

Laymen's

Examiner

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LAYMEN'S RESEARCH COMMITTEE'S PLAN OF ACTION

by Roy Marrs

Many have inquired as to why the Laymen's Research Group was established, and probably as many more have wondered and asked, "What do you plan to do?"

All who have wondered about these questions can appreciate the fact that when a person is asking a question, he doesn't necessarily have the answer. You may recall that our first public release was accompanied by a group of questions in a pamphlet title "20 WHYS."

The questions in that pamphlet were asked sincerely, and to most of us they remain unanswered. Such a list of perplexing questions cannot be answered immediately. We have not yet attempted to find all the answers. We feel it more logical to study only a few questions at a time.

Consequently, we do not claim now to be presenting a plan which will correct all our problems, nor do we wish anyone to hope that our plans will work miracles. We do dare to hope that they will be better than our present methods for which they are offered as a replacement.

In our study of problems, confronting the Church, we have arrived at a few conclusions that are reflected in the changes which we are proposing in a set of "Bylaws," following in this issue of the Examiner. We suggest that you keep this issue for future reference, as we plan to publish detailed discussions of the pros and cons between now and camp-meeting.

Some may also wonder, "What do the Laymen's Research people plan to do if they fail to get their proposals adopted?" The answer to that is simple enough, and

IN THIS ISSUE

Complete Proposals for Constitutional Changes by Laymen's Research

we hope will be recognized as a proper course. It is the same plan the Church uses when it fails to gain converts--just keep on preaching ideas.

This is the first time in the history of the denomination when a group of laymen have petitioned a complete re-organization of the General Conference. Ministers have worked out a reorganization before, and the results were significant.

But, no one has ever begun before conference time to publicize their views as to just what they thought ought to be done, and methodically propagandized their opinions. This is actually the method which ought to be followed, and according to parliamentary practice, major changes are not usually allowed in constitutions without adequate airing to the membership.

It is the desire of the L.R.C. to publish at least two more issues of the Examiner before conference time, to discuss their reasons for proposing the changes which are advocated in the "Bylaws" which they propose, and also to state objections which they and anyone else may raise to the proposed bylaws, or specific parts of them.

We invite your discussion, and will attempt to summarize the objections, printing them in the Examiner. We feel that both the good and bad points ought to be discussed thoroughly so that all of us may more intelligently discuss the matters involved when the petition comes up for discussion in the conference sessions.

(Continued on page 2)

LAYMEN'S RESEARCH, constituted of volunteer members of the Church of God, 7th Day, for better Church government, is a strictly volunteer group, cooperating in the study of Church problems, and recommending solutions through peaceful, democratic process.

Laymen's Research is operated in accordance with democratic principles; it is fully within its legal rights. Activity reports and financial information will be supplied to all active members of this group.

Special offerings needed for research, printing, and promotional work for successful accomplishments. Receipts issued for all funds received. Support your Church in the regular manner; support Laymen's Research as a special and urgent need. It is dependent upon your assistance and prayers. 1 Thess. 5:17 and 21.

LAYMEN'S EXAMINER

The Laymen's Examiner is published in the interest of research and analysis of our Christian concepts of spiritual responsibility (Nehemiah 1), and for the purpose of promoting the great commission of our Lord, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

EDITOR

Roy Marrs

831 Cedar Avenue, Hawthorne, California

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Mary Holbert, W. Va. Myron Coulter, Colo.

LAYMEN'S COMMITTEE

Samuel C. Maynor, Chairman

390 Oxford Avenue, Hawthorne, California

Ed Blenis, Arizona; J. H. Coulter, Colorado; Mary Holbert, West Virginia; Carl Merriam, California; Albert Miller, Oregon; Garner Thompson, Michigan.

+ Statement of Principles +

We believe in Christian liberty which allows to the individual his natural and inalienable right of freedom of conscience.

We believe in that form of government which is so dedicated and ordained to protect the individual in his enjoyment of his natural rights; that the government which fulfills this role is entitled to the respectful and willing obedience of all its people.

We believe that in the exercise of his rights, the member should respect the equivalent rights of others; that each has the right to promote change or improvement, in peaceful and orderly manner, holding that this represents the very essence of religious liberty.

We believe that any legislation or governmental acts which are subversive of human rights, potentially persecuting in character, and against the best interests of the Church should be opposed.

We believe that all of our Christian liberties are embraced and guaranteed in the framework of the best law of all, the golden rule, which teaches that we should do to others as we would have others do unto us. This rule denotes reproof of error as well as commendation of truth.

Finally, we believe in malice toward none and charity for all. I Cor. 13.

-- Laymen's Research

LR PLAN OF ACTION (Cont'd from page one)

If you wish us to publish a summary of either your favorable comments or objections to the bylaws which we propose, or any specific part of them, please send them to us, and we will attempt to be perfectly fair in presentation of them.

Please send your comments to:

Roy A. Marrs

Box 37, Capitol Hill Station
Denver 6, Colorado

If you wish, your name will be used to give credit to the comments you make. If you state no preference as to whether your name be printed or not, we will not refer to the author of the comment.

