

**Resolution No. 11** from Ruling Elder Charles E. Boyce

Resolved that the Fifth General Assembly of the PCA go on record as being unalterably opposed to godless communism, and that the Church urge all of its members to write to the President and individual Congressmen urging them to do all within the power of our Republic to insure that South Korea and other free nations not fall under communist rule.

Charles E. Boyce  
Western Carolinas Presbytery

Answered §6-111, III, 2; p. 110.

**Resolution No. 12** from the Rev. John Holmes

Whereas the BCO 10-5 is suggestive of the need for conferences of Deacons to aid them in their abilities to minister mercy and fulfill other responsibilities of their office.

**Be it therefore resolved** that we the Fifth General Assembly of the PCA encourage our Presbyteries to begin holding appropriate conferences for Deacons as soon as possible.

Answered §6-75, III, 8; p. 86.

**Resolution No. 13** from the Rev. David G. K. Howe

Whereas the BCO (25-6 through 25-9) states that ordination to the office of ruling elder is perpetual, not to be laid aside at the pleasure of the individual, the session, or the congregation; and

**Whereas** the practice of rotating elders off of the session, in effect removing ruling elders from their rule, is without any warrant from the Word of God; and

**Whereas** the BCO contains provisions for removing ruling elders under special circumstances (age, incapacity, or offense); and

**Whereas** the BCO contains no provision for an automatic rotational system for removing elders; and

**Whereas** some of our member churches are practicing a rotational system.

**Therefore be it resolved** that the Fifth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America advise its member churches to evaluate their present practice in this regard and bring themselves unto conformity with the BCO so that churches without a rotational system will not seek to establish one and churches with a rotational system will consider adopting a plan to establish their ruling elders in a permanent capacity, in conformity with the BCO (25-6 through 25-9).

Respectfully submitted by:  
Rev. David G. K. Howe  
Teaching Elder  
Tennessee Valley Presbytery

Postponed §6-111, IV, 3; p. 119.

## E. JUDICIAL CASES

### COMPLAINT I. FROM RULING ELDER JAMES H. CAMPBELL, AGAINST MID-ATLANTIC PRESBYTERY

The Reverend Morton H. Smith, Stated Clerk  
General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in America  
Box 256  
Clinton, Mississippi 39056

In view of the following extenuating circumstances it is respectfully requested that the late filing of this complaint be excused and that the Permanent Sub-Committee on Judicial Business examine the complaint; particularly in view of the judicial findings. The extenuating circumstances are:

(a) The Commission to the New Covenant Presbyterian Church met in Baltimore on January 16, 1978 for the purpose of receiving information concerning the matters under investigation and to make a report to the Presbytery. I understand this report was made on January 17, 1978.

(b) On 16 January 1978, when informed, unofficially by representatives of the Commission, of the report they intended to make (Enc. 1), I expressed my disagreement with the report and asked if I could appeal. I was informed that I could not appeal as the charges were illegal and had not been accepted by the court.

(c) On 23 January 1978, after several unsuccessful attempts, I contacted the Reverend Leon Wardell, Stated Clerk, Mid-Atlantic Presbytery and requested an official copy of Presbytery's ac-

tion on the Commission's report, as I needed it in order to determine what action, if any, I should take. As of this date I have not received this information.

(d) On or about 13 February 1978 I received in the mail, from the Office of the Stated Clerk, Mid-Atlantic Presbytery, Enclosure (1) and a copy of the minutes of the Called meeting of the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic held on Thursday 8 December 1977. There was no forwarding letter or other information, simply the two items.

(e) On Tuesday 14 February 1978, Mr. Schoof called to inform me that the Commission would be at the New Covenant Church on Saturday 18 February 1978 for the purpose of counselling with me. I informed Mr. Schoof that I would be out of town on business from 16-20 February, and thus would be unavailable. However, this indicated to me that the Commission was still active, apparently had not been discharged by the Presbytery, and thus had not made their final report.

(f) On March 15, 1978, while in conversation with the Stated Clerk, General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in America, I was informed that he had received the minutes of the January 17, 1978, meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery, and these minutes indicated that the report, Enclosure (1), had been received and approved, if I remember correctly.

