



*"The Only Infallible Rule  
of Faith and Practice"*

# THE CONCERNED PRESBYTERIAN

*Dedicated to Returning the Presbyterian Church U. S.  
to its Primary Mission — Winning the Unsaved for  
Christ and Nurturing all Believers in the Faith*

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## Statement of Purpose and Policy

### Adopted by the Board of Trustees of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., at Asheville, N. C., August 18, 1966

WHEREAS the Confession of Faith calls the Presbyterian Church in the United States to heed the commission of Christ to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Chapter X, Paragraph 4); and

WHEREAS the Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Chapter XVII, Paragraph 1) clearly sets forth that evangelism is the primary and urgent task of the Church; and

WHEREAS the diminishing number of members added to our Church annually on Profession of Faith, the marked decrease in our Sunday School enrollment, and the tragic reduction in the ranks of candidates for the ministry all indicate that the effectiveness of our Church in accomplishing its primary task has steadily been declining in recent years despite large increases in the total population of the areas served by our congregations; and

WHEREAS we believe that this deterioration in the effectiveness of our Church in fulfilling the Lord's command to evangelize can be attributed to:

1. Our failure as members of the Church to earnestly seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in our individual lives and our unwillingness to allow the things of God to have first priority.
2. A growing lack of confidence, on the part of so many of our people, in the Bible as the Word of God, inerrant and infallible, which distrust has been created in part by the teaching of some of the professors in our colleges and seminaries and encouraged by some of the literature emanating from our Board of Christian Education.
3. The determined effort on the part of some ministers and members of the staffs of some of the boards, agencies and institutions to divert the Church from its primary task of saving individual sinners and preparing them for Church service and consecrated living, substituting instead involvement in current social, economic and political efforts to reform and uplift society at large.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we pledge ourselves individually and corporately as Concerned Presbyterians:

1. To earnestly invoke the evidence of the Holy Spirit in our individual lives, praying daily that God will give us the courage, the grace, and the strength to surrender ourselves more fully and completely to Him.
2. To endeavor in every possible way to help maintain our Church's historic commitment to the

integrity and authority of the Scriptures as the verbally inspired Word of God — the only infallible rule for faith and practice.

3. To exert our influence to the end that the Church adhere faithfully to the basic principle that evangelism is the primary task of the Church permitting no other program to take precedence over the winning of the unsaved to Christ.

4. To seek to maintain in our Church the unshakable conviction that the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms contain the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures, and lay emphasis upon the fact that this system of doctrine is as true and relevant today as it was when our Church was first established. This is especially vital in a time when official efforts are multiplying to weaken the witness of our Church to her historic reformed and Calvinistic doctrines.

5. To assist in rallying the office-bearers of our Church — ministers, elders and deacons — in behalf of the preservation of our scripturally based Presbyterian form of government as against the episcopal system which powerful forces in our Church are asking us to accept.

In the task which lies before us we shall endeavor, to the best of our ability, to fulfill the admonition of the apostle Paul "Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong," being careful to avoid all unseemly evidence of passion or ill-will toward those with whom we differ, but seeking always the mind of Christ and obeying the apostle's injunction, "Let all that you do be done in love."

### C. O. C. U. Super-Church to be Ruled by Bishops

SOME of the brethren who voted to have our Church become an active participant in the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) justified their action by saying, "This doesn't commit us to anything — there is no harm in talking with these other denominations."

But when our delegation arrived in Dallas for the Consultation meeting it was made quite clear to them that certain definite principles had already been agreed upon and that our group coming in late would have to accept. One of these was the fact that the united church will be ruled by bishops.

Our own particular polity with its emphasis upon control at the level of the local church and the presbytery has made it possible in the past for the Presbyterian Church in the United States to out-perform most of the

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larger denominations in membership growth, new members added on profession, per-capita giving and other indices of a Church's effectiveness.

We do not believe that the majority of the members of our churches are ready to surrender this "grass roots" control to a hierarchy patterned after the historic episcopacy — a governing body which can be expected to be liberal in its theology and ruthless in its exercise of ecclesiastical power.

Our COCU Committee appointed by the moderator is loaded with men who are apparently determined to push this merger regardless of the fact that the majority of our ministers and the vast majority of the members of our churches are not in favor of submerging our denomination in the proposed super-church.

