

"The Only Infallible Rule
of Faith and Practice"

Bulletin

CONCERNED PRESBYTERIANS, INC.

*A United Effort to Return the Church to its Primary Mission—
Winning People to Jesus Christ and Nurturing Them in the Faith*

100 Biscayne Boulevard
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33132

July 24, 1969

To: Presbytery Chairmen, Synod Trustees,
Executive and Strategy Committees

Re: Semi-Annual Meeting -- Atlanta -- June 20, 21, 1969

1. ATTENDANCE. Twelve of our 15 synods were represented at our recent Atlanta meeting. Attendance exceeded that of any previous meeting.
2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT. Our membership continues to increase steadily. The statement censuring Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. which the Mobile Assembly passed (over the ruling by the Permanent Judicial Committee that the Assembly had no authority to censure us) has brought in many inquiries from church officers and members in liberal churches who had never heard of our organization before.

Progress is being made in strengthening our organizations in certain presbyteries. Edward N. Odom of Richmond, Va. (Hanover Presbytery), Aaron B. Batten of Hope Mills, N.C. (Fayetteville Presbytery), Charles J. Lowry of Bristol, Va. (Abingdon Presbytery) agreed to serve as Chairmen.

Our field staff has been enlarged and now consists of:

Joseph B. Nalls, Field Director (full time)
Warren R. Wilson, Associate Field Director (part time)
P. Y. Matthews, (Ruling Elder, North Avenue Presbyterian Church,
Atlanta) - Associate Field Director (part time)

It was agreed that we urgently need part time field men in every synod to help in organizing and carrying out our program -- each man to be responsible for 3 or 4 presbyteries. Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. will pay the mileage, travel, telephone calls and other out-of-pocket expenses of these men. All Presbytery Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen are urged to send the names and addresses of men who might be willing to undertake this work to Joe Nalls, 2793-A Clairmont Rd., N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30329.

We are not making the progress we should be making in organizing effective working groups in some presbyteries. Each chairman in presbyteries which are not well organized is urged to proceed promptly with the selection of Area Chairmen who will assume the responsibility for 4 or 5 churches and these Area Chairmen should select a key man to work with him in each church. Each Chairman should appoint his best Area Chairman to serve as Presbytery Vice-Chairman. The names and addresses of these men should be reported promptly to the Miami and Atlanta offices.

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3. RECOMMENDATIONS OF STRATEGY COMMITTEE. The Strategy Committee which met at 2 P.M., Friday made the following recommendations:

- a. Electing Conservative Commissioners. Our immediate objective must be to elect as many responsible conservatives as possible as commissioners to the 1970 Assembly. Each Chairman is asked to ascertain from his presbytery executive the rules of the presbytery which pertain to the election of commissioners. If these rules make it difficult to elect conservatives, an effort should be made to change the rules. The 1970 Assembly meets in Memphis -- June 14-19th.

Each Presbytery Chairman should proceed immediately to call a meeting of his Area Chairmen to select a slate of conservative ministers and ruling elders to be nominated from the floor in the event that the slate proposed by the nominating committee is not predominately conservative. Ministers known to be conservative should be asked to sit in on the meeting to guide in selecting the right men.

The men proposed should be men who are not afraid to speak up when the crucial issues come on the floor of the Assembly. They should be contacted ahead of time to make certain that they will serve. When the slate has been selected, this fact should be made known to the key man in every church. Ministers known to be conservative should be alerted to the fact that the slate will be nominated from the floor and urged to support it.

It was pointed out that many ruling elder Commissioners hesitate to speak out in the Assembly because they do not know all the facts and the arguments which should be used to speak for or against certain controversial issues. It was agreed that we will endeavor to provide these Commissioners next year with speech material which they can use.

- b. Selective Giving. It was agreed that the time has come to step up our program of encouraging individual donors to designate where they want their benevolence gifts to go and urging Church Sessions to do likewise. It is recommended that Church Sessions instruct their church Treasurer to remit all benevolence funds direct to those causes which they feel are worthy of support.