VIEW-POINTS RESULTING IN THESE BYLAWS

There are certain basic ideas which prompt these proposals. Some of them are:

1. The General Conference does not constitute the "Church." The General Conference is merely a tool of the Church, and as such, members at large are no more logically automatically members of it than they are members of the Education, Publishing, or any other department. We believe that our current system has so identified the General Conference with the thought of its being "The Church," that we have come to recognize its officers as a hierarchy of authority, resulting in emphasizing General Conference growth instead of emphasizing missionary and evangelistic work. We feel that the General Conference ought not be thought of as anything but a tool in the hands of the Church, and that its officers are servants to the Church, not the Church servant to it.

2. The General Conference exists to strengthen the local Church, and not the local church to strengthen the General Conference. The local church ought to be our main emphasis, for it is through it that we feed the flock. It is through the local church that constant contact is made for fellowship. The General Conference, on the other hand, supplies such fellowship only biennially, and only to a small portion of the brotherhood.

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SPECIAL ISSUE

We bring you this special issue of the "Laymen's Examiner" of May 25, containing the entire, original draft of the Laymen's Proposals for Constitutional Amendment or Change.

According to a 1957 Conference resolution, it was recommended that the Conference office should publish all such proposals. We filed our proposals within the time stated, at the Conference office, but we have been informed that they do not have the time to publish and mail them out for us.

Inasmuch as these proposals are being petitioned by the people, according to Constitutional requirement, they will be presented to the coming Conference for consideration and vote.

Therefore, we have found it imperative to send out special issues of the "Examiner" containing these proposals, and the discussions concerning them, to our membership in the Church.

TWO OR THREE MORE EXAMINERS

The Laymen's Research proposes to publish two or three more Examiners before Conference, in which their proposals will be PICTURED OUT and critically discussed, and compared with the present Church operations, which we feel are faulty, and in need of much improvement.

We will publish any sound, sincere criticisms of the LR proposals in a fair manner. The proposals we have drafted can easily be corrected or amended before FINAL ADOPTION at the Conference.

Please be sure that we have your name and address, so that you can receive these special issues of the EXAMINER between now and Conference. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE, the Lord willing.

-- LAYMEN'S RESEARCH COMMITTEE

LR PLAN OF ACTION (Cont'd from page two)

3. Local Churches ought not be overburdened with sending support to other places until they have grown enough to walk. It is fatal to draw all the funds from local work which may possibly be extracted, for it stunts the local work, allowing it no method of growth.

4. The example of limiting the tithes as has been done in our current administration is not biblical, nor logical. Tithes were used as part of the main treasury along with the offerings, with no particular distinction as to use. Tithes were even used for purposes such as attendance and living expenses for campmeetings by families who were not even dedicated to Church work. (Please study Deuteronomy 12, 14.) These two chapters do not uphold the narrow interpretation given by our Church. We feel that a local church ought to have the privilege of stating how much it will contribute to general, state, or district work, and decide for themselves whether it shall come from tithes, offerings, or what. There is no biblical example of the Apostles dictating how tithes and offerings shall be used.

5. We feel that the work has been hurt by preventing individuals from freely indicating where their contributions shall be used. A person more naturally gives large amounts to portions of the work which inspire him the most. This will stimulate better advertising of the work of the church, better understanding, and much more inspiration will be felt when the offering plate is passed.

6. We feel that the Church has been supporting too much of a superstructure, and that the number affiliated in the church does not justify more than four or five districts. We believe that it is not only unnecessary but a waste of personnel, finance, and time, to have so many district overseers, district boards, state conferences, state boards, etc. Four U.S. district boards as the heads of four conferences could easily and efficiently do the necessary supervisory district work, and by having more personnel within their planning, could plan more effective work. As for the General Conference, we feel that it is not logical to place so much responsibility upon the

shoulders of so few men. The results are that planning is inadequate and execution of what is planned is delayed. The General Conference Executive Board has had actual responsibility for everything from placement of ministers in local churches to determining educational policy and approving treasurers in districts. However, you will note that we feel that there is too much authority in the hands of the General Conference Board while, on the other hand, local churches and districts have held too little authority.

7. We feel that ill-will is being generated by failure to delineate areas of duty, and that state conference boards and district boards have entirely too much over-lapping authority. We feel that the number of members in the organization indicates that it would be more logical to do away with state conference systems for the time being and operate the work of the church through district conferences. However, we feel that some districts may be on the borderline and therefore ought to have the privilege of making the decision to have or not to have state conferences themselves.

8. We believe that it is a mistake to impose uniform constitutions on conferences. Uniformity presupposes that the constitutions or articles of incorporation which have been devised fit all the various situations in the Church. Actually, some of the state conferences have already refused to accept uniformity. We feel that any conference, whether state or district, ought to have the privilege of determining how it shall run its own business. Our times demand flexibility of organization, for only flexibility will promote growth. Instead of saddling the church with systems too difficult to change, we should expect and encourage frequent changes to meet evolving needs.