There is reason to believe that we who sit in the pews are about to be subjected to a deluge of propaganda designed to prepare the way for a favorable vote on this union. Our official church paper — the *Survey* — has already commenced its "brain-washing" program. The literature put out by our Board of Christian Education will be keyed to this effort. Our youth camps, adult conferences and retreat programs will be studded with speakers who will seek to influence our people. The staff of our Board of Women's Work and the executives of other boards and agencies can be expected to promote the merger actively.

To offset this propaganda with which the Church is about to be flooded we must get the factual truth regarding COCU into the hands of the officers and other leaders in every local church. It's going to take a lot of concentrated effort on the part of thousands of Concerned Presbyterians to prevent our Church and its testimony from being destroyed. We hope and pray that we will be equal to this task.

## Dr. C. Darby Fulton Views Now on Tape

DR. C. DARBY FULTON filled the strategically important post of Executive Secretary of our Board of World Missions with ability and distinction from 1932 until his retirement in 1961. No servant of the Church is more universally loved and more highly respected. No man has a better understanding of our denomination and its problems. No one is better qualified to answer the crucial question which confronts us today: *Are we ready for one church?*

Dr. Fulton answers this question in a 20-minute taped talk which is now available on loan without cost to Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. members. It can be purchased outright for just \$4.50. We urge you to borrow or buy this tape. Invite a group of your friends to your home and play it for them. Use it on the programs of the Men of the Church and the Women of the Church. Suggest that the Session and the Diaconate hear it at one of their meetings. Ask for Tape D.

Our library of taped talks is expanding rapidly. Here are some of the new tapes which are available on loan or purchase:

Tape B: *The Vital Role of the Layman in the Church Today*, by Kenneth S. Keyes, President of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. (45 minutes) outlines the reasons for concern and what our movement proposes to do about them.

Tape I: *Talk to Concerned Presbyterians of Houston, Texas*, by Col. Roy LeCraw, Vice President of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. (1 hour 35 minutes)

Questions and Answers (15 minutes).

Tape E: *The Great Omission*, by Dr. L. Nelson Bell (21 minutes).

Tape F: *Evangelism*, by Dr. Billy Graham (39 minutes); his challenging keynote address at Presbyterian Journal Day, August 17, 1966.

Tape G: *The Basic Issue*, by Dr. L. Nelson Bell, and *Developments in the Consultation on Church Union*, by Dr. John R. Richardson, a member of the COCU committee appointed by the Moderator to represent our Church. Tape recordings of the two talks made at Presbyterian Journal Day (30 minutes).

Tape H: *The Central Treasurer and Our Benevolence Gifts*, by the Rev. Harry Hassall, pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and *The Ownership of Church Property*, by W. J. Williamson, Secretary of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., and Chairman of our Legal Committee. Two talks made at Presbyterian Journal Day (47 minutes).

Still available are:

Tape A: *Concerned Presbyterians*, by Dr. Robert Strong, pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, Alabama (34 minutes).

Tape C: *Aims and Objectives of Concerned Presbyterians*, by Dr. G. Aiken Taylor (60 minutes).

All tapes are on 7" reels. Some are recorded at 3¾ speed, others at 7½ speed.

These tapes are available on loan or purchase only to enrolled members whose contributions total \$10. or more during a calendar year.

The tapes will prove most effective when used by sessions of churches that wish to inform themselves regarding the controversial issues in our Church; by chapters or groups of Concerned Presbyterians in acquainting others with the crucial issues; and by individual members who invite friends to meet in their homes to discuss the situation.

To obtain the maximum use of these tapes, the following rules regarding their distribution have been established:

1. Orders for the tapes should be sent to Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., 234 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Fla., 33132, at least three weeks in advance of the date it is planned to use them. This date should be specified when the order is sent.

2. Each tape may be kept for one week only. It is important that the tapes be returned as soon as their use is completed so we can make them available to others.

3. Members who desire to retain the tapes for future use may obtain them by contributing \$4.50 each toward their approximate overall cost to us. Checks should be made payable to Concerned Presbyterians, Inc.

4. When tapes are returned, we should appreciate a note telling us: When and where it was run; the number of persons hearing it; a word as to how the message was received; and any suggestions or criticisms.

