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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 7, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

RON NESSEN

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JEC*

The attached newspaper article was returned in the President's box with the following notation:

"Did you see this by Les Kinsolving?"

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Dick Cheney

Attachment:

Article from HUMAN EVENTS of 9/11/76
entitled: "The Bizarre Activities of the National
Council of Churches"

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Ron Gessen

Did you see this
by Leo K.?

The Bizarre Activities of the National Council of Churches

One of the nation's leading far-left, tax-exempt pressure groups espouses causes rarely in agreement with the opinions of the rank-and-file of its individual financial supporters

By LESTER KINSOLVING

On March 15, 1975, the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* reported in a page one story that Bishop Valerian D. Trifa, of the Rumanian Orthodox Church, faces revocation of his U.S. citizenship on U.S. Department of Justice charges of having lied about committing atrocities during World War II.

The *Plain Dealer's* religion editor, the Rev. Darrell Holland of the United Church of Christ, cited a *New York Times* report on Dec. 26, 1973, that "some Jewish groups, and the Rumanian government, charge that he played a key role in an abortive Iron Guard uprising that degenerated into an anti-Jewish pogrom, in which hundreds died."

The Rev. Mr. Holland's story did not mention the rather newsworthy fact that Bishop Trifa has for the past four years been a member of the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches.

Nor did Holland's story include the report of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Trifa was a leader of the Iron Guard which, in cooperation with Nazi occupation forces, murdered at least one-thousand Jews in the city of Bucharest alone.

At his denomination's 200-acre estate in Grass Lake, near Detroit, Bishop Trifa denied all such charges and said that he welcomes his day in court and complete vindication.

At the Manhattan headquarters of the National Council of Churches (NCC), the Rev. Dean Kelley conceded that the council of 30 Protestant and Orthodox denominations is aware of the federal charges against Trifa. But he explained

The NCC has displayed a stunning indifference as to whether one of its officials was cooperating in implementing Hitler's "final solution" to the Jewish problem.

that delegates to the Governing Board of the NCC are chosen by the denominations themselves—with such appointments subject to no challenge by the Council.

Another NCC spokesman added that even if missing Nazi leader Martin Bormann were discovered to be an NCC Governing Board member, the matter would be entirely left to the discretion of his denomination.

The Department of Justice action against Bishop Trifa is the culmination of three decades of effort by New York dentist C. H. Kremer, president of the Rumanian-Jewish Federation of America.

The Rev. Kinsolving, syndicated correspondent with the White House press corps, currently edits the religion and political supplement in the North Virginia Globe. He has written for Ramparts, The Christian Century and The Living Church. His political commentary is heard on WAVA radio station (Arlington, Va.) daily.



Dr. Cynthia Wedel, president of the National Council in 1972, ignored a letter sent to her which raised serious charges against a member of the Governing Board of the NCC.

During this time period, Trifa became a U.S. citizen (in 1957) after being ordained and later consecrated a bishop (in 1952) by three White Russian prelates, who designated themselves as heads of the Orthodox Church in America (a member of NCC).

Kremer finally made contact with famed Nazi-hunter Simon Weisenthal in Austria—who verified his claims to *New York Times* writer Ralph Blumenthal. The Department of Justice then launched

an investigation which led to the authorization for present court action by the U.S. Attorney's office in Detroit a year ago March. The case is still pending.

NCC Notified

The National Council of Churches was approached by Dr. Kremer in 1964, when it met in Miami. Three years later, Dr. Kremer met with six of the leaders of the NCC—including the Rev. Dr. Edwin Espy, general secretary. Kremer spent two hours discussing Bishop Trifa's record. But the NCC did nothing.

On Jan. 30, 1972 Dr. Kremer wrote to Dr. Cynthia Wedel, president of the National Council of Churches, asking for a chance to discuss the case of Trifa. Mrs. Wedel, who is now national chairman of Volunteers for the American Red Cross, never answered Dr. Kremer's letter.

Dr. Kremer now writes:

"In my opinion it is an absolute disgrace for the NCC to have accepted Trifa as a member and a few years after I gave them a great amount of documentation to have elected him a member of its General Board. Shame! Shame! Shame! To the General Board of the NCC."

Trifa's membership of the NCC General Board (name now changed to the Governing Board) was largely unnoticed because he was absent from almost all meetings. Then, in February 1975, when the NCC held its Governing Board meeting in Chicago, Trifa was spotted in attendance.

This was the meeting in which the NCC Governing Board entertained a visiting delegation of 20 clergymen from the Soviet Union—without any such NCC hospitality being offered to Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

The rector of Moscow's Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany, Protospesbyter Vitaley Borovoy, when asked about the famed author, replied:

"The matter of Solzhenitsyn is very complex. It would take at least six hours to discuss properly."

Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev was asked during this press conference to comment upon Solzhenitsyn's 1972 Lenton Letter, in which he wrote:

"The Church [in the Soviet Union] is ruled by atheists. Priests have no right in their parishes. . . . By what reasoning is it possible to convince oneself that the planned destruction of the spirit and body of the Church under the guidance of atheists is the best way of preserving it?"

Replied Filaret:

"Solzhenitsyn declared himself not a

participating Christian. In our Church, laymen don't teach Bishops how to lead the Church. . . ."

While the NCC presumes to be the conscience of its claimed 40 million members, here you glimpse how the NCC really wields its "moral" authority.

On the one hand, it remains silent about one of its own Governing Board members who stands accused by the Justice Department of having lied about his membership in that Jewish exterminating agency, the Iron Guard. Whether Bishop Trifa is guilty is of less consequence than the attitude of the NCC, which has publicly displayed a stunning indifference as to whether one of its officials was actively cooperating in implementing Hitler's "final solution" to the Jewish problem.

On the other hand, NCC officials lend moral sustenance to state-subservient clergymen of the USSR, who apologize for a nation that has not only persecuted Solzhenitsyn, one of the towering Christian figures of this age, but has gone about systematically trying to purge religious freedom wherever it exists.

NCC authorities, however, are not without a capacity for righteous indignation.

At the NCC's fall meeting in 1974 in Manhattan, for instance, a carefully picked panel engaged in the invigorating game of "Which Countries Shall We Condemn?" Quite predictably, the NCC condemned right-wing authoritarian governments: South Korea, the Philippines, Brazil and Chile.

One observer at this committee meeting was the Rev. Blahoslav Hruby, the Presbyterian minister who edits the magazine *Religion in Communist Dominated Countries*. The Rev. Mr. Hruby's magazine was previously subsidized by the NCC as a sort of sop to those who have accused the organization of never criticizing Communist countries, but the support was always grudging and finally withdrawn altogether in 1971.

At any rate, the Rev. Mr. Hruby pleaded for some balance in the resolutions. He asked for some inclusion of concern about the massive suppression of freedoms in Soviet Russia and of the murderous, black tyranny of Uganda's psychotic dictator, Field Marshal Idi Amin, whom even the *New York Times* has editorially tagged a "racist murderer." But the Rev. Mr. Hruby didn't stand a chance, with his appeal neatly sidetracked along with other issues the NCC regards as tedious.

NCC's CIA Connection

The NCC's capacity for "selective indignation" was nowhere more apparent than when President Sterling Cary joined with other NCC dignitaries, such as Methodist Bishop James Matthews of Washington and Greek Orthodox Arch-

bishop Iakovos, in calling for "an end to CIA covert action."

Just how any efficient intelligence agency can go about confining its activities to overt actions was not explained by these churchmen, who deplore such actions as the reported U.S. effort to destabilize the recent government of Chile's Marxist president, Salvador Allende.

In the light of Cary's statements, it is interesting to reflect on the fact that the NCC itself has been the recipient of "covert" CIA funds.

Back in 1967, the NCC acknowledged that it had on three separate occasions received financial aid from foundations identified as CIA conduits. Dr. R. H. Edwin Espy, then the general secretary of the interdenominational church body, said the Youth and Student Affairs Foundation, had contributed \$200 and \$2,000

The NCC has been engaged in both "covert" and "overt" actions designed to destabilize governments friendly to the United States.

in 1965 toward expenses of a conference of the NCC-supported National Student Christian Federation.

Both in 1966 and 1967 the Kaplan Fund, also identified as a CIA conduit, gave \$2,000 to assist the NCC in its poverty rights program. And prior to 1965, the David and Winfield Baird Foundation gave between \$3,000 and \$4,000 annually for several years for "direct relief" programs in the United States and overseas to the NCC's Department of Church and World Service. So far as can be ascertained, the NCC never tried to return this "tainted" money.

Moreover, the NCC itself has been engaged in both "covert" and "overt" actions designed to "destabilize" governments friendly to the United States. By paying dues to the World Council of Churches, by drumming up economic pressures against various governments, and by supporting an NCC officially related agency IFCO (Interreligious Federation for Community Organizations), the NCC has played a major part in causing chaos in Africa.

With the Soviet-backed MPLA dominating Angola today, it is interesting to recall that the WCC poured money into this Communist-oriented group—as well as subsidizing both of its rival terrorist groups. Back in 1970, the MPLA was massacring men, women and children in Angola, but that didn't deter the WCC, which in September, through its executive council, voted \$20,000 to these terrorists.

Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, upon retiring as general secretary of the WCC in 1972, didn't seem to care. He loftily told the Associated Press that pouring money into these terrorist groups—though he didn't use that term—was not "inconsistent with a church's role if it is relevant to the real problems faced by man." Dr. Blake, who from 1954 to 1957 occupied the top spot in the NCC, virtually excused the WCC's role in funding African liberation movements. "People have charged us with supporting rapists or terrorists," Blake said, but he suggested the WCC's actions were justified because "these Africans are people dominated by a white minority."

Blake went on: "As for the fact that

some of these liberation groups might be Communist, I don't know... but we have not lost a member church by granting these funds."

Various councils of churches have not stopped their moral support of the WCC because of these destabilizing programs. On the other hand, some of the greatest critics of white-ruled African countries were appalled.

On Sept. 4, 1970, the sole Progressive party member of South Africa's Parliament and one of the stoutest foes of the regime, Mrs. Helen Suzman, expressed alarm. She said the Council's decision to fund liberation groups was "ill advised" and that "This is no way to make a contribution to the solution of the problem of racialism in southern Africa."

Subsidizing LeRoi Jones

Surely some of the more exotic incidents in NCC history have occurred un-

der the stewardship of the recent past president, Rev. W. Sterling Cary. A United Church of Christ official from New York City, Cary spent nine months planning for a major meeting in Dallas in December 1972. The result was disastrous from the very first day, when the NCC invited black militant poet Imamu Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones) of Newark as one of its featured lecturers.

Baraka, a playwright and porny poet, delivered a 90-minute, obviously ill-prepared rambling hate-America, anti-whitey war talk which exuded the stench of a poison gas bag.

Baraka's ranting was devoid of the frequent and vicious anti-Semitism ("cracking steel knuckles in a Jew lady's mouth"), which has been so recurrent in his writing that his invitation by the NCC evoked strong protest from leaders of the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. During a press conference, which I attended, Baraka declined to repudiate such sentiments.

It took newsmen two days to pry loose the fact that the NCC had guaranteed payment of \$1,500 to meet Baraka's lecture fee. "His fee is of no concern to the press," Cary loftily informed numerous reporters from national and church media. And Dr. David Hunter, the NCC's deputy general secretary, reacted with: "It's nobody's damned business! And you can quote me!"

It subsequently became apparent why there was such a fervent attempt to conceal expenditures of money contributed by the estimated 40 million members of 30 denominations who comprise the NCC. It was learned that San Antonio's Catholic auxiliary Bishop Patrick Flores—who was put on the same platform as the \$1,500 Baraka, but who by contrast had his lecture prepared—was not paid a dime.

When asked how he thought this astounding financial discrimination would appear to the nation's Catholics, including Chicanos, Cary laughed, replying: "I think they will celebrate the fact that the Bishop was close enough and had enough of a budget to be with us." Two years

previously, Flores had pawned his Bishop's ring to help the poor.

Commented Orthodox Bishop Mark Lipa of Massachusetts after hearing Baraka's demand for revolution and the destruction of capitalism: "This is the end of the NCC," a highly optimistic remark.

And Houston's Methodist Bishop Kenneth Copeland added: "I'm critical of a program which does not provide someone to answer a man of this sort."

Cary, a generally soft-spoken and affable man, later admitted he not only supported Baraka, but disclosed, when pressed, that he, Cary, was also a signer of the Black Manifesto, a document that makes Baraka's raging sentiments look almost well-reasoned by comparison.

Black Manifesto

Which brings us to another curious chapter in the National Council of Churches. Why the Rev. Mr. Cary chose



Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, former general secretary of the WCC, seemed indifferent to the fact that WCC funds aided the Soviet-backed MPLA, which now dominates Angola.

to bestow praise upon this particular document is difficult to comprehend. Though largely inspired and adamantly supported by top leaders in the NCC, and such officially related NCC organizations as the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), the "manifesto" is not ever likely to be confused with the Sermon on the Mount.

The "Black Manifesto" fairly bristles with hatred against America and advocates a revolution against U.S. leaders.

Indeed, this document, whose title is clearly taken from Karl Marx's call to revolution in 1848, fairly bristles with hatred against America and the white race and advocates a brutal, black revolution against U.S. leaders. Adopted at a three-day conference in Detroit in April 1969—from which white reporters were barred—the manifesto was studded with such incendiary phrases as these:

"It is the power of the United States government, this racist, imperialist government, that is choking the life of all people around the world... We live inside the U.S., which is the most barbaric country in the world, and we have a chance to help bring this government down...."