9. We believe that it is strictly against New Testament example and against the operation of the Holy Spirit to restrict the missionary efforts of local churches, state conferences, and ministers

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Please be sure to note: WE ARE NOT HERE DISCUSSING WHO OUGHT TO BE THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH. It will be up to the various conferences to choose the

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L.R. PLAN OF ACTION (Cont'd from page three)

personnel for the jobs which they make. We believe that ministers ought to seriously consider where they would fit into this new structure, and try to visualize the fact that a new emphasis is being placed on missionary efforts and evangelistic activity, as the job for ministers, and that this is an effort to make it possible for them to spend much more time praying, studying their Bibles, visiting, holding meetings, etc., instead of spending so much time in clerical duties.

Because of our convictions, we offer the following bylaws as a substitute plan to replace the old constitution and bylaws completely. In studying the current constitution and bylaws, we were not able to see a clear-cut differentiation in the importance of rules in the "Constitution" and the "Bylaws," so we followed a method suggested in Roberts Rules and simply formulated a simple set of rules, which are then only called "Bylaws." We hope you will prayerfully consider these proposals.

We have advocated that the Church give ample time for consideration of its plans, and that thorough consideration be given before action is taken. Therefore, we are not so much concerned with whether these proposals are adopted at this next conference or not.

If you, the Church, feel that you are ready to adopt these proposals this August, then we are. If you are not, then we, as your brothers, are not ready either, and we will be ready to continue study and discussion of the matter, along with other problems.

Feelings have been rather keen as to the activities of the L.R.C. People usually fear what they do not understand. We hope this issue of the Examiner will help you to understand better how we feel, and the tone of what we plan to do. So far as we are concerned, there is no reason why brethren should be apprehensive of the results of the coming conference session. It ought to be a pleasure to do business for the Lord, and with a determination to understand each other, to follow the two most important precepts of Christianity, we should have a most profitable experience in August.

REMINDER: General Conference convenes August 14. Plan to attend.

THE MEANS TO THE END

In the past, the goals of the Church have been to provide its community with inspiring worship, compelling preaching and productive teachings--while ministering to human problems through effective pastoral counselling. Today, the Church has a much taller order to fill!

Since the last worldwide unpleasantness, there has been a tremendous rise of religious consciousness throughout the United States. This situation poses an acute housing problem. If this heightened interest is to be transmuted into firm conviction, enlarged teaching facilities must be forthcoming. As a result, many a local church now must face up to a new building or re-building program, perhaps for the first time since its foundation.

Furthermore, if church attendance is to be nailed down into active church membership, this is not enough! Moreover, there has been a continuing weakening of the family circle during this paradoxical era, which likewise has witnessed a rise in juvenile delinquency.

Again, it is not enough to denounce and decry the loosening of family ties and declining teen-age morality! Within its budgetary, staff, and physical limitations every church has a job to do: the provision of activity and recreational programs, with basic facilities and equipment.

Youth has the energy to burn in wholesome pursuits. The family that works and plays together, prays together; the family that prays together, stays together!

These multiple tasks impose serious obligations. Costs are high and money is never easy to raise; financing must be carefully planned and astutely directed.

Building, rebuilding, teaching activity and recreational programs demand devoted and farseeing administration.

THESE ARE THE VITAL MEANS TO THE END: THAT ALL MEN WILL COME TO FEEL THAT THEY BELONG IN THE ARMS OF THE CHURCH.

Selected from "Your Church."

VISION!

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he..."

"Honour shall uphold the humble in spirit."
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GENERAL CONFERENCE BYLAWS

(PREFACE: The following are the proposed bylaws prepared by members of the Laymen's Research. Rather than offering a number of proposals to amend the current Church Constitution and Bylaws, it was felt that it would be far less confusing to re-draft the entire document, incorporating all the good features of the former, and submitting the following for study.)

ARTICLE I - Conference Name

The legal name of this conference is: "The General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)." The body of believers affiliated through this conference is known by the inspired Bible name, "The Church of God."

ARTICLE II - Objectives of the Conference

This conference is formed for the purpose of performing functions necessary to undergird the growth of the local church, to give doctrinal stability through a cautious approach to growth in Bible knowledge, and to coordinate efforts to evangelize new fields. Those functions aimed at undergirding the growth of the local church are those which are too expensive or otherwise impractical to have duplicated by each local church. The cooperative activities are performed through the departments of the general conference as outlined in Article XIV.

ARTICLE III - Membership in the Conference

Section 1. Sources of Conference Membership: Members of the conference shall come from five distinct groups: executive committeemen of the Ministerial Council; administrative committeemen; pastors of affiliated churches; elected representatives of affiliated churches; and officers of the general conference.

Section 2. Entitlement to Conference Seats: Each organized church affiliated with this conference is entitled to seat one bona fide member of its congregation as a representative for each thirty of its members, and the pastor of every such church is entitled to a seat in the conference; the chairmen of the departments of the General Conference and the twelve executive committeemen of the Ministerial Council each are entitled to a seat. Each conference seat is entitled to one vote in conference decisions. Laymembers and other ministers are eligible to election as representatives from local churches on an equal basis.

Section 3. Exclusion from Conference Seats: Unless otherwise elected or eligible for membership, the officers of the conference have no vote in conference deliberations. The conference president may not decide a tie vote. Ballots resulting in ties shall reopen the question for discussion on the floor.