### "Apostles of Deceit"

THIS very informative book, published recently by the Church League of America, traces the development of the insidious movement launched by the Communists to undermine the integrity and authority of the Bible and to create confusion and division in leading Protestant denominations, preparing the way for a possible Communist takeover from within. It will terrify you to learn how successful the Communists have been in getting U.S. church leaders to sponsor and to promote their objectives. The 526-page paperback edition sells for \$2.50 at the bookstores but while our supply lasts you can obtain a copy from our Miami office for \$1.50.

# Answering Mr. Hartley

IN his October "Editorial Comment," the editor of *Presbyterian Survey* asked this question:

"When a church doesn't use our denomination's Christian education material, when its session has voted to keep the congregation racially segregated, when it refuses to send the official magazine to the congregation's families, when it withholds funds from denominational causes, when it refuses to participate in many presbytery activities and projects and its representatives to church courts consistently dissent from well-established positions and programs of the denomination, and when the church shuns or withdraws from almost all that is distinctively Presbyterian U.S., then why do they wish to be identified with the denomination?"

We would answer Mr. Hartley by asking him a few questions:

Our Book of Church Order charges the Session of a local church with the responsibility for supervising the church school and the educational program of the church. When the members of the Session in good conscience decide that Board of Christian Education literature departs from the clear teachings of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith and Catechisms and conclude that they must substitute literature faithful to the Word of God and honoring to Christ and in keeping with the Confession of Faith, is it fair to accuse these elders of being un-Presbyterian?

## Preparing Minds for Super-Church

Our official church paper *The Presbyterian Survey* today seems to reflect the mind of the relatively small group of liberals which is in control of our Church. It is deluging its readers with propaganda which seems designed to prepare them for union with a colossal super-church ruled by bishops — a union which some of our leaders believe would violate the constitution of our Church. When the Session of a local church refuses to subject its members to this propaganda and desires to keep the church true to its historic faith and mission, is it fair to accuse the members of this Session of being un-Presbyterian?

When a Session, after careful study, concludes that the programs and policies of certain boards and agencies are contrary to the standards of the Church and cannot in good conscience continue to support financially such programs and policies, should it be accused of being un-Presbyterian when it channels undesignated benevolence gifts to presbytery or synod causes or to other recognized evangelical organizations which are carrying out the Great Commission given to us by our Lord?

What you seem to be trying to say, Mr. Hartley, is that the faithful members of the Presbyterian Church U.S., who believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, who have vowed to "receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures," and who are unwilling to see our Church submerged in a super-church where the power and the authority will be vested in those who do not hold these views, should be obedient, not to the Bible or the Church's constitution, but rather to the decisions of the General Assembly, even when these violate one's conscience.

## The Real Deserters

But is it fair to imply that those who protest some of the activities and refuse to support some of the projects approved by our Church courts are "shunning

or withdrawing from almost all that is distinctively Presbyterian Church U.S.?" In all honesty, would it not be fairer to say that those who seek to have us abandon the distinctive Presbyterian doctrines which have characterized our Church during most of its glorious history are in reality the ones to whom the label of "withdrawing from almost all that is distinctively Presbyterian Church U.S." might be applied with more accuracy?

Why do ministers and other officers who have taken solemn oaths and vows committing them "without mental reservation or equivocation" to the orthodox Calvinistic creed of the Church deny that faith daily in word and in deed? Why should a minister of our Church who publicly proclaims his denial of some basic Presbyterian doctrine think he is justified in berating his brethren for some alleged violation of the Book of Church Order?

By what authority and in keeping with what Christian ethic does a presbyter bemean brother-presbyters and accuse them of violating some provision of the *polity* of the Church, when this same presbyter is himself on record as denying the *faith* of the Church? How can those who are working for the demise of Presbyterianism — the absorption of our denomination into COCU, for example — feel any proprietary interest in a Church whose theology and whose government they believe to be obsolete?

When Mr. Hartley has a satisfactory answer to these questions he may very well have answered his first.

When the *Presbyterian Survey*, which too often acts as spokesman for the minority group which is today in control of the General Assembly, is willing to become in truth the official magazine for the *whole* Church and will present both sides of controversial issues with some degree of restraint and fairness, the editor may suddenly discover a new and growing market for his paper.

Answering Mr. Hartley's final question, "Why do we wish to be identified with the denomination?" the answer is very simple: We love our Church! We believe in our Presbyterian system of doctrine and our Presbyterian form of government. We consider the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States a wonderfully sound and Biblical document. We are committed to it. We want to see it preserved.