In churches where a majority of the ruling elders are conservative it is suggested that Presbytery or Area Chairmen seek an opportunity to meet with the Session to discuss this matter. It was also pointed out that the Women of the Church should also be contacted and urged to be selective in designating where their benevolence gifts should go.

- c. King Memorial Service. The Mobile Assembly voted to hold a memorial service for Martin Luther King in connection with the Assembly meeting in Memphis. We will be raising strong objections to the holding of this service in our Fall Bulletin which will present documented evidence that this man is not the Christian martyr that the communications media have led many to believe that he is. Following our publication of this material, Presbytery and Area Chairmen will be urged to have overtures sent to the Assembly urging that this service be cancelled.

- d. Changing 3/4ths Rule. It is anticipated that the 1970 Assembly will send to the presbyteries a recommendation that the Constitution be changed to provide that changes in the Confession of Faith and union with other bodies can be effected by a 2/3rds vote of the presbyteries instead of the present 3/4ths. We must be prepared to defeat this issue when it comes to a vote. A special bulletin outlining the arguments which the liberals will use and the arguments we should use to oppose them will be sent to Chairmen, Area Chairmen and Key Men in the near future.
- e. New Confession of Faith. The Mobile Assembly voted to have a committee appointed to draft a new Confession of Faith to replace the Westminster Confession of Faith. The committee, which seems to have only one conservative member, has already been appointed. It is anticipated that the committee will recommend that the new Confession follow pretty much the lines of the Confession of 1967 which the UPUSA adopted recently. We doubt that the new Confession will be sent to the presbyteries for a vote before 1971 since the liberals will probably first try to change the 3/4ths rule. We feel quite confident that there are enough conservative presbyteries to defeat this change.
- f. Merger with UPUSA. A committee has been appointed to study union with the UPUSA. This is a primary objective of the "ecumaniacs" for they know that a UPUSA union would inevitably take us into the super-church being planned by the Consultation on Church Union. Our Strategy Committee has analyzed the situation and feels very confident that our forces combined with many of the middle-of-the-roaders will be able to defeat this union even if the liberals succeed in their efforts to change the 3/4ths rule.
- g. Division. If we defeat the change in the 3/4ths rule we feel that many of the left wing extremists will realize that they will not succeed in their efforts to liquidate the Church. This would be even more true if we block their plans to unite with the UPUSA. The Rev. W. A. Benfield, Jr. who heads the committee which is drafting the plans for the COCU super-church has already stated publicly that if he saw no evidence of progress toward church union in the Presbyterian Church U.S. in two or three years he will personally lead a movement to break up the Presbyterian Church U.S.

It is interesting to note that at the recent meeting of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, the General Synod approved the appointment of a committee to study the possibility of reconciliation between the liberal and conservative wings. If this committee is convinced that the conflicting views cannot be reconciled it is proposed that the RCA be dissolved and let each group go their own way. This movement was sponsored by the liberal wing -- frustrated because the conservatives defeated the proposed merger with our Church. A similar movement to split our denomination could be proposed by the liberals in our Church if they do not succeed in changing the 3/4ths rule.

- h. Restructuring the Church. We anticipate that the liberals will in the near future try very hard to restructure our Church in a way that will lessen the power of conservative churches and presbyteries. A committee appointed by the 1969 Assembly has the power to recommend such action to a future Assembly. We need to be very alert to this danger.

(OVER)

i. Timing. Many of our conservative brethren have been asking how long it will be before we can cease this internal struggle and be free to concentrate all our energies and efforts on the primary mission of the Church. The far left actions of the Mobile Assembly have now focused the attention of the Church on what the liberals are plotting and planning. The votes will be cast on these crucial issues in the very near future, probably within the next 2 to 3 years. We believe that the day is fast approaching when the future of the Church will be decided.