Section 4. Term of Membership: Membership in this conference shall be equal to the term of office, for membership by virtue of office; for pastors, the length of employment as a pastor, or for two years if an elected representative.

Section 5. Election of Representatives by Affiliated Churches: Each affiliated church shall elect representatives in number as prescribed in section 2 of this article (above). They shall elect said representatives no less than three weeks prior to conference session. If for any reason an elected position as representative becomes vacant, the affiliated church shall, in case of a special session of conference, elect representatives to complete its quota.

(Continued on page six)

BYLAWS (proposed) (cont'd from p.five)

ARTICLE IV - Officers of the Conference

The officers of the conference shall consist of a President, Vice-president-secretary-treasurer, Historian, and Parliamentarian.

ARTICLE V - Duties of Officers

Section 1. Conference President: It shall be the duty of the conference president to preside over the sessions of the conference, to coordinate planning for the conference next subsequent to his election, to be the official representative of the conference to receive inquiries and proposals for business and to channel them to the proper committee or department for action or consideration, to insure proper functioning of standing or special committees between conference sessions, and to serve as chairman of the standing committees of the conference except the nominations committee.

Section 2. Vice-president-secretary-treasurer: It shall be his duty as vice-president to perform all the functions of the president when it is impossible for the president to perform his duties for any cause, whether removal from office, absence, resignation, or other hindering cause. As secretary-treasurer it shall be his duty to record the minutes of the conference sessions and to prepare and distribute a copy of the minutes to each member shortly after conference session, and to make them available upon request to any member of the affiliated churches; to maintain a record of all properties held by the general conference; to receive funds and disburse them for the operation of the conference, the conference committees, and the conference departments at the direction of the conference chairman as authorized by the conference in session; to be properly bonded; to issue official receipts for all monies received; to maintain accurate records of all receipts and expenditures; to prepare a financial report containing itemizations of each category of expense and present this report to the conference in session, furnishing a copy to each representative. His records shall be audited by a certified public accountant and the accountant's report shall be mailed to the conference members two weeks prior to the conference session.

Section 4. Historian: It shall be the duty of the historian to maintain close contact with the activities of the conference and to publicize activities of its departments, committees and officials, through the church papers most appropriate, and to maintain a written, descriptive record of the general actions and status of the church, including actions of the conference sessions and its agencies or officials between sessions. Information for his use in accomplishing this requirement shall be sent to him in regular monthly reports from the various departments and officials of the church. In case it becomes necessary for the Vice-president-secretary-treasurer to act as President, the Historian shall assume the duties of secretary (but not treasurer) for that time.

Section 4. Parliamentarian: It is the duty of the parliamentarian to be available for questions of parliamentary procedure either from the chair or conference members during sessions of the conference. He shall obtain, at conference expense, copies of the conference bylaws and assure the availability of a copy for each member seated in conference. He shall observe the proceedings of the conference and call attention to deviations from proper procedure which in any way endanger the proper functioning of the conference according to its own regulations or the privileges of any group or individual represented by the conference.

ARTICLE VI - Election of Officers and Standing Committeemen

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All officers and standing committeemen of this conference shall be elected

by majority votes by the conference in session. Voting shall be by ballot. Nominations shall first be received from the nominations committee then from the conference floor.

ARTICLE VII - Term of Office

Each office of this conference expires thirty days after the first biennial conference session following the session in which it was filled. New officials shall work with outgoing officials during the thirty days from the time of their election until their term of office begins. In the offices of president and vice-president-secretary-treasurer, both the old and new officers shall receive pay for the thirty days subsequent to conference session. The other offices may be considered part-time employment and with permission of the conference president may elect to acquaint themselves with their new office by correspondence.

ARTICLE VIII - Eligibility to Office

The conference shall elect officials from nominations of bona fide members of churches affiliated with the conference. All conference offices are open to ministers and lay-members except the office of the chairman of the Department of Ministry, who shall be elected by the Ministerial Council. Nominations for office shall not be offered without prior consultation with the nominee to obtain his consent and agreement to assume the duties of the office if elected, whether the nomination is from the floor of the conference or the nominations committee. It is the duty of the nominator to certify eligibility of the nominee to the office at the time the nomination is presented. All officers are eligible to re-election, except those who may have been removed as outlined in Article IX.

ARTICLE IX - Removal from Office of Officers and Standing Committeemen, and Revoking Ministerial Credentials

Section 1. Method of Registering Complaints: Evidence of malfeasance in office or moral turpitude on the part of any officer of the conference shall be brought to the attention of any credentialed minister of the church by the observer of such evidence. If the minister feels that the charges are well grounded, he shall prepare a statement of charges which both he and the observer shall sign, outlining the evidence upon which the charges are based, and present this evidence to the chairman of the executive committee of the Ministerial Council, who shall prepare copies of the charge for each member of the Ministerial Council executive committee. He shall appoint a committee of three from the executive committee to make further investigation and if their investigation discloses evidence of the validity of the charges, they shall prepare a formal statement of charges, a copy of which shall be given to the accused simultaneously with the other members of the executive committee. The statement of charges shall contain a date for hearing, which shall not be earlier than two weeks from the time of formal presentation of charges but at the earliest practical subsequent date. The accused may obtain counsel, and shall not be denied the privilege of presenting evidence or calling witnesses. He and/or his counsel shall have the privilege of cross-examining his accusers during trial.