## Majority Still Faithful

We sincerely believe that a very large majority of the informed members of the Presbyterian Church U.S. are not in favor of what the minority in the denomination is trying to do. We are convinced that the majority of the ministers of our Church are still faithful to the vows which they took when they were ordained and will not stand idly by and allow this minority to destroy the Presbyterian Church U.S. and its historic testimony.

We hope, we pray and we firmly believe that the time will come when our Presbyterian Church in the United States will cease to be the battleground between two divergent groups — when all who love the Lord will truly be baptized by the Holy Spirit — when we will again be united in heart and spirit, concentrating our efforts on the basic mission of the Church: leading the unsaved to Christ and encouraging believers to surrender more fully and completely to Him. We long for this day and intend to remain in the Presbyterian Church U.S., believing with all our hearts that it will surely come.

# "New Morality" in the Pulpit

ON Sunday, September 4th, the Rev. Robert B. McNeill, pastor of Bream Memorial Presbyterian Church, Charleston, W. Va., (1,430 members), preached a sermon entitled "The Ancient and the New Morality." He recommended that his people read what he called the most popular book on the subject of the New Morality — *Situation Ethics* written by Dr. Joseph Fletcher of Episcopal Theological Seminary, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

This preacher failed to tell his people that Dr. Fletcher has a long history of affiliation with Communist-inspired activities and organizations — that his record reveals 80 instances where he aided and abetted Communist causes — that Herbert A. Philbrick testified that Dr. Fletcher worked with him on Communist Party projects when Philbrick was a counter-spy for the FBI.

## Commandments Belittled

Here's what the Rev. Mr. McNeill had to say, belittling the Ten Commandments:

"When we think of the ancient morality we think automatically of the Ten Commandments. These, we say, were and are and always will be the moral laws to live by. Actually they were given by Moses to his people as a means of welding together a nation, a kind of constitution in simplified form that would enable them to become more than a loose confederation of tribes or a collection of individual family groups with no law or order.

"But we have adopted these laws as a code of personal ethics and a means whereby a person before Christ could achieve salvation. For some reason we have labeled them God's laws, which is true, but we have assumed that He has given us none others. We have claimed that they are inviolate and have coined the cliché that we cannot break them but only break ourselves against them.

"I would like to say three things about these commandments:

"First, we cannot possibly keep them if we are going to change them from civil statutes to a code of ethics. We might possibly get by the first one because there aren't any competing gods around except the desires that motivate our lives and we are unwilling to admit that these are gods. The second one about graven images and likenesses the church has never kept as long as it has accepted the artistry of sculptors and painters. What church school class has not pictorialized Christ? The third one is broken not just when we curse but when we use God's name flippantly. And the fourth? In this industrialized society do we suspend all work and recreation? And the fifth, who does not have a sense of guilt over the dishonoring of his parents? Sixth, we may not kill our own kind but we have no qualms of conscience about destroying the battalions of the Viet Cong. Seventh, as Jesus interpreted adultery have you never had a feeling of lust? Eighth, you may never have by stealth taken the property of another but you may have unfairly profited at his expense in competition, in wages, in prices, in slovenly labor or poor service. Ninth, without going to a court of law you have damaged the reputation of another by false rumor or by exaggeration or by a subtle twist of words. And as for coveting, I would hate for you to know about some of the things you have that I wish I had.

How would you grade yourself?

"Secondly, if we did keep these commandments to the letter, and went no further we would be sorry citizens and unfit to live with. These laws require you to do very little; they stipulate what you must not do. So you don't kill, steal, commit adultery, lie, covet — so far you haven't moved an inch off the starting line, and you haven't made one humane gesture toward anyone else.

## Breaking Commandments Moral?

"In the third place, it is possible that a breach of the Ten Commandments would be the moral thing to do. And here is where we come to the so-called new morality. And here is where the theologian is beginning to say what the average layman has been saying all along, that what's right or wrong depends upon the circumstances under which you have to make a decision."

After quoting Dr. Fletcher's statement that we must be prepared to compromise our ethical principles or set them aside "if love seems better served by doing so," the preacher said, "There is simply no law — repeat, no law — we can live by absolutely except the law of love." Then he quoted with apparent approval Archbishop Temple's statement "the atheist who is moved by love is moved by the spirit of God; an atheist who lives by love is saved by faith in the God whose existence (under that name) he denies." And then the preacher added, "So it is not the unbelieving who invite damnation but the unloving."

