



*"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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## A Learned Minister Questions "Why Presbyterian Union"

**By Dr. John R. Richardson  
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THE Presbyterian Church U.S. (combined with UPUSA) will soon be inundated with some 2.5 million copies of a folder entitled "Why Presbyterian Union." The format is attractive, and the writing is skilfully done. A reader experienced in this area quickly recognizes it as the kind of propaganda frequently used to beguile the unwary and untutored. The verbiage is characteristic of the Ecumenical party.

The paramount argument for the proposed merger rests upon a foundation of sand. This argument is based on an erroneous interpretation of John 17:21. Strictly speaking, the argument must be evaluated from the standpoint of responsible hermeneutics. The folder affirms, "Christian faithfulness to our Master's prayer impels Presbyterians in the United States to form a Church of national scope and international mission in order to make more vital our witness in our land and in the world which is our parish."

John 17:21 has been frequently tortured by those who are only satisfied with that unity we designate monopoly. Such a practice was engaged in widely in 1954 by those who favored an ecclesiastical take-over by the larger group. All who are familiar with ecumenical jargon know that this is the favorite verse employed by those who steadfastly refuse to recognize vital intellectual differences, and bring them into the open for inspection.

The kindest thing one can say about the interpretation set forth in the folder is that it is grotesquely superficial. Candor, however, impels us to remark that it is a luminous exhibition of enormous exegetical ignorance. To confirm this statement I shall support it with precise quotations of biblical scholars who are to the left of me in their theological stance.

The radical critic Bultmann said the kind of unity envisaged here is "not organizational." He protests that some misuse it for this purpose instead of the unity with apostolic revelation. In a similar vein Dr. Reginald H. Fuller, Professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, declared at the COCU meeting at Cambridge, May, 1967, that the unity of the Church cannot be organized. The Church, he continued, can only provide the conditions under which unity may be created by God. Said Fuller, "This prayer does not mean that

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## Declaration Opposing Present Union Plan

THE Executive Committees of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., Presbyterian Churchmen United and *The Presbyterian Journal* have issued the following statement declaring its opposition to the present Plan of Union of our Church with the United Presbyterian Church.

Instead of organic union with the UPUSA we propose a constitutional realignment of the two denominations, allowing those who prefer to join with the UPUSA and to become a part of the COCU super "Church of Christ Uniting," and allowing those who prefer to worship in a Church which is faithful to the Bible, the Reformed Faith and Presbyterian polity to unite with the Presbyterian Church U.S..

### **Preamble**

*In this time of crisis and decision in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, there is a need for clear direction and commitment. We make this candid statement of our position on the current issues of church union. We, the governing bodies of the undersigned organizations, do hereby adopt and approve this statement.*

### **Statement:**

**We reaffirm our commitment to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.**

**We hope and pray for the restoration and preservation of our church as a truly Reformed**

**and evangelical body.**

**We are opposed to any action that would destroy the historic witness of our church to the true message and mission of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**We are, therefore, opposed to and will resist the present plans for union of our church with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and with the proposed Church of Christ Uniting (COCU).**

**Recognizing the doctrinal divergencies within the Presbyterian Church in the United States and other denominations holding the Reformed faith, we would pray and work toward the realignment of present church structures to the ultimate end that for those who desire it, there will be in America a fervently evangelistic church, faithful to the Bible, the Reformed faith, and Presbyterian polity.**

**Therefore, we seek an open, complete and constitutional realignment of those denominations willing to participate either under a plan of union embodying necessary changes in the present plan, or under some special commission appointed by the General Assembly to accomplish this objective (TRUE realignment), through proper constitutional process.**

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there can be no unity unless and until all Christians are comprehended into a single historical organization."

The architects of this plan for amalgamation will do well to ponder the trenchant statement of Professor Arthur Gossip on the point under discussion. Wrote Gossip, "There is throughout the Church something of a crusade, almost a clamor for organic union . . . which crusade sounds wiser than it is, may indeed be only a particular form of a tendency of the day which still has to prove itself. Everywhere it becomes more and more the fashion to squeeze and compress all men into one particular mold that the majority for the time being happens to prefer; to frown upon and discourage all individuality and variety; which, if it is not a hopeless endeavor, and if it could succeed, would mean the impoverishment of human nature, which can be so regimanted only at the cost of many of its glories and for a sad loss to the general good."