Section 2. Interim Replacement: Officers other than president, against whom formal charges have been placed by the committee of three, shall be replaced protempore by the executive committee, from the time of formal presentation of charges until either removed from office or cleared of the charges. If such office in question becomes vacant as a result of the trial, the Ministerial Council executive committee shall select a substitute to complete the term of office. Should the president be called in question, the vice-president shall assume his duties.

Bylaws (Continued from page seven)

(ARTICLE IX)

Section 3. Disposition of Case: Any office in question shall be declared vacant if eleven of the committeemen vote that the officer is guilty of the charges and that they are in fact malfasant or immoral. By majority vote or the defendant's appeal the case shall be referred to the Ministerial Council or the conference in session, whichever convenes at the earlier date, in which case the office shall be replaced until trial of the case. If the officer is cleared of the charges, he shall receive pay for the full term of office, and be eligible for re-election. If he is convicted he shall be removed from office and receive pay for the thirty days subsequent to presentation of formal charges. In case of conviction, he shall be ineligible for re-election to general conference office. He may be convicted as guilty of the charges by 2/3 vote of the council or conference. These rules shall be followed for any elected position of the conference, and for any ministerial credentials in question.

ARTICLE X - Standing Committees

Section 1. Committee Names: The conference shall maintain standing committees known by the following titles: "The Bylaws Committee," "The Research and Planning Committee," "The Agenda Committee," "The Nominations Committee," and "The Administrative Committee." Members of these committees shall be elected as prescribed in Article VI.

Section 2. Organization, Election, and Membership of Standing Committees: The Bylaws Committee shall consist of the conference president as chairman, and two members, one of which shall be secretary for the committee. Members of the Bylaws committee shall be elected from conference members in attendance at the time of election. The Research and Planning Committee shall consist of the conference president as chairman, three ministers and three laymen as members. The members of this committee may be selected for election from the bona fide membership of affiliated churches. Specialists, who may not be bona fide members, may be engaged for technical assistance by the committee at its discretion, but such technical assistants shall have no vote in decisions of the committee. The Agenda Committee shall consist of the conference president as chairman, the chairman of the executive committee of the Ministerial Council as secretary, and three other members elected by the conference from conference members in attendance. The Administrative Committee shall consist of the conference president as chairman and the seven chairmen of the seven departments of the General Conference. The conference president, serving as chairman of this committee may participate in the deliberations but may not vote.

ARTICLE XI - Duties of Standing Committees

Section 1. Duties of the Bylaws Committee: This committee shall receive recommendations from individuals, conferences, or any other interested parties and consider them for action at the first subsequent conference session, as hereinafter limited. Proposed changes shall first be submitted to the department, office, committee or other organ of the conference most affected. The parties concerned may prepare an opinion, which if presented, shall be given to the Agenda Committee simultaneously with the proposed change. If a petition for change is received bearing the signature of fifty (50) bona fide members of affiliated local churches, or from the Research and Planning Committee, it must be presented without change in wording to the Agenda Committee, at least five months before the conference session in which it is to be considered. Petitions received less than five months prior to a conference session shall be referred to the next incoming Bylaws Committee and presented at the following conference session. Proposed changes which originate within the Bylaws Committee shall be presented to the Agenda Committee at least

Bylaws (Continued from page seven)

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five months prior to the conference session in which they are to be acted upon. The committee shall study all proposals for change of the bylaws, and may comment upon the proposals in full or not at all as it may choose when they are presented on the conference floor. No proposals for change shall be considered on the conference floor without first having been considered by the committee and presented by the Bylaws Committee to the Agenda Committee for advertisement to conference members as provided in section 3 of this article.

Section 2. The Research and Planning Committee: This committee shall study and make recommendations on any subject referred to it by the general or district conferences through their officers, by other general conference committees, or which this committee considers necessary for the welfare of the Church. Unless an order of priority is specified by the General Conference in session, the committee shall determine the order in which it considers matters. Studies not begun or not completed shall be referred to the conference in session and if the conference chooses, the incoming committee may be excused from considering the matter. Otherwise, it shall be placed on the agenda of the incoming committee. The conference shall indicate by majority vote whether it prefers to require a priority for consideration of matters. If so, it shall state the order of priority.

Section 3. The Agenda Committee: All new business to be considered by the conference session shall be submitted to the Agenda Committee no less than four months prior to conference session. The Agenda Committee may correspond with the author of any proposal for clarification, and may present such proposals for consideration of the conference members either with or without comment. All such new business shall be presented to all members of the conference no less than three months prior to the conference session, together with regular or unfinished business in an agenda indicating the order in which business shall be considered. The agenda may then be changed only by the conference in session.