Under the headline "Presbyterian Defends Bishop Pike" the *Charleston Gazette* reported that this same minister, speaking from his pulpit on November 6th, saluted Bishop James A. Pike and invoked the blessing of God on his heresy.

We can thank God that there are only a few ministers in the Presbyterian Church U.S. who hold and teach such radical views. We need to be much in prayer that the Holy Spirit will open their blinded eyes and lead them to see the tragic end in store for all those who would substitute man-made rules of ethics for the Commandments of Almighty God.

## True Unity

WHEN Professor B. B. Warfield, D.D., L.L.D., of Princeton Theological Seminary was asked in 1919 to give his views on the union of Protestant churches then being proposed in New Zealand, he wrote:

"The unity for which our Master prayed in His high-priestly prayer, the unity to which we are exhorted in the Apostolic Epistles, is not an artificial 'unity' of external organizations, but an inward unity of thought and feeling and life. It can never be attained by surrendering our testimony to truth already perceived. Christ's entire people will never unite in destructive errors. There will always be left a remnant who have not bowed the knee to Baal; and the real core of the Church will be with this remnant and not with the multitude who are willing to content themselves with being but partially Christian in order that they may be in a greater company.

"The effort to secure 'unity' by 'compromising' is necessarily as futile therefore as it is unfaithful. A story is told of a rustic who, wishing a hive of bees, caught all that visited his flowers and shut them up in a box together, only shortly and quite thoroughly to learn the difference between a hive and an aggregation. It seems too late in the day to continue such experiments in the Church. No aggregation of discordant elements can make a unity in the Church. The attempt to do so is treason to the true idea of Christian unity."

## Strange Bedfellows

THE December *Survey* reported that the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church U.S. has voted to give "full and enthusiastic support" to a joint campus ministry with several other denominations in an organization known as the United Campus Christian Fellowship. This new affiliation would replace the Westminster Fellowship in our denomination.

This recommendation will probably be included in the Board's report to the General Assembly next June. If the Assembly approves this move, the result will be the complete abandonment of our distinctive Presbyterian testimony on college campuses and the surrender of our program to an organization in which the radical-liberal elements are in full and complete control. Our Church has found some "ecumenical" student work intolerable. We had to withdraw from joint work with the United Presbyterian Church on the University of Tennessee campus a few years ago. How can we have an effective witness if our campus program is under the control of left-wing liberal leaders in this and other liberal denominations?

In the Cincinnati area the United Campus Christian Fellowship has been cooperating with the radical youth group known as Students for a Democratic Society whose members have been most vocal in condemning the American way of life and our form of government. The Rev. Mr. Stanley Holt — a Presbyterian U.S.A. minister who heads the United Campus Christian Fellowship in Cincinnati — hosted the national SDS organizer and sought permission from the University of Cincinnati administration to allow this left-wing group to work on campus. J. Edgar Hoover testified before the House Committee on Appropriations in February, 1966, that Communists were actively promoting Students for a Democratic Society.

It appears that this effort on the part of those who direct the affairs of our Board of Christian Education is just one more step toward the super-church. We hope they realize that our Church is not going to submit to the amalgamation proposed in COCU and that they will abandon their attempts to accomplish piecemeal through an agency of the Church what they might be unable to accomplish through the courts of the Church.

## C.O.C.U. and the Roman Catholics

SPEAKING of the proposed C.O.C.U. merger of Protestant churches, the Rt. Rev. R. F. Gibson, Jr., Episcopal Bishop of Virginia and former Chairman of the Consultation, said:

"It would still be regarded as only one stage in the achievement of the basic goal — unified Christianity." Commenting on union with the Roman Catholic Church, Dr. Douglas Horton emphasized the fact that the united church would need a symbol of unity and that the Pope could well be that symbol. He said:

"I could not accept the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope but I could accept a pope who would be a symbol of a united church."

The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. — one of the prime movers in C.O.C.U. — already has an official committee working with the Roman Catholics preparing a common book of worship and Bible study. At the end of a two-day conference in Philadelphia, spokesmen announced that basic agreement on a tentative draft had been reached.