Professor William Barclay of Glasgow in his Commentary on John says the unity our Lord had in mind "was not a unity of administration or organization. It was not in any sense an ecclesiastical unity. It was a unity of personal relationship." In another place Barclay observes that denominations are foolishly condemned. The fact that there are so many branches, he said, is "the Church's great virtue and blessing. Amidst the multiplicity of churches a man will find that Church in which he will find God." Moving a step further, Barclay avers, "Nothing could be less desirable than one great mechanically united Church in which there was a flat similarity in ritual and in worship. Its very diversity is the glory of the Protestant Church." Christians are thus exhorted to set their faces against such proposals for a flat uniformity.

On this point we can also learn from the Book of Common Prayer. This Book affirms that truth occupies the place of primacy, and is indispensable to any unity worthy of the name. Samples: "that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led in the way of truth, and hold the faith in the unity of the Spirit," "united in one holy bond of truth and peace," "beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: and grant that all they who confess Thy holy name may agree in the truth of Thy holy Word and live in unity and godly love."

Such sincere utterances clearly are worlds away from the statements made today by ecumenical neurotics who are long on ecclesiastical machinery and short on efforts to make the Church of the living God "the pillar and bulwark of truth."

In light of the preponderance of evidence that John 17:21 fails to teach what writers of the folder before us claim, they should not be surprised that mature and informed Christians cannot become enthusiastic for a movement that is intellectually intolerable. It is difficult to resist the suspicion that underneath the numerous pietistic phrases found in this folder there lurks the old lust for power that accompanies such ecclesiastical concentration and centralizations.

C. P. Snow has done much to show the ruthlessness of the struggle for power in academic circles. Anyone conversant with contemporary Church structures must be obtuse if he fails to perceive this identical temptation involved in the manipulations found in ecclesiastical circles. For this reason, do your own thinking. Better still, think Biblically. When we think Biblically we shall

promptly become aware that "leaders" who err so egregiously in interpreting John 17:21 cannot qualify to advise us concerning our decision in the present struggle for survival.

## Let the Issues Be Debated Openly

THE Joint Committee of 24 is flooding the churches with a folder—"Why Presbyterian Union"—giving their reasons for favoring the merger of our two churches.

In his scholarly article appearing elsewhere in this issue Dr. John R. Richardson makes it very clear that the Joint Committee's use of Christ's prayer "That they all may be one" (John 17:21) as a reason for organic union contradicts the interpretation which most competent expositors (including even some liberal ones) place on this prayer.

We would hasten to point out several other "reasons" given in the folder which appear to us to be equally fallacious:

**1. The folder says "Presbyterian union offers a new mandate to provide for fuller participation and representation of minorities in the life and leadership of the Church." It is a well-known fact that in recent years conservative minorities have been almost completely ignored in the courts of both denominations. Boards and agencies and important committees and commissions have been "stacked" with liberal leaders. If we judge what will happen in the future by what has taken place in the past, conservatives will have no more to say about programs and policies in the united church than they have today. It is folly, therefore, to believe that the merger will give conservatives a greater voice.**

**2. Another paragraph says, "Presbyterian union will strengthen and make more compelling the special contributions which Reformed theology makes to the whole of Christian life." Our brethren must be naive indeed if they expect the Church to believe this when it is common knowledge that their leaders are planning to abandon Reformed theology entirely in the COCU super "Church of Christ Uniting."**

**3. The folder also says "Presbyterian union would fulfill a widespread desire for union in both churches which has grown throughout many years."**

A "widespread desire" for union has not been growing in our Presbyterian Church U.S.—indeed there is less desire for union today than there was 15 years ago because more and more church officers and members have come to realize that union means the liquidation of our beloved Church and its historic evangelical testimony.

We heartily agree with the folder's concluding paragraph, "Let our debates be free and hearty, but let our fundamental concern be an openness to the leading of God's Holy Spirit in these wondrous days which he has given us."

Most liberal ministers have refused to allow the views of those opposing union to be presented to people in their churches. Some of them, including our 1970 Assembly moderator, have viciously attacked those who are standing for a continuing Church true to the Word of God and loyal to Presbyterian doctrine and form of government.

We say "Amen" to the holding of "free and hearty debates."