In view of the confusion resulting from the above, and the fact that the Commission has not been discharged by the Presbytery, it is requested that the requirements of BCO 43-4 be waived and the complaint submitted herewith be received.

WHEREAS, in the action of the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America, at the winter meeting January 16-17, 1978, in Baltimore, Maryland, respecting the approving the report of the findings of the Commission to the New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, which action is contrary to the *Book of Church Order*; the undersigned hereby complains to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America of this action of the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery in the above entitled matter, and for the reasons in support of such complaint, states the following:

(1) The Commission found the charges inadmissible in an ecclesiastical court and cited four (4) grounds:

- (a) **GROUND 1** "The Third General Assembly had ruled that the Directory of Worship, though to be taken very seriously as guidelines, does not have the 'force of law.' It is doubtful whether a church court could censure a party on the basis of provision in the Directory part of the BCO." The Complainant appeals this finding, stating that he was a Commissioner to the Third General Assembly, and it is his recollection that the ruling cited had to do with the "Optional Forms for Particular Services" which were submitted along with Chapters 48-64. I am certain that the General Assembly did not mean that the "Principles and Elements of Public Worship"; "Sanctification of the Lord's Day"; "Public Reading of the Holy Scriptures"; "Preaching of the Word"; "Confessing the Faith"; "Administration of Baptism"; "Administration of the Lord's Supper"; etc. were not to be considered as integral parts of the Book of Church Order. I am certain that the Third General Assembly considered violations of the contents of Chapters 48-64 BCO proper grounds for discipline.
- (b) **GROUND 2** The complaint challenges the application of BCO 28-5. The three members of the Commission, who talked to the Complainant, did not bring up this subject; and two of the members of the Commission, who assisted in drawing up the findings, never interviewed the undersigned. The record shows that 28-5 (a), (b), and (c), were followed.
- (c) **GROUND 3** The Complainant challenges the application of BCO 32-8. I deeply resent the use of this article of the BCO as grounds for rejection. By inference, the Commission, in citing this article, has placed ruling elders, who acted as a matter of conscience, in company with "any person who is known to indulge a malignant spirit towards the accused; who is not of good character; who is himself under censure or process; who is deeply interested in any respect in the conviction of the accused; or who is known to be litigious, rash or highly imprudent." Again, I repeat, only three of the five members of the Commission talked with two of the three elders who preferred charges. Each of the three elders, all of whom are of high moral character, acted according to the dictates of his conscience, and there is nothing in the evidence to substantiate any other finding.
- (d) **GROUND 4** "No evidence of a 'deliberate violation' of the provisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia or Book of Church Order." This finding is challenged as the evidence does not support such a conclusion. Mr. Schoof, of his own free will, signed an official document of the Commonwealth of Virginia, certifying that he had performed a marriage, which he, and every guest present at the wedding, knew that he had not joined the couple in marriage. By this violation of Civil Law, Mr. Schoof, perforce had to violate BCO 60-1 and 60-6.

(2) In further support of this complaint it should be noted that the Commission limited testimony to seven elders, contrary to the instructions of Mid-Atlantic Presbytery; members of the congregation, who had requested to be heard, were not allowed to appear before the Commission; the full Commission did not hear testimony of the undersigned complainant, though he travelled from Virginia Beach, VA to Baltimore, MD for the purpose of being available for

questioning; the Commission changed the purpose and scope of the inquiry without proper authorization from Presbytery.

The undersigned complainant does hereby complain against the action of the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery, and asks that the General Assembly review this matter, declare the action of the January 16-17, 1978 meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery, in approving the report of the Commission of the New Covenant Church to be null and void, and direct the Presbytery to redress this wrong.

In His Service,  
James H. Campbell  
Ruling Elder

**Extract from the Minutes of Mid-Atlantic Presbytery  
January 16-17, 1978**

**Report of Findings of the  
Commission to New Covenant Church**

- 1) Purpose of the Commission.
  - A. Judicially, to rule on the specific charges brought.
  - B. Pastorally, to identify and offer solutions to the problems of antagonism between the Pastor and certain members.
- 2) Judicial Measures:
 

Find the charges inadmissible in an ecclesiastical court.