Section 4. The Nominations Committee: This committee shall become active six months prior to conference session, and shall receive suggestions from any local church as to preference of nominees for any or all offices. It shall consider the qualifications of various individuals for the offices to be filled and present its recommendations to the conference for each office. It shall not present a nomination without first having gained agreement with the nominee that he would serve in that office if he were elected. The work of this committee may be carried on by correspondence. The list of nominees shall be published in the appropriate official publication of the Church last prior to conference session. The list shall be presented to the publishing department no less than two weeks prior to date of publication.

Section 5. Administrative Committee: This committee shall consist of the chairmen of the various departments of the General Conference. It shall prepare a proposed budget for adoption by the General Conference, and, to reach its budget, suggest quotas for each local church. These quotas shall be presented to the local churches for approval three months before conference time. Each local church shall at that time indicate whether it is willing to assume the obligation to raise its quota, and if not, the amount it is willing to raise, whether more or less than that suggested by the Administrative Committee. The departments must operate within the budgets so prepared or exceed their budgets only in equal amounts of unexpected revenue already in hand at such a time as the decision shall be made to exceed their budget in expenditures. The committee shall receive detailed reports of expenditures and receipts not coming through regular channels, from each department, for use in planning future budgets. The president of the General Conference, as chairman of this committee, shall present to the Administrative Committee a proposed budget for expediting the work of all committees of the General Conference, whether standing or special committees, as anticipated by the proposed agenda wherein it shall involve

(Cont'd on page 10)

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expenditure of conference funds, and as anticipated by usual or special operation of such committees. The Administrative Committee shall plan and agree upon departmental programs of expansion and present them to the Agenda Committee for approval by the conference.

ARTICLE XII - Special Committees

The conference may, by majority vote, establish any special committee for whatever purpose the conference shall deem necessary with or without inclusion of a proposal for such a committee in the agenda, by majority vote of the conference. A proposal for such a committee may be introduced at the beginning of any seating of any session of the conference by any member of the conference.

ARTICLE XIII - Departments of the Conference

Section 1. Names of Conference Departments. The General Conference shall operate seven departments, titled as follows: The Department of Ministry; the Department of Missions; The Department of Education; The Department of Young People; The Department of Publications; the Department of Women's Activity; The Department of Conference Properties.

ARTICLE XIV - Operational Scope and Organization of the Departments

Section 1. The Department of Ministry: This department shall, with conference approval, establish minimum standards for granting of licenses and credentials to ministers; it shall have the privilege of developing plans for presentation to the General Conference for conference consideration relative to any part of the work of the Church, but must consult with the other parties concerned before presentation of such plans; it shall organize and consist of all licensed and credentialed ministers of the Church and hold periodical councils as the department shall deem it advisable or profitable; it shall keep an up-to-date ministerial manual in publication, furnishing manuscript for the manual to be published by the Department of Publications; it shall select a committee from its members or from laymembers or a combination of both to receive manuscript for tracts from the Department of Publications which committee shall be responsible to the Department of Ministry for insuring doctrinal correctness in tracts published by the Department of Publications (this shall not be understood to refer to style of writing nor appearance of tracts); it shall elect eleven executive committeemen who, with the chairman of the Department of Ministry shall comprise the executive committee of twelve; it shall, in cooperation with the Department of Education, plan a regular system of in-service training for the ministry of the Church; it shall develop its own rules of procedure and its own method of organization--neither of which shall conflict with the General Conference Bylaws; it shall determine the doctrines to be taught by the Church and keep in publication an up-to-date manual of the teachings of the Church.

Section 2. The Department of Missions: This department shall plan for all Home and Foreign Missions activities sponsored by the General Conference. The operation of this department shall not imply a limitation on district or local church activities in missionary efforts, but it shall operate for the purpose of insuring that the missionary efforts of the Church remain aggressive by developing missionary programs aimed at systematic evangelization of areas hitherto undeveloped by the Church and by developing plans for use by local churches or district conferences voluntarily or at their request. It shall recommend candidates from undeveloped mission fields, foreign or domestic, to the Executive Committee of the Department of Ministry for receipt of licenses or credentials. It shall make recommendations to the Executive Committee for revocation of licenses or credentials held in mission fields.

Bylaws (Continued from page 9)

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Section 3. The Department of Education: This department shall plan, with the District Executive Boards, for establishment and operation of church schools, academies and colleges as the needs of the Church demand. Educational institutions developed within a district shall be operated by the district. The Department of Education of the General Conference shall serve as an advisory and coordinating council. The department may employ personnel for carrying out the authorized functions of the department as it shall determine necessary and possible within its budget. Districts in consultation with the Department of Education may elect to operate church schools, academies, or colleges cooperatively or within single District jurisdiction. The District Conferences shall make the final decision whether to operate educational institutions independently or cooperatively, but shall first consider the advice of the Department of Education. This department shall also be responsible for planning Sabbath School materials for use of the Church.

Section 4. The Department of Young People: This department shall, with conference approval, plan with district youth organizations, for the development of youth camps; it shall be responsible for youth programs during general conference campmeetings; it shall have the privilege of advising the Department of Publications relative to the publication of youth literature and may submit suggestions for the selection of an editor of youth publications to the Department of Publications, which may or may not follow such suggestions but shall first consult with the Department of Young People before making such a choice. It may make plans which it considers necessary for the benefit of the young people and, after consideration of the proposals by the Administrative Committee, submit them to the conference for approval.