# “Wide Freedom of Opinion”

**Dr. William Childs Robinson**  
**Professor Emeritus,**  
**Columbia Theological Seminary**

A pamphlet on WHY PRESBYTERIAN UNION promises that “the new church would be an inclusive community whose members, holding the fundamentals of biblical faith, are allowed wide freedom of opinion in all matters.” This accords with the Confession of Faith which proclaims God alone is Lord of the conscience and has left it free from the doctrines or commandments of men which are either contrary to or beside His Word; likewise, that synods or councils have erred and do err, and are not to be made the rule of faith or practice.

On the other hand, is this the position of those who are now advocating Church Union in our denomination? Our presbyteries have now approved a proposed new chapter 20 to be added to our *Directory for the Work and Worship of the Church*. This declares, “It is the responsibility of Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods to lead congregations and church members to understand and to participate in the work and mission of the whole denomination as expressed by the higher courts in their meetings.”

Many of the current actions of our higher courts are carried with bare majorities, leaving a strong minority holding a different opinion. If it is enacted, the new chapter will force the minority to participate in the actions of the higher courts despite their conscientious convictions that some of these actions are contrary to the Word of God. This applies to such matters as the ordination of women as presbyters, the use of the Covenant Life Curriculum which is based, at least in part, upon an erroneous exegesis of the earthen vessels in 2 Cor. 4.7, and in supporting abortion. According to the 1970 Assembly this is to be done on “the considered decision of a pregnant woman.” In a particular case, this could mean a Session might be required “to participate” in a case which it regarded as murder.

Moreover, those who are pushing the addition of this chapter 20 to our Directory are the very ones who are pressing for the Presbyterian Union. If the brethren are unwilling to allow us liberty of conscience in matters now being passed by narrow majorities in our Assemblies, how can we be sure that they will keep their committal to give us wide freedom of opinion when they get us into the new united Church?

The same quotation from WHY PRESBYTERIAN UNION describes the members of the new Church as “holding the fundamentals of biblical faith.” But are those who are thus pressing for the union lending their weight to keeping the leftists in either Church in accord with the fundamentals of biblical faith? Our General Assembly of 1939 *unanimously* declared that our ordination vows involved the acceptance of the infallible truth and Divine authority of Holy Scripture, and of Christ as

true and eternal God who became also man for us and for our salvation by being born of a virgin, who offered up Himself a sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice and reconcile us to God, who rose from the dead with the body (\*) with which He suffered and Who will come again to judge the world. Are those who are now urging this union with the UPUSA Church and the wider union in COCU supporting these fundamentals of biblical faith, or are they giving their influence to the ordination of those who do not accept the virgin birth of Christ, or the reality of His resurrection from the dead?

“For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”

**(\*) The Confession speaks of the same body, although with different qualities.**

## Covenant Life Analysis

IF you haven't written for your free copy — or enough copies for your session and your church school teachers — then write today for a free copy of *Analysis of the Covenant Life Curriculum*, by Dr. W. A. McIlwaine, retired U. S. Presbyterian missionary. The booklet is free, and if you want additional copies for key persons in your congregation specify number. Write Concerned Presbyterians, 100 No. Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Fla. 33132.

### EL PASO CHURCH DECLARES RIGHTS

**THE 450-member Manhattan Presbyterian Church of El Paso, Texas, added its protest to those of the growing list of churches which are refusing to surrender control of their local church property. Following is the resolution of the session, attested to by the clerk and the moderator:**

Inasmuch as the Presbytery of The Southwest PCUS contemplates a plan of union with the Presbytery of Big Bend and the Presbytery of the Plains, the Congregation of Manhattan Presbyterian Church, in a duly called meeting this 25 day of October, 1970, adopted the following declaration:

1. Whereas Chapter 6 Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in The United States specifies that the officers of an individual church have the power to buy, sell or mortgage its property subject only to the authority of the Congregation they serve, and
2. Whereas the articles of Agreement of the proposed union Presbytery would take away from the Congregation its constitutional right to do as it sees fit with its real property and would vest complete control of the property in Presbytery, and
3. Whereas this church contends that no court of the church has a moral or legal right to usurp the property rights of an individual congregation which, under the Book of Church Order are vested in the Congregation; and
4. Whereas the Book of Church Order (Chapter 6) places upon the officers of each individual church the responsibility for “holding and defending title” to the property of the church.