## Books Worth Reading

### Your Church — Their Target

12 eminent ministers and laymen tell what is happening to the Protestant Churches of America. 275 pages. Pocket editions \$1.95. Herbert A. Philbrick, Dr. Howard E. Kershner, Dr. Charles S. Poling and our own Dr. G. Aiken Taylor are among the authors.

### Freeway to Babylon

by Talmage Wilson, former United Presbyterian Church missionary to Sudan. Discusses the trends in the Church in language which will appeal to laymen. 288 pages. \$1.50.

### Baal or God

by Herman Otten. Contrasts the liberal and conservative views on all the great doctrines of the Church. 351 pages, paperback. 75¢ each; 10 for \$6; 100 for \$40. \$40.00.

We urge every Concerned Presbyterian to buy these three books, read them and then pass them along to your friends who need to be informed. To encourage every member to do this we make the following *Special Combination Offer*: all three books (retail price \$4.20) for \$3.50.

## "Principles of Church Union"

THIS is the title of a 96-page booklet which sets forth the principles of union to be followed by the proposed super-church which were agreed upon at the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) meetings in Dallas, May 2-5, 1966.

The chapter on "The Ministry of the Church" — pages 45-54 — states clearly that the united church will be ruled by bishops who will be responsible for administering the church's program.

### District Councils

Another chapter "The Structure of the Church" reveals that district councils "will have responsibility for the oversight, coordination, unification and development of the worship, mission, education and other services of the parish-congregation and task groups of the united church." There will also be regional councils "organized to perform judicial, legislative and executive functions." The "grass roots" control by the local church and the presbytery is to be replaced by the rigid control of district and regional councils with a general council at the top empowered to supervise all executive functions of the church.

### Six Stages

The closing chapter "Stages and Steps Toward a United Church" — pages 79-90 — outlines the six stages and five steps on the road to the united church. It states that we are now entering upon Stage 3 — "the period of preparation for a plan of union to be presented to our several churches." This is to be followed by Step 3 "the adoption of the plan by the churches."

We urge every Concerned Presbyterian to get and to read this booklet (available for 25¢ from our Miami office); better still, order a copy for every member of the Session of your church. This attempt to liquidate our Presbyterian Church U.S. by submerging it in a colossal super-church organization must be defeated. We believe it will be defeated if our people know what COCU plans to do. Order your copies today.

# The Church, Politics, and the NCC

IN matters of politics, a growing number of clergymen are doing what Adlai Stevenson said was characteristic of politicians: they are approaching every subject with an open mouth. This new inclination of many ministers to use their positions for openly promoting political policies is in line with the new theology's conception of the mission of the Church.

Dr. Truman B. Douglass, executive vice-president, Board of Homeland Missions of the United Church of Christ, has said, "The mission will become increasingly this-worldly. The outcries of those who are forever pleading that the church confine itself to 'spiritual matters,' that it stay out of politics and economics and civil rights and public affairs generally are becoming more and more absurd and anti-Christian. Reactionaries had better be warned that mission is to become more political, not less." This view was affirmed by theologian Harvey Cox who in *The Secular City* wrote "that evangelism, the speaking about God, is political, and Phillippe Maury is right when he says that 'politics is the language of evangelism.'"

Concerted effort to make the Church a sanctified political-pressure group may be seen clearly in the repeated drumbeating by the National Council of Churches for entry of Red China into the United Nations and for American diplomatic recognition of the Peking regime. Despite Communist China's past and present record of ruthless violence, rampaging atheism, iron-fisted tyranny, and aggressive imperialism, NCC leaders and agencies have for a decade issued statements favorable to these Red Chinese objectives.

The latest NCC policy statement on China, adopted by the General Board on February 22, 1966, called upon the United States to develop "a new policy of support to the seating of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations" and requested "that careful study be given by the United States to regularizing diplomatic communications with the People's Republic of China and to the conditions under which diplomatic recognition may appropriately be extended." These recommendations and others seeking trade, cultural exchanges, open travel, technical co-operation, and international negotiation with Red China were approved by ninety out of ninety-four members present at a meeting of the 250-member General Board.

The action taken by these ninety people became the official policy of the NCC and ostensibly represented the majority opinion of members of the thirty Protestant denominations that belong to the NCC. It put the nation and world on notice that mainstream American Protestantism strongly favored these policies on Communist China now rejected by the nation's elected leaders.