1. If we defeat the move to change the 3/4ths rule, the liberals could conclude that they have lost and either leave the Church or suggest, as the liberals in RCA have suggested, that a fair and equitable plan be worked out to divide the Church. This could come to a head as early as 1971.
2. If the liberals succeed in changing the 3/4ths rule and we block their plans to change the Confession and unite with UPUSA, this could come to a head in 1972 or possibly 1973.

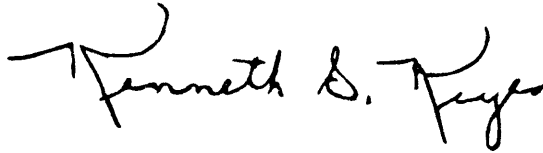
If, God forbid, we should lose you can be sure that there will be a wholesale movement by conservative churches and presbyteries to leave the Church and either form a new denomination or unite with the conservatives in the RCA or some other predominantly conservative group.

It is imperative that responsible conservatives and Bible-believing churches stay in the Church. To leave before these issues are definitely decided would only result in the fragmentation of the conservative forces in the Church and the cause of Christ in our Southland would be set back.

4. 1969-70 BUDGET. Realizing the need for more bulletins and a redoubling of our field work a budget of \$127,500. was approved for the crucial year which lies ahead. This is an increase of 40% over our \$90,000. budget for the year just closed. A letter will be sent soon to all of our members asking that they undergird this expanded effort. To guarantee that we will not have to curtail our program by a shortage of funds all Chairmen are asked to contact men and women who are able to make substantial gifts and urge their support. This is most important.
5. EVANGELISTIC TRAINING INSTITUTES. At last report all but one of the 10 dates for these institutes conducted under the joint auspices of Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship and Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. had been set. It is hoped that this program can be expanded during the coming year. Every Chairman should give serious consideration to arranging for an institute in his presbytery. Write direct to The Rev. William E. Hill, Jr., President of PEF, P. O. Box 808, Hopewell, Va. 23860, Phone (703) 456-1313.
6. PRESBYTERY OPERATING RULES. Many presbyteries conduct their meetings under Roberts Rules of Order. Some operate under special rules. Chairmen should obtain copies of the rules under which their presbyteries operate, become familiar with them. An effort should be made to have the rules distributed to all ruling elders in every church in the presbytery. If our ruling elder presbyters had been familiar with these rules it is probable that the votes on union presbyteries would not have been reversed in the presbyteries of Mobile, North Alabama and East Texas.

7. CONSERVATIVE MINISTERS. A group of conservative ministers has had two meetings and has called a third meeting for an early date in August. A statement expressing their convictions has been drafted and is being circulated for signatures. When sufficient signatures have been secured it is planned to give the statement wide-spread publicity throughout the Church. Please keep this confidential until publicity is released by the group.
8. JOURNAL DAY. The annual rally of Journal supporters and Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. will be held at Weaverville on Wednesday, August 6th. Principal speaker will be Walter D. Shepard who served as a missionary in the Congo for some years and later directed our Board of World Missions activities in Africa and the Middle East. The afternoon program will be conducted by Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. with W. J. (Jack) Williamson reporting on the Mobile Assembly and our Field Director, Joe Nalls, speaking on "What You Can Do To Help in Your Presbytery."
9. NEXT SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING. The next semi-annual meeting of Presbytery Chairmen, Co-Chairmen, Synod Trustees and Members of the Executive and Strategy Committees will be held at Hilton Inn, Atlanta Airport on Friday evening, December 5th and Saturday morning, December 6th. The Strategy and Executive Committees will meet Friday morning at 9 A.M. so they will have a full day for their deliberations. Synod Trustees are invited to be present at the Strategy Committee meeting. Please note these days on your calendar NOW and plan to attend.

Yours in His service,



KENNETH S. KEYES
President

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encl ret env

P.S. THE EXTRA COPY OF THIS MEMO IS INTENDED FOR YOUR VICE-CHAIRMAN. IF YOU HAVE NOT APPOINTED A VICE-CHAIRMAN SEND IT TO YOUR ABLEST AREA CHAIRMAN AND URGE HIM TO BE YOUR SECOND-IN-COMMAND.