Now Therefore Manhattan Presbyterian Church hereby notifies the Presbytery of The Southwest that we, the Session and the Congregation, do persevere in our protestation of full and unrestricted ownership and use of the property both real and personal, now belonging to this church.

#### OFFICERS of

#### Concerned Presbyterians, Inc.

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# Brazos "Declaration" Opposes Merger

**BRAZOS Presbytery (Texas) with 33,374 communicant members is the third largest presbytery in our Church. To express their convictions in regard to the proposed union of Brazos Presbytery with Gulf Coast Presbytery (UPUSA), a number of ministers and laymen signed the following "Declaration of Conviction" outlining in detail their reasons for opposing the union presbytery. We are reporting the Declaration in full because most of these reasons are equally applicable in other presbyteries which are considering union with their UPUSA counterparts.**

*A DECLARATION OF CONVICTION and of Opposition to the Formation of a Union Presbytery Between Brazos Presbytery, U. S. and Gulf Coast Presbytery, U.P.U.S.A.:*

In issuing this Declaration of Conviction, those whose names are signed to it wish to make it clear that we are not denying the validity and importance of the concept of the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ, nor are we opposed to the realization of that unity in specific situations. On the contrary, we gladly acknowledge and rejoice in the fact of the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ, in the fact that all Christians are members of the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head. We are not convinced, however, that the unity which our Lord prayed for and which the apostles urged upon the Church always and inevitably necessitates the merger of various organizations of Christians. At times it does. But Church union, in and of itself, is not an automatic and fixed theological good of such overwhelming importance that all other concerns must take second place to it. The merging of ecclesiastical organizations of any kind is a good thing only if the consequences of such a merger are good. And in deciding upon the desirability of any proposed merger of structures, Christians must take into consideration all other factors (practical as well as ecclesiastical) which tend to counterbalance the admitted value of uniting Christians into one ecclesiastical body.

Let it also be noted that in opposing the formation of a Union Presbytery between Brazos and Gulf Coast Presbyteries, we are not dealing with the larger question of the union of the Presbyterian Church U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. This is not the question before us. The question before us is the union of two lower courts of these two different denominations of Presbyterians.

We wish also to make it perfectly clear that while we are opposing *this* merger, at *this* time, trusting Almighty God to guide us, we would also strongly urge an increased appreciation of the fact of our unity with all other Christians, of whatever denomination. We also urge continuing cooperation with Gulf Coast Presbytery, as well as greater emphasis upon efforts to work cooperatively with other bodies of Christians and with other Christian individuals.

In the light of this Declaration of Conviction, we find ourselves to be opposed to the formation of a Union Presbytery for the following reasons:

1. IN REGARD TO THE MISSION OF THE TWO PRESBYTERIES, A UNION PRESBYTERY WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO DO LITTLE, IF ANYTHING, MORE THAN IS BEING DONE AT THE PRESENT TIME OR CAN BE DONE IN THE FUTURE. The program committees

of the two Presbyteries are already union committees and they are presently planning for and carrying out a single program of work. If a Union Presbytery were to be formed, Brazos and Gulf Coast Presbyteries would be no more united in mission than they are now.

2. BECAUSE A UNION PRESBYTERY IS A MERGER OF TWO REGIONAL UNITS INSTEAD OF A MERGER OF TWO DENOMINATIONS, NONE OF THE DENOMINATIONAL PECULIARITIES WILL BE LOST. INSTEAD, EACH PRESBYTERY WILL BRING WITH IT INTO THE UNION ALL THE DENOMINATIONAL BAGGAGE IT IS ALREADY CARRYING. This would not be a matter of such great concern if the two denominations operated in well-nigh identical fashion. But this is not the case. In the Presbyterian Church U.S., planning, staffing, and financing tend to originate with and be controlled by the Presbytery. While the Synod and Assembly agencies do participate by way of offering counsel and guidance, most decisions are made by the Presbytery. In the U.P.U.S.A. denomination, however, financing, review and consequently, control of planning, program and staff tend to flow from the Assembly and Synod down to the Presbytery. We have no desire to debate the merits of these two different methods of operation, but we do note the fact that they exist. Because they do exist, the formation of a Union Presbytery may make cooperation more difficult than it is now, rather than less difficult. This would be true because the whole Union Presbytery would have to deal with both denominational methods of operation instead of working out these matters separately before coming together to plan for program as we do now.