To ascertain the actual convictions of Protestant clergymen on the Red Chinese question, Dr. Daniel Poling, chairman of the board of the *Christian Herald*, recently polled a random 65 per cent of the Protestant ministers in the United States. Of the 30,000 who replied, he found that 72.9 per cent opposed a United Nations seat for Red China, 71.4 per cent were against diplomatic recognition of the Peking regime, and 93.7

per cent rejected the expulsion of Nationalist China from the U. N. The findings of the poll offer strong evidence that the NCC General Board's policy statement on Red China decidedly contradicted the position of the vast majority of American clergymen. One suspects that the vote might have been even more conclusive if lay members of NCC-affiliated churches had been polled.

NCC policy on Red China is only one of many examples of the heavy-handed attempts of ecclesiastical strategists to forge a political policy and pass it off as the official position of the Church. While denominational leaders and pastors must as individuals always be free to express their political convictions without fear of pressure from their constituencies, they must remember that their offices do not entitle them to speak officially for the Church in matters of politics. They are called to proclaim biblical doctrine, not political doctrine. The Bible is hardly a handbook of political science. The Church was not established as a political debating society or pressure group. Rather, the Church exists as a spiritual body to exalt the Triune God, call men to repentance and faith in Christ, and equip them for his service. The Bible declares the eternal truth of God, which, if preached and believed, will enable Christians to live as responsible citizens in the city of man.

In the complexities of politics it is often difficult — and sometimes well-nigh impossible — for anyone to assert that a given viewpoint is *the* Christian position. For ecclesiastical leaders to make political pronouncements in the name of the Church is irresponsibly presumptuous and violates the duties of their offices. Clergymen have no mandate to make the pulpit or the organized church a sounding board for political dogma or strategy. Their task is to sound forth the Word of God to man and fearlessly address the moral problems of our day.

Contrary to Dr. Douglass's claim that it is absurd for the Church to stay out of politics, great dangers await the Church when it deteriorates to the place where its evangelistic program emphasizes political action to redeem social institutions. Such a conception of the mission of the Church is a distinct denial of the great commission Jesus Christ gave his Church. For Christian theologians to propose that the mission of the Church is political in character is itself the height of absurdity. To follow such counsel is to disobey God, to destroy the effectiveness of the Christian witness, and to dissipate the Church's service to the world.

The church that takes the political plunge will soon move away from its devotion to God's Word. It will inevitably find its unity ruptured as divergent political viewpoints vie for ascendancy. It will finally see its fellowship grow cold. Its uniqueness as a Christian body will be lost as it increasingly becomes assimilated into secular groups that care not for the things of God but seek only this-worldly objectives. The net result will be that such a church will forsake its love for Jesus Christ, and the world Christ loves will be poorer because of it.

If the Church of Jesus Christ is to have the greatest possible effect on individual lives and society as a whole, it must devote itself to the God-given task of preaching the Gospel and serving mankind in love. To register political convictions, the individual Christian can and should take part in the political parties and organizations that exist for this purpose. No responsible Christian citizen can remain oblivious to social and political problems. He must work actively to solve them. Yet he

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*This editorial, reprinted by permission from the October 14th issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, is one of the best things we have read on the increasing involvement of the Church in politics. Copyright 1966, CHRISTIANITY TODAY, INC.*

must not make the organized church the political instrument for solution of these problems. Christians must actively repudiate ecclesiastical strategists who would use their offices and church organizational structures as a platform for advancing political policies. By witness through word and life, Christians must dedicate themselves to making the Church what God intends it to be: His means of bringing to all men the message of salvation in Christ.

## Virginia Church Urges

### Withdrawal from C. O. C. U.

THIS overture was unanimously adopted by the Session of Rivermont Presbyterian Church on August 14, 1966:

"Whereas, we, the Session of Rivermont Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Virginia, believe and are committed to the proposition that Jesus Christ as the only King and Head of the Church, has, in the Holy Scripture, given to His Church His system for its doctrine, government, discipline and worship; and

"Whereas, we believe the Holy Scripture to be the only infallible authority in all such matters; and

"Whereas, we believe the doctrine, government, discipline and worship of The Presbyterian Church in the United States to be sanctioned and ordained by Holy Scripture; and