Section 5. The Department of Publications: This department shall be responsible for printing the official publications of the Church. Other departments or districts may employ it for special job printing when it is to mutual advantage to do so. Any department or district may own and operate publishing equipment and print literature according to its own needs when it considers it more beneficial, except that such endeavors shall not be in violation of the General Conference Bylaws nor at variance with doctrines established by the Department of Ministry.

Section 6. The Department of Women's Activity: This department shall formulate its own policy, goals, and methods of procedure in agreement with the bylaws of the General Conference. It shall determine its own method of finance, and maintain its own treasury. The General Conference reserves the privilege of requiring specific changes if it becomes necessary for the general welfare of the Church.

Section 7. The Department of Conference Properties: This department shall constitute a Board of Trustees to hold general conference properties and shall be responsible for their purchase, maintenance, use, and sale. It shall sell or purchase real properties only at the direction of the conference, and shall oversee the use of the real properties in accordance with conference approved Administrative Committee plans. This department shall develop plans for purchase and development of a centrally located camp site. Upon selection of a site, the department shall submit a pictorial, descriptive brochure of the proposed camp site to the members of the conference by mail unless the plans shall have been completed near enough to conference time to warrant presentation of the plans to the conference in session. The members shall discuss the proposed site with their local churches then may vote, by mail if necessary, according to their best judgment. A simple majority approval shall constitute authorization to proceed with purchase. When such plans are completed, this section shall be stricken from further publications of the Bylaws, beginning with "This department shall develop plans for purchase..." and ending at this point.

ARTICLE XV - Organization, Membership, and Election of Departmental Committees.

Section 1. Organization of Departmental Committees: Each department shall be

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(ART. XV, Sect. 1)

operated by a committee. They shall determine their own methods of procedure to expedite business except that they shall adopt no methods which violate the General Conference Bylaws. They may hire themselves or other personnel, or secure voluntary aid, or give charge-free service to their departments as the needs, opportunities and finances may indicate best. They shall consider suggestions from any members or agencies of the Church, but they are responsible to the General Conference for their decisions and therefore must make final decisions or plans as they deem best, subject to conference approval.

Section 2. Election of Departmental Committees: The chairman of each department shall be elected by the General Conference as provided in Article VI of these bylaws. Each district conference shall elect one member for each departmental committee except for the departments of Ministry and Women's Activity. The Department of Ministry, consisting of all certificated ministers of the church, shall elect eleven executive committeemen who, with the chairman elected by the General Conference shall be the departmental committee of the Department of Ministry. The Department of Women's Activity shall provide for its own organization and methods in agreement with the General Conference Bylaws.

Section 3. Membership of Departmental Committees: Any bona fide member, layman or minister, of affiliated churches is eligible to election as chairman or committeeman of any department with the exception of the Department of Ministry, whose chairman and members shall be credentialed ministers.

ARTICLE XV - Functions of the Executive Committee of the Department of Ministry.

This committee of twelve shall be the highest spiritual authority of the Church. Suggestions or admonition given by this committee to any or all parties of the Church shall be given serious consideration by those to whom the admonition or suggestions are directed. The committee shall consider and decide on applications for credentials referred to it by the Department of Ministry and shall ordain ministers so referred for credentials whom it deems worthy; it shall serve as a board of arbitration to hear charges of malfeasance or moral turpitude against conference officers or credentialed ministers and make disposition of such cases as outlined in Article IX of these bylaws; it shall administer the affairs of the Department of Ministry; it shall be aware of the general welfare of the Church and make appropriate recommendations for its progress.

ARTICLE XVI - District Conferences.

Section 1. Organization and Function of District Conferences: Each district conference shall determine its own organizational structure; it shall make its own rules of procedure which shall not be at variance with the General Conference Bylaws; it shall issue licenses to applicants to the ministry preparing to work in the district who qualify according to standards developed by the Department of Ministry and accepted by the General Conference; if requested by a local church of the district, it shall make recommendations for a pastor or special help for evangelistic or missionary work; it shall plan missionary activities for undeveloped areas within the district and announce such plans to the local churches to prevent duplication of planning or overlapping of efforts unless agreed upon for a cooperative effort; it shall determine whether there shall be state conferences within the district or whether the whole district shall be operated under the supervision of the district conference, each district to determine the decision according to its own circumstances.

BYLAWS (Cont'd from page 11)

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Section 2. District Boundaries: The United States shall be divided into four general districts named and unnumbered as follows: District 1, the East Coast District; District 2, the East Central District; District 3, the West Central District; District 4, the West Coast District. The Districts shall contain the following states: District 1. Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Vermont, West Virginia, and District of Columbia. District 2. Arkansas, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wisconsin. District 3. Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. District 4, Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Mexico shall be named District 5. Canada shall be considered unorganized territory, whose churches shall affiliate with the General Conference and shall have the same privileges in the General Conference as churches in organized districts. Canada shall organize its churches into a conference to expedite its work, or the Canadian churches may elect to be annexed by the nearest organized District.

ARTICLE XVII - Church Membership.