3. A UNION PRESBYTERY WILL TEND TO FRAGMENT THE CHURCH IN TWO WAYS:

a. It creates units within the denomination which are neither PCUS nor UPUSA. A Union Presbytery is a "tertium quid," a "third thing." It is "neither fish nor fowl" but an entity different from anything now existing in either denomination. If enough of these Union Presbyteries are formed, their existence could pose a real problem to the operation of our General Assembly. They could conceivably become "ecclesiastical kidney stones" which are present in the body of the denomination but which do not fit in and so pose an operational problem to our Church. (They could also pose a problem to the UPUSA Church, but since it is so much larger than the US Church, more Union Presbyteries could probably be tolerated before they became a source of difficulty.)

b. The formation of a Union Presbytery will also tend to fragment the Church here in our own Presbytery because there is serious opposition to a Union Presbytery on the part of a considerable number of Church members. Those who oppose the formation of a Union Presbytery could see this step as just one more way in which the higher courts of the Church are disregarding the concerns of the communicant members of the Church.

4. WHEN A UNION PRESBYTERY IS FORMED, A PARTICULAR CHURCH HAS NO OPTION BUT TO BE A UNION CHURCH, WHATEVER ITS MINISTER(S) AND MEMBERS MAY THINK IS PROPER OR WISE. Every Plan of Union with another denomination which has thus far been proposed has had a provision by which a local congregation could withdraw from the union if a stated percentage of its membership wished to do so. But since a

Union Presbytery is not a union of two denominations, no such "escape hatch" is provided for a local Church. Indeed, in the very nature of the case, this is unlikely and probably unworkable. This is true, first of all, because there is presently no provision in the Presbyterian Church U.S. for the establishment of Presbyteries and Synods whose member Churches are not geographically contiguous. But when such Presbyteries and Synods did exist (for example, Texas-Mexican Presbytery and Snedecor Memorial Synod) they were found to be unsatisfactory and — in the case of Snedecor Memorial Synod — to encompass such a large geographical area as to be virtually unworkable. Consequently, a particular Church now has no option but to be a Union Church if it belongs to a Union Presbytery, even though this may be contrary to the conscientious scruples of a large majority of its communicant members. Nor is it likely that this situation will be changed in the foreseeable future.

#### 5. A UNION PRESBYTERY COULD CONCEIVABLY HAVE SOME EFFECT ON THE OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY AND WOULD CERTAINLY AFFECT THE USE AND CONTROL OF LOCAL CHURCH PROPERTY.

**A. Local Church Property** — It is quite clear that the two different denominations have different provisions concerning the property of a local Church, according to the comparative statement of policy and practice issued by the Committee on Cooperation. In both the UPUSA Church and the Presbyterian Church U.S. congregations theoretically may hold title to their own property. In practice, however, the Committee on Cooperation points out that the title to most local Church property is held by Gulf Coast Presbytery, UPUSA. This is in distinct contrast to the situation in Brazos Presbytery, U.S., where title to local Church property is always held by the particular church unless the church is aid-receiving and its land was bought by Presbytery. And even in the case of land bought by Presbytery, title is usually given to the particular church once it achieves self-support.

The Committee on Cooperation and Union, noting the fact that in the PCUS Church, title to property is clearly vested in the local congregation according both to our historic practice and recent Supreme Court rulings, offers its best judgment in the matter in these words: "It is our judgment that no different rule can bind a particular PCUS church under Union without the overt agreement of the particular church." But this is the *judgment* of a Committee, and it is reflected neither in the proposed Standing Rules nor in the Constitution of the Church. And the *judgment* of a Committee seems a slim thread from which to hang so weighty a matter as the ownership of local church property. Quite conceivably, at some future date, it might be discovered that their judgment is inaccurate.