"Whereas, we believe that the Constitution of The Presbyterian Church in the United States prohibits our denomination from uniting with any other denomination not committed to the Reformed system of doctrine and government; and

"Whereas, we believe that the participation of The Presbyterian Church in the United States in the Consultation On Church Union (COCU), sometimes called

the 'Blake-Pike Plan,' seriously endangers the aforesaid doctrine, government, discipline and worship of our Presbyterian faith as well as all evangelical Christianity based upon Biblical authority; and

"Whereas, we solemnly affirm that, should the unhappy result of participation by The Presbyterian Church in the United States in the said Consultation On Church Union (COCU) cause our denomination to be included in any merger with other ecclesiastic bodies not committed to the Reformed system of doctrine, we will not become a party to such union, but will continue to bear witness to our faith within the framework of the true Presbyterian and Reformed system of doctrine as found in the Holy Bible,

"Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

"(1) That we, the Session of Rivermont Presbyterian Church, do hereby petition Appomattox Presbytery to take immediate action by overruling the 107th General Assembly to withdraw from all participation by our denomination in the aforesaid Consultation On Church Union (COCU) and that it be further proposed to the General Assembly that it proceed as quickly as possible to further our efforts toward a plan of union with the Reformed Church in America.

**R. McFerran Crowe**  
Moderator  
**Doake R. Vess**  
Clerk of Session."

If the majority of the members of your Session are opposed to the destruction of the Presbyterian Church U.S. they should be encouraged to adopt similar resolutions urging their presbyteries to overture the 1967 Assembly to withdraw. If the presbytery refuses to take action, the resolution should be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for referral to the proper committee of the Assembly.

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# Strategy of the "Liberals"

*The Presbyterian Outlook* — organ of the liberal wing of our Church — recently printed on its editorial page a statement from Ronald E. Osborn's book *A Church for These Times*, published by Abingdon Press.

We reprint it here because it discloses the methods being used to prepare the lay members of the churches of America for the super-church toward which the Consultation on Church Union is rapidly moving. Here is the statement:

"To Members Whose Churches are Participants in the Consultation on Church Union —

"It is only through you that the will of Christ can be made effective in this matter. For humanly speaking, all six of the churches concerned are governed (directly or indirectly) by their members. The common understanding and the common obedience to the Lord's will are the decisive factors.

"Then let your impatience with the present denominational situation be known. Speak out concerning your commitment to a church sufficient for these times. Encourage your minister with the knowledge that you and many other church members are ready for such a reformation of our present ecclesiastical structure as Christ wills. Write letters to the editors of your denominational papers concerning the need for a reunited church, not just a bigger organization but a church truly evangelical, reformed, catholic. Study these matters in groups within your congregation and discuss them informally. Prepare yourself with theological understanding and with pertinent facts, so that when fearful Committees-to-Preserve-Our-Dear-Old-Denomination-Just-as-it-Always-Was-Forever-and-Ever-Amen are organized you will not be swept off your feet by thoughtless charges, frantic drumbeating, and the emotional peti-

tion of ancient slogans.

"You should know that a great host of ministers and of denominational officials long for a reunited church. They are ready for it right now. But they have been taught the myth that their members are opposed to church union, and they do not want to stir up trouble. Let them know that as one church member you are ready for a far greater church than any to which you have been privileged to belong. And let them know that many other members feel just as you do."

## Liberalism Inconsistencies

Many of the men who lead this movement for church union at the national level have stated publicly that they do not believe in the virgin birth, the miracles and the bodily resurrection of our Lord. And yet they assert — quite brazenly, we think — that the union toward which they are moving is the "will of Christ" and that those who oppose the merger are "resisting the Holy Spirit." How men who openly deny the deity of Christ can come to know His will is a bit difficult to understand.

We agree with Mr. Osborn that the great need in Protestantism today is for a Church truly evangelical, reformed, catholic. But these words have a hollow sound when they come from those who no longer believe that spreading the good news that Christ came into the world to save sinners is the primary mission of the Church.

Every Concerned Presbyterian should pray daily that God will work a miracle of grace in the hearts of those ministers and agency officials who are deliberately working to liquidate our Church and its testimony by merger in this liberal-controlled super-church — that God will open their eyes and enable them to see clearly the tragic end which awaits our Church if they are allowed to succeed in their efforts.

## THE CONCERNED PRESBYTERIAN

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