other way of carrying on such work is wrong. Several of Dr. Buswell's arguments, if valid, would lead a long way in this direction. Early in this rejoinder I quoted a statement from another man, which if correct, would logically lead exactly in this direction. Unless one takes such an extreme and unscriptural view, one must conclude that Scripture does not require the establishment of such organizations, nor show any instance of similar procedures. Consequently the question what type of organization should be used for the carrying on of the missionary and educational work which Christ has committed to His people is one to be decided on other considerations. This leads to our next argument.

#### INEFFICIENCY

It was our fifth argument that Synod-controlled agencies by their very nature tend to inefficiency. On pp. 7-8 of *The Free Press* I gave convincing evidence of this point. The only answer that has been given is Dr. Buswell's statement on p. 9, col. 2, that he once heard Hitler say the same thing. I am really very curious to know what Hitler actually said. My impression is that he favored bringing all activities under control of the state, rather than the type of free enterprise that I am advocating.

I pointed out that even in the Roman Catholic Church, which we think of as the extreme of centralization, it has been learned by experience that missionary and educational work is far better carried on by voluntary organizations than by centralized control. While the Roman Catholic Church is expanding rapidly, by use of this vital principle, we ourselves are adopting procedures that it has rejected as ineffective. Its central controls watch over the voluntary agencies to make sure that their doctrine remains in line with that of the church, but leaves them almost entirely free in administrative matters.

#### MACHINES

My seventh argument was that Synod-controlled boards and agencies lead to the development of harmful ecclesiastical

Everything in this issue is written by Dr. Allan A. MacRae and he alone is responsible for all statements made.

machines. No attempt has been made to disprove the arguments on this point that I presented on pp. 9-10. One friend has expressed horror that I would attribute such actions to Bible Presbyterians. However, I criticized no individual in my articles. The actions I described are those which will inevitably result from a system of synod-controlled boards and agencies. The agencies either fade away and fail, through lack of administrative authority, or they set to work to control the election of members to their governing boards and to get the necessary actions passed by the Synod. Log-rolling, electioneering, and other phases of machine politics become a necessity, if the agency is to survive. We have seen this occur in every denomination that has developed a full-fledged system of synod-controlled boards and agencies. Last summer's Synod took a big step in that direction. Do we wish such a future for our little church?

#### IMPAIRMENT OF SYNOD'S REAL FUNCTION

I have left the sixth argument for the last. The existence of synod-controlled boards and agencies makes it difficult for the Synod to carry on the work which properly belongs to it. This argument was developed on p. 9 of *The Free Press*. I showed how the proper work of the Synod was pushed aside and neglected at the last meeting. Establishment of new Boards and Agencies makes it impossible to get the proper work done.

This is what happened in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Why did that church go bad? It had a fine system of graded courts, following the scriptural pattern, set up to perform their proper purpose of protecting the church from the entrance of false doctrine. But the church gradually was led along the alluring path of the development of Synod-controlled Boards and Agencies until its meetings, and the interests of its delegates, were so filled with such matters that it was impossible for these courts to give sufficient time or attention to the fulfilling of their proper function of guarding the church from the entrance of unbelief. The very boards which the church was supposedly controlling became instruments for the introduction and dissemination of unbelief, and eventually filled the entire church with false doctrine and ruined its testimony.

New England Congregationalism, without any such system of graded courts, raised a great witness to Christianity all around the world for over

two hundred and fifty years. A great church stood true to the faith until it was finally overcome by Modernism. If only it had had a scriptural system of graded courts to protect the church from apostasy, who knows but that it might have stood true for another century or two?

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had such a system of graded courts. Yet within a period of only about two centuries from the foundation of the very first presbytery, and of less than a century and a half from the foundation of the first general assembly, it had been riddled with modernism and apostasy. Why did it go bad so much more quickly than Congregationalism? Was it a matter of doctrine? No, for the doctrine of the two churches was originally identical. It was because the Presbyterian and Biblical system of graded courts ceased to perform its proper function, being stultified by the development of assembly-controlled boards and agencies.