Assuming that the Committee's judgment is correct, however, and assuming also that no future actions will be taken by any church court which will "cloud the title" to local church property — both of which are debatable assumptions — the matter of *control and use* of local property still has not been dealt with adequately. The fact of the matter is, that according to Chapter 32 of the *Book of Church Order* (the chapter dealing with Union Presbyteries) Presbyterian U.S. congregations will be bound by the provisions laid down in the *Book of Order* of the UPUSA Church regarding *control and use of local Church property*. Chapter 62.12 of the *Book of Order* reads as follows:

**"A particular church shall not sell, mortgage**

**or otherwise encumber any of its real property and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the particular church.**

**"A particular church shall not lease its real property used for purposes of worship or lease for more than five years any of its other real property, without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the particular church."**

These provisions will necessarily apply to PCUS Churches in a Union Presbytery for the very simple reason that Chapter 32.2 of our *Book of Church Order* states categorically that "Wherever the Constitutions of the denominations differ, any mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases where the others are permissive." The statement that is quoted above from Chapter 62.12 of the UPUSA *Book of Order* is clearly mandatory. Our own *Book of Church Order* is more than permissive in this regard; it is totally silent. Therefore, without any question, any PCUS church which is a member of a Union Presbytery would have to have written permission from its Presbytery to "sell, mortgage or otherwise encumber any of its real property" or to "acquire real property subject to an encumbrance."

While title might continue to be vested in the particular PCUS churches which enter into a Union Presbytery — though no one can be absolutely sure of this — such churches would immediately become subject to the provisions of the UPUSA *Book of Order* regarding use and control of local church property. To enter into a Union Presbytery would thus mean that particular PCUS churches would give up their right to determine how and when their property might best be used. And holding title to property which cannot be used without the permission of Presbytery seems almost to be an empty legal form, insofar as the rights and privileges of the particular church are concerned.

#### 6. FORMATION OF A UNION PRESBYTERY WILL REDUCE THE ROLE THAT BRAZOS PRESBYTERY PLAYS IN THE PCUS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

a. Our *representation* at the General Assembly will automatically be reduced. This is true because commissioners to the General Assembly shall be elected on the

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## The UPUSA and Gulf Oil

THE February 27th issue of *Business Week* reported that "A special task force of the United Presbyterian Church won its battle to get four stockholder resolutions included in Gulf Oil's proxy statement. The resolutions criticized the oil company's development of oil wells in Angola and Mozambique, questioned a \$70,000. grant which the company made for technical training in Angola, asked that the Board of Directors be enlarged to include consumers, dealers and the public at large and that Gulf's charter be amended to prohibit investment in colonial areas.

Josiah H. Beeman, Secretary of the special task force, estimated that the Church's boards and agencies control "more than 20,000 shares." Gulf has 207,565,234 shares.

That a church denomination should attempt to control the business decisions of a successful corporation like Gulf Oil seems utterly ridiculous. We would call this "meddling."

# Brazos Declaration . . .

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basis of an equal division of the total communicant membership of the Presbytery. Brazos Presbytery at present elects seven Ruling Elder and seven Teaching Elder commissioners to the General Assembly. However, if the total membership of Gulf Coast and Brazos Presbyteries were combined and commissioners elected on the basis of half the combined total, we would perhaps be entitled to only four (and certainly no more than five) commissioners.

b. Eventually the money that goes to the PCUS General Assembly would be reduced. While it is true that through 1972 the benevolent monies of the Union Presbytery would be apportioned to the higher courts of each denomination according to the percentage of gifts given by each presbytery in 1970, it is difficult to see how this could continue. If the kind of fellowship and cooperation developed within the Union Presbytery which its proponents envision as developing, this unequal division of benevolent money would eventually be seen as a breach of fellowship and brotherly cooperation. The question would be asked, just as it was asked when this objection was raised at a ministers' meeting: "Don't you think that the UPUSA General Assembly can spend the money just as usefully as the PCUS General Assembly can spend it?"

This simply begs the question. Ruling and Teaching Elders have obligated themselves by their ordination vows to do all they can to support the higher courts of the Presbyterian Church U.S.. And they are equally obligated to do all in their power to prevent any foreseeable reduction in the support of the higher courts. It is not a question of which General Assembly can spend the money better. It is a question of faithfulness to our General Assembly in accordance with our ordination vows.

## 7. IT IS UNWISE TO FORM A UNION PRESBYTERY IN VIEW OF THE IMPENDING CHANGES IN THE CHURCH.

a. It is quite possible that the next General Assembly will vote to restructure synods. If this is done, it is also quite possible that the Synod of Texas (or its successor court) will restructure presbyteries in order to make the best possible use of its resources. If so, the whole process of forming a Union Presbytery will have to be undertaken again on the basis of new presbytery boundaries.

b. It is conceivable that the Presbyterian Church U.S. and the U.P.U.S.A. Church will unite in 1974. In that case, the Presbytery will have to adjust itself to conform with that union. This may well involve boundaries, standing rules, staff, and structures.