Grounds:

  1. The charges cite references in the Directory of Worship as grounds for discipline. However, the Third General Assembly has ruled that the Directory of Worship, though to be taken very seriously as guidelines, does not have "the force of law." It is doubtful whether a church court could censure a party on the basis of a provision in the Directory part of the BCO.
  2. BCO 28-5 states that personal admonition and repeated visits with witnesses ought to take place before the judicial process is begun. This seems not to have sufficiently taken place.
  3. BCO 32-8 states that charges should not be received from anyone who is "deeply interested in the conviction of the accused." There is reason to believe some of the complainants fall into that category.
  4. The Commission finds no evidence of a "deliberate violation" of the provisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia or *Book of Church Order*.  
Nevertheless, this decision does not determine the civil legality of the marriage in question. The Commission urges Mr. Schoof to seek competent advice on measures he should take to assure that the union is above question.
- 3) Pastoral Measures:
  1. Recommend that the Commission continue to Counsel only as follows;
  2. Counsel with Bob Schoof about his Administration of the church and his dealings with those who disagree with him. Determine specific changes he can make.
  3. Counsel with the members of the Session (especially those backing Bob Schoof) on the basics of reconciliation. Get commitments from all.
  4. Counsel with Complainants, have them accept the legitimate changes needed to be made by Bob Schoof.  
Speak to them about their illegitimate grievances.  
Counsel with them about forgiveness and reconciliation.
  5. Report to the next meeting of the PRESBYTERY.

ENC. (1)

See §6-49 for Assembly action; p. 74.

**COMPLAINT 2. BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF SESSION OF WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, AGAINST TENNESSEE VALLEY PRESBYTERY**

We, as individual members of the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church do hereby register complaint against Tennessee Valley Presbytery.

History and basis of this complaint is as follows:

April 9, 1978 the pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church took the entire morning worship service to deliver a dissertation on "Your Pastor's Concerns," copy enclosed. This entire presentation was given without prior consultation with the Session. The pastor ignored the *Book of Church Order* in his plan, except in his reference to Section 26-2. He overlooked Section 25-1 which clearly deals with the election of officers.

dates and their support are drawn, and these local churches require Christian training materials and information for growth through winning new and discipling present members in Christ.); and

**Whereas**, First Corinthians 12 reminds us that though our tasks may differ we are one, and that each differing task or function is an essential part of this branch of our Lord's Body; and

**Whereas**, this Committee speaks out of this background and prayerful concern for the future of our Church and our commitment to see her a mighty soul-winning instrument.

**Therefore**, we recommend to the Sixth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America the following action:

Direct the four Permanent Committees and their Sub-Committees not to lose the vision of the overall work of the Church so necessary to her welfare; direct the staff to maintain such vision even when pursuing the objectives of their particular areas of responsibility, and so to conduct their promotional and fund-raising efforts as well as the development of their budgets in a manner that will also promote and consider the needs and responsibilities of the other Committees as charged to them by the Assembly; to the end that we will move forward in unity and harmony under our Lord's banner to be used mightily in His work.

The Assembly received the Resolution and referred it back to the Committee of Commissioners on Administration.

Answered in the affirmative, § 6-87, III, 16; p. 98.

#### **6-45 New Business**

The following Resolution was introduced by the Rev. Frederick C. Fowler:

##### **Resolution No. 4:**

Be it resolved that the General Assembly appoint an Ad-Interim Committee for the purpose of studying the subject of Theonomy and to report back to the Seventh General Assembly.

The Assembly received this resolution and referred it to the Committee of Commissioners on Bills and Overtures.

Answered in the affirmative. Referred to Permanent Committee on Christian Education and Publications, § 6-63, II, D; p. 81.

#### **6-46 Assembly Recessed**

The Assembly recessed at 10:10 p.m. The Rev. Laurie Jones led the Assembly in prayer.

## **MINUTES — WEDNESDAY MORNING**

**June 21, 1978**

### **Fifth Session**

#### **6-47 Assembly Reconvened**

The Assembly reconvened at 8:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 21, 1978, with prayer by the Rev. James A. McAlpine.