May our little church return to the path of true Presbyterianism. May our Synod meetings cease to be sessions of wranglings over boards and agencies, and again become times of sweet Christian fellowship. May we find time for prayer, confession, and testimony, instead of having the work of the Spirit cut short by the pressure of board and agency business, as was done on the last day of the recent Synod. May our courts have time to fulfill their proper function as courts, guarding the church against the entrance of false doctrine. May we find time to hear what each other are doing, and how the problems are being met in each community, as we strive to advance the work of the Lord. May we place the work of boards and agencies where it properly belongs, in the hands of voluntary agencies.

Oh, that our meetings might again be times of Christian testimony, of considering the great doctrines together, and of encouraging one another to good works and Christian growth. Then would our church grow to be a great church, and to accomplish a great work for God.

All communications may be addressed to the secretary-treasurer of the Committee, the Rev. Arthur G. Slaght, 1630 S. Hanover St., Baltimore 30, Md.

# FALL RALLY

## Independent Board for Presbyterian Home Missions

**THURSDAY AND FRIDAY -- OCTOBER 13 AND 14, 1955**

**BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Haddon Avenue and Cuthbert Boulevard,  
Collingswood, N. J.

### AMERICA'S CALL FOR HOME MISSIONS

**America—Our Jerusalem and Judea**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1955**

- 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting  
1:00 p.m. Luncheon for Board Members  
Registration  
2:30 p.m. Opening Meeting  
Greetings—Welcome to Collingswood  
R. S. Wigfield, Treasurer of Benevolences  
2:35 p.m. Address—HOW THE APOSTLE PAUL BUILT NEW CHURCHES  
Rev. Robert DuVall  
3:00 p.m. Address—LEADING A CHURCH OUT OF THE APOSTASY  
Rev. Fred Stroud  
3:45 p.m. Recess  
4:00 p.m. Address—STARTING A CHURCH FROM NOTHING AND REACH-  
ING THE UNCHURCHED  
Rev. Dallas Billington, Akron, Ohio  
5:00 to Question and Answer Period  
5:45 p.m.  
6:15 p.m. Dinner  
Theme: THE CHURCH IN THE NATION  
8:00 p.m. Evening Rally  
Theme: WHAT IS TRUE PRESBYTERIANISM  
Dr. Allan A. MacRae

### CHALLENGING THE APOSTASY WITH NEW CHURCHES

**"Occupy Till I Come"—Luke 19:13**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1955**

- 10:00 a.m. Address—THE PLACE OF BIBLE TEACHING IN STARTING A NEW  
CHURCH  
Rev. Adam Hunter  
10:30 a.m. Address—THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN STARTING A NEW CHURCH  
Rev. George W. Fincke  
11:00 a.m. Address—OBTAINING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR NEW CHURCHES  
Hon. James E. Bennet  
11:30 a.m. Open Forum and Discussion  
12:30 p.m. Lunch  
2:00 p.m. Address—THE EVANGELISTIC EMPHASIS AND APPROACH  
Rev. Jack W. Murray  
3:00 p.m. Address—STARTING NEW CHURCHES IN RELATION TO AMERI-  
CAN COUNCIL MEETINGS AND RALLIES  
Rev. Clyde Kennedy  
3:45 p.m. Recess  
4:00 p.m. Address—WHAT SHOULD THE INFANT CHURCH'S EMPHASIS  
BE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS  
Dr. J. Gordon Holdcroft  
4:30 p.m. Address—TESTIMONIES OF HOME MISSIONARIES  
6:15 p.m. Dinner  
Theme: THE CHURCH IN THE HOME TOWN  
8:00 p.m. Evening Rally  
Theme: BUILDING UP THE TWENTIETH CENTURY REFOR-  
MATION THROUGH NEW CHURCHES  
Dr. Carl McIntire