The net result of such changes would be to require our spending the lion's share of staff and committee energy in internal operations instead of in mission. We could well find ourselves spending an inordinate amount of time and energy in ecclesiastical housekeeping instead of being out in the world doing the work Jesus Christ has called us to do.

Obviously, if the good which would result from a Union Presbytery were so great, and if the need for a Union Presbytery were so overwhelming as to make it imperative that we form a Union Presbytery no matter what the future holds, we should do so. But if it is the case—as it seems to be—that the gains in term of mission and program will be either minimal or non-existent, then the uncertainty of the future ought to be a factor in deciding whether or not to form a Union Presbytery. The best course of action in regard to a

Union Presbytery would then seem to be: "Don't just do something, stand there!"

## 8. THERE ARE FLAWS IN THE PROPOSED STANDING RULES.

Since each Teaching or Ruling Elder will have his own ideas as to the flaws which are present in the Standing Rules, and since each person will also have to determine the weight he will give these flaws, no attempt is made here to pinpoint all these flaws.

There is one exception to this, however, and that is the provision made in the proposed Standing Rules for the nomination, review, control and responsibilities of the Presbytery Staff. It is quite clear from Article II Sec. C.3., and from Article III. Section C.1, that the Union Presbytery will not have sole power to select its own staff and guide their actions. This power will be shared by the Union Presbytery with the U.P.U.S.A. Synod and with certain structures of the General Assembly of the U.P.U.S.A. Church.

In regard to other flaws in the proposed Standing Rules, it may be said that: "After all, Standing Rules can be amended. Why worry about disagreements with them?" But the provisions written into the proposed Standing Rules concerning nomination, review and control of Presbytery Staff *cannot* be changed. Our Standing Rules were written to conform with the requirements of the U.P.U.S.A. Assembly procedures, and so must remain approximately as they are unless the procedures of the U.P.U.S.A. Church change.

To become a Union Presbytery with Gulf Coast Presbytery, U.P.U.S.A. would mean that we no longer would have sole power to select, review and guide the work of the Presbytery's Staff. We would thus surrender control of Presbytery's Staff to other groups and agencies. **Footnote: On February 9th BRAZOS Presbytery rejected the formation of a union presbytery.**

## PRIME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

IN the rallies which Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. and Presbyterian Churchmen United have been holding all over the Church there is usually a Question and Answer Period following the talks. Most of the questions are honestly seeking information and guidance. Occasionally questions are asked in an attempt to discredit our stand. Here are some of the questions which were asked in recent meetings:

**Question: You profess great zeal for evangelism. Do you expect to win men and women to Christ by splitting our great Church wide open?**

**Answer:** This question needs to be answered in two parts.

1. Evangelism is carrying out Christ's Great Commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation." In the last decade those in control of our Church showed so little interest in evangelism that it was necessary for a group of faithful ministers and laymen to form a separate organization to carry out Christ's marching orders. Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship now has eleven evangelists spreading the Good News of salvation. PEF and Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. have been jointly sponsoring Evangelism Training Institutes—training lay men and women to lead the unsaved to Christ. These have proved so rewarding that a dedicated layman has now been employed full time to conduct these Institutes. Our denomination should have been conducting these

activities.

2. In all fairness it seems to us that the onus for "splitting our great Church" should fall on the shoulders of those who show little concern for evangelism, who are violating the Church's constitution which they vowed to uphold and who now seek to have the Church abandon its Reformed Faith and Form of Government. They are really the ones who are "splitting the Church," not the ministers and laymen who stand for the Bible and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church U.S..

If one party to a marriage violates the vows he or she has taken and the situation reaches the point where they can no longer live together in harmony, the onus for breaking up the marriage should certainly be on the unfaithful partner, not on the faithful one.

**Question: What is the position of Concerned Presbyterians on world problems such as hunger? How do you propose to fulfill Christ's command in this regard?**

*Answer:* Our position is that individual Christians who seek to obey their Lord should be concerned about the poor and needy and concerned enough to do something to alleviate their condition. We believe, however, that aid in the form of food and clothing should be administered by Christians and accompanied by a Christian testimony. Born-again Christians will not ignore Christ's command in this respect.