#### **6-48 Minutes Read**

The Clerk read the Minutes of the previous day, which were approved.

#### **6-49 Partial Report of the Committee of Commissioners on Judicial Business**

The Rev. Richard A. Fraser presented a partial report of the Committee of Commissioners on Judicial Business respecting the Mid-Atlantic Case (§ 6-11, E). The recommendation was approved by the Assembly:

That this General Assembly instruct the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic to schedule, at the next Stated Meeting of that Presbytery, a new hearing on the original charges brought by Ruling Elders of New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, against the Rev. Robert Schoof in accordance with the provision of BCO 44-5, and charge the Presbytery to conform to the BCO, and to keep all principals to the issue informed in timely fashion.

It is further recommended that, if a complaint or appeal should come prior to the Seventh General Assembly pertaining to the above matter, the following serve as a Judicial Commission to adjudicate the matter:

*Adopted.*

**Ruling Elders**

Ernest Mason  
James Westlake  
Larry Mick  
Robert Kirksey  
Kenneth Ryskamp  
Henry Lincoln  
George Gulley

**Teaching Elders**

Thomas A. Cook — Covener  
John Oliver  
John Clelland  
Russell Toms  
Robert Cannada  
C. D. Murphy  
F. Nigel Lee  
W. J. Stanway

**Alternates**

Ralph Langford  
John Moore

Gordon Reed  
Jack Eubanks  
John Holmes

**6-50 Program of the Committee on Mission to the United States**

The Rev. J. Philip Clark introduced a special presentation by the Permanent Committee on Mission to the United States. The Rev. Terry Gyger spoke of the search for a new Coordinator and on hopes and plans for future work. The Rev. Donald C. Graham introduced the "Five in Five Campaign". The ministers of the churches seeking building fund assistance introduced themselves, and each presented his situation. Mr. Graham then spoke on behalf of the campaign itself.

**6-51 Report of the Committee of Commissioners on Mission to the United States**

The Rev. Nathaniel S. Heeth presented the report of the Committee of Commissioners on Mission to the United States.

**I. Responsibility of the Committee of Commissioners**

This Committee received for consideration:

- A. The minutes of the Permanent Committee on Mission to the United States.
- B. The Report and Supplemental Report of the Committee on Mission to the United States with Recommendations (Appendix H).
- C. Various revised Permanent Committee recommendations.
- D. The audit of the Mission to the United States Committee for the year ended December 31, 1977.
- E. Overtures 8 (p. 36), 23 (p. 37), 34 (p. 37), 35 (p. 37).

**II. Discussion of Work Covered**

Your Committee in making report on this work takes due note of the problems under which the MUS Committee has labored this past year, problems of tension, of changes, of challenge and of opportunity. Its work has not been perfect, being in part human, but it has been work with a heart. And your Committee wishes to thank and praise Almighty God for the devotion and courage with which the Committee and its staff have met these challenges. We ask your patience and indulgence both for the Permanent Committee and the Committee of Commissioners as we seek to do the Lord's work through this report.

The recommendations with explanation and grounds speak for themselves.

Please note that the Permanent Committee recommendations in Appendix H have been revised by the Permanent Committee (with the exception of Recommendations No. 2 and 6). In all recommendations except numbers 8 and 10, your Committee is recommending revision to the Permanent Committee wording. We have been asked to be thorough. We have tried to be, to the limit of our all too little knowledge and experience.

**III. Recommendations:**

1. That the Minutes of the Permanent Committee be approved with these exceptions:
  - a. Three sets of Executive Committee Minutes do not show kind of meeting according to "Rules for Assembly Operations" 8-12-3 (a)
  - b. One set omits person closing with prayer; another shows no opening with prayer.
  - c. Minutes of September 12, 1977, noted as approved in October 21, 1977, Minutes but our Committee not supplied with these Minutes.
  - d. Coordinators report shows that it was made but not received as information or otherwise acted upon.
  - e. No Minutes reveal that the report of the Permanent Committee, Recommendations and Supplemental Report were ever approved by the Permanent Committee.

*Adopted.*