"But while we talk of revolution, which will be an armed confrontation and long years of sustained guerrilla warfare inside this country, we must also talk of the type of world we want to live in...."

"Let us deal with some arguments that we should share power with whites. We say that there must be a revolutionary black vanguard and that white people in this country must be willing to accept black leadership.... Only an armed, well-disciplined, black-controlled government can insure the stamping out of racism in this country.... We say: 'Think in terms of total control of the U.S.'"

"We the black people assembled in Detroit, Michigan, for the National Black Economic Development Conference are fully aware that we have been forced to come together because racist white America has exploited our resources, our minds, our bodies, our labor...."

"We are therefore demanding of the white Christian churches and Jewish synagogues, which are part and parcel of this system of capitalism, that they begin paying reparations to black people in this country. We are demanding \$500 million from the Christian white churches and the Jewish synagogues. This total comes to \$15 per nigger... Fifteen dollars a nigger is not a large sum of money...."

Evidence of the NCC's involvement in this message of Brotherly Love is not hard to come by. The National Black Economic Development Conference, the group from which the manifesto directly sprung, was headed by James Forman, who, according to the *New York Times* of July 26, 1969, "has operated largely out of the offices of the black staff members of the National Council of Churches." The Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), which the NCC made an officially related agency in February 1974, was the main sponsor of the Detroit gathering, contributing \$50,000 to meet the conference's expenses.

The Rev. Lucius Walker, executive director of IFCO in 1969 and now part of the elite leadership in the NCC, actually arranged the Detroit meeting. His attitude toward the fulminations in the manifesto was disclosed a few weeks later, when he lamented that the half-billion-dollar shakedown demands were too small. "I'm not of the opinion," said the

Rev. Mr. Walker at the annual meeting of the American Baptist convention in Seattle, "that \$500 million is an appropriate or desirable limit... when we get together and work out some figures, I think they will be staggering."

Whether it was for his role in propagating this orgy of hate-America propaganda or for some other such glorious achievement, the NCC thought so well of the Rev. Mr. Walker that it later made him head of the NCC's Division of Church and Society. He emerged as part of the council's top power structure on June 14, 1974, following an incident known as "The Friday Morning Massacre." On that day, General Secretary Clair Randall fired five of the NCC's top

executives, which even the strongly liberal *Washington Post* noted were "all white, all male, and all over 60." Miss Randall said the axing of the high-level leaders was necessary "in order to implement the new structure and management style" endorsed by the NCC's General Assembly.

Those who live by the sword shall die by the sword, warns the New Testament, and there is a certain irony that the militancy and hatred fanned by NCC officials have sometimes come back to haunt them.

Early in 1974, for instance, Miss Randall, a red-hot women's libber, refused to call police when a band of Harlem black militants occupied the NCC offices for 26 hours. NCC President Sterling Cary admitted that these people were risking the lives of people in the building because: "They [the intruders] have sealed the fire doors in violation of the city fire ordinance, placing in jeopardy the lives of the people in this building."

At a press conference, Dr. Cary was asked, why, therefore, hadn't he "asked

There is a certain irony that the militancy and hatred fanned by NCC officials have sometimes come back to haunt them.

the police to stop this 26-hour jeopardizing of people's lives" (including the large number of black NCC employees)? President Cary, a United Church of Christ minister, promptly and nervously passed the question (and the buck) to General Secretary Randall.

"That is a premature question!" growled the imposing Miss Randall. "We must negotiate with them first."

The militants, who occupied the entire eighth floor of the impressive building on Riverside Drive, rifled Miss Randall's files. Still earlier that year, Miss Randall was mugged in her apartment, with the result that when the NCC met in Los Angeles, General Secretary Randall was accompanied by a bodyguard.

The militants who occupied her NCC offices arrived with neatly mimeographed



Some of the more exotic incidents in NCC history occurred under the stewardship of the NCC's recent past president, the Rev. W. Sterling Cary.

press releases which reported, among other things: "With clock-like precision, a group of 30 arrived and took command." They demanded the removal of both Miss Randall and the Rev. Lucius Walker, whom they described as a "shameless example of Uncle Tomism."

Miss Randall and the Rev. Walker Uncle Toms? This represented something on the order of the chickens not only coming home to roost, but laying eggs all over the NCC.

"Let Them Eat Celluloid"

One of the most powerful of NCC hierarchs is the Rev. Eugene Stockwell, a Methodist who heads the NCC's Department of Overseas Ministries.

The Rev. Mr. Stockwell began his campaign to politicize this renowned relief agency by firing its director, Presbyterian layman James MacCracken, on June 14, 1974.

It was the Rev. Eugene Stockwell, who succeeded recently in politicizing the NCC