Every member of the Church of God (7th Day) shall maintain membership in some local church. If a member does not reside near a local church, he shall apply for membership in any local church which he prefers. If accepted as a member of a local church, he shall send his tithes and offerings to the treasurer of that local church and shall participate in its business sessions on an equal basis with resident members if he chooses.

ARTICLE XVIII - Undeveloped Areas.

Any area, whether in a district of the General Conference or not, shall be open for missionary efforts voluntarily on the part of any credentialed minister of the Church or any affiliated local church, if that area is not being actively evangelized or if no immediate plans are being made for its evangelization. If the work so developed is within an organized district, it shall become a working part of the district within which it is developed, if the work results in establishment of a strong church. Such a work shall not be obligated to send support to the state, district, or General Conference until it becomes firmly established. When it elects to become affiliated with the General Conference and to send representatives to the conference, it shall be considered well enough established to assume its obligations of support.

ARTICLE XIX - Financial Structure

The General Conference shall be financed by funds received from affiliated churches according to the quota accepted by the affiliated churches. Individuals or churches may give contributions for any specific departmental activity which they may choose. Funds shall be sent directly from the local church treasurer to the General Conference Treasurer, who shall issue receipts promptly to the local church. Individuals wishing to make specific contributions to General Conference departments shall send them earmarked through their local church treasurer, who shall issue receipts for earmarked as well as regular contributions to all donors.

ARTICLE XX - Scope of Authority of the General Conference

The General Conference shall have legislative, executive, and judicial authority as follows:

- (a) to define and fix the conditions, duties, responsibilities and

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privileges of church membership;

(b) to define, on recommendations of the Ministerial Council, the qualifications and duties of ministers;

(c) to define and fix the powers and duties of subordinate conferences;

(d) to provide for the organization, promotion, and administration of the work of the Church outside the United States of America;

(e) to define and fix the powers, duties, responsibilities and membership of the Departments, officers, agencies, and their employees;

(f) to provide for all denominational enterprises of the Church, including Sabbath Schools, Home and Foreign Missions, Evangelism, Church Building and Extension, Benevolences, Publishing, Education and Educational Institutions, the work of Laymen, Women's Societies, Young People's Work, and to provide for Departments for their promotion and administration;

(g) to determine and provide for the raising of funds necessary to carry out the work of the Church in its various Departments and agencies, and to provide for the administration and proper accounting of such funds;

(h) to establish such agencies of the Church as may be deemed advisable for carrying out the purposes and program of the Church;

(i) to provide a judicial system and method of judicial procedure for the Church, to hear and determine the validity of charges brought against any minister or member of the Church, and to provide for the proper discipline of the Church;

(j) to provide for the method of representation of the membership of the local churches in the General Conference, and to establish the conditions of membership in such General Conference, and the time and place of meeting;

(k) to delegate its powers to individuals, committees, departments, affiliated churches and subordinate conferences;

(l) to determine the order of procedure for its sessions, to declare them open or closed to observers.

ARTICLE XXI - General Conference Procedure.

The Agenda Committee shall provide for the specific procedure of each Conference Session. Rules, in accordance with accepted parliamentary practice, shall govern the procedure of the conference.

ARTICLE XXII - Method of Amendment.

These Bylaws may be amended as outlined in Article XI, Section 1, of these Bylaws, by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present.

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BYLAWS (Cont'd from page 13) (ART.XX)

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(h) to establish such agencies of the Church as may be deemed advisable for carrying out the purposes and program of the Church;

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PLAN NOW TO

COME TO GENERAL CONFERENCE, August 14 - 23, 1959

A CALL TO PRAYER: From several sections of the country, from various members, has come the urgent appeal that we should sound the general "call to prayer." This certainly is one thing upon which all can be in unity, not praying selfish prayers, but praying that God's will be done, and that He will work all things together for good, to them that love and serve the Lord. Romans 8:28.

Joel says: SANCTIFY A FAST, CALL A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY
Joel 1:14.

We believe there are remedies to our spiritual problems. Many months ago, many of us stated that the best kind of organization in the world, and the finest type of constitution, will only be as good also as the people who administer it. If we are involved in a holy work, it must be manned by people who renounce sin and carnality, quarreling and backbiting, and put on the robes of peace and true holiness, without which no man shall even SEE the Lord! Hebrews 12:14.

"Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your HEART!
Joel 1:2:12,13.

THE LAYMEN'S RESEARCH

- + Has offered to apologize, when it first began, and the offer stands, if it shall be found in serious error, or if it has wronged anyone.
- + Has made several attempts, during 1958 and 1959 to approach the opposition and meet in counseling, or in prayer and reconciliation of differences, so that we could, altogether, work on research and Church proposals.
- + Does not seek to defend its individual members, wherein they might be found in any error or wrong-doing, but it heavily protests unChristlike handling of its people, and failure in handling personal grievances the Bible way.
- + Stands ready to make complete amends if, when its work is tested under proper procedures, it is found "out of bounds" or in any way seeking to hurt or undermine the Church of God. It has carried out Matthew 18:15-17. Having failed, again and again, to receive audience or redress, it is now going to "the Church" to seek correction of its ills, and hoping to cause the least offense possible (to any persons).

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