We feel that the Church has a responsibility to stress the need of those who desperately need help — to urge its members to supply these needs. We believe that when these needs are stressed, born-again Christians will continue to respond as they have in the past by helping those who need their help. But we steadfastly maintain that the leading of the unsaved to Christ is the primary mission of the Church — that hunger is not

the "top priority" concern of our Church that the 1969 General Assembly asserted it to be.

**Question: If each local church is allowed to decide whether it will unite with the United Presbyterian Church will not this decision be made by the pastor of the church?**

*Answer:* Not if the Session and Congregation of the church accept their responsibilities seriously. On this controversial issue which threatens the very existence of Presbyterianism every congregation should be given an opportunity to hear both sides before they are required to vote. If your Session should refuse to let the membership hear both sides or refuses to call a congregational meeting for the purpose of voting on this crucial issue, it's time to seek another Church where fairness and justice prevails.

**Question: Don't you think Christ's Church can use brothers of both liberal and conservative persuasion if both act in love?**

*Answer:* Yes, Christ's Church could encompass both groups if they respected one another's viewpoints and did not try to force the Church to adopt the plans and programs of whichever group happened to have political control of the Church at that particular time. In such a church the boards, agencies and important committees and commissions would need to have both groups represented in their leadership at an equal level, the Board of Christian Education would need to supply conservative as well as liberal literature, instead of 4 liberal seminaries two of them would need to be conservative, and so on. We do not believe, however, that a divided Church of this nature would be as effective in serving the cause of Christ as a smaller Church wholly committed to a program which it fervently believes will best serve its Lord.

**IF YOU ARE "CONCERNED" ABOUT THE TRENDS IN OUR CHURCH  
USE THIS ENROLLMENT BLANK TO ENLIST TODAY!**

**Please send information about Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. to the following members of the Presbyterian Church U.S.:**

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100 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Florida 33132

Name .....

**I AM CONCERNED** about present trends in the Presbyterian Church, U.S. Please enroll me as a member of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. and send me your Bulletins and other literature.

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**All contributions to Concerned Presbyterians, Inc. are tax deductible**

# Time for Decision

WE may be very rapidly approaching the day when the members of all church congregations in our Presbyterian Church U.S. will have to vote on whether their church should unite with the United Presbyterian Church and then merge with the C.O.C.U. super "Church of Christ Uniting" or whether to join with the hundreds of churches which will refrain from uniting with the UPUSA.

Southern Presbyterians can no longer afford the luxury of saying "I don't want to become involved." Every church member should become informed without delay regarding the Plan of Union under which it is proposed that our Church unite with the UPUSA. He should read carefully the reasons being advanced by those who favor union and the reasons given by those who oppose it. He should prayerfully weigh the "pros" against the "cons." Having done this he should take a definite stand. The time for action is almost here.

## World Council Aids Brutal Terrorists

THE World Council of Churches recently issued an appeal for \$210,000. to help provide food, clothing and counseling to American deserters from the armed forces and draft-dodgers living in Canada.

The World Council's Executive Committee has appropriated \$200,000. for activist organizations in Africa and elsewhere. Nine of the beneficiaries of this fund are terrorist groups that employ fire and sword against the governments and the people in Portugal's African

provinces, Rhodesia, South Africa and Southwest Africa. Anyone familiar with these terrorist bands knows that the methods of the Viet Cong are almost mild compared with their outrages. In Angola they have been killing captives by running them alive through sawmills!

These are two more potent reasons why our Church should withdraw from its affiliation with this unholy organization.

## Have You Read C. O. C. U. Plan?

IF you have not written to Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., for your copy of the Plan for C.O.C.U.'s "Church of Christ Uniting," do so today, sending 25¢ in coin. This is the plan under which nine denominations, including the Presbyterian Church U.S., are proposing to unite. All members of sessions and other leaders in congregations should read this booklet.

## Special Recording

A special recording of "Meeting the Crisis in Our Church" by Kenneth S. Keyes, President of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., 100 No. Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Fla. 33132, is available to members on loan free of charge. To non-members, the price is \$4 per copy. The tape is a 7" reel and is recorded at 3-3/4 speed.

As the supply of this important message is limited, orders will be filled as they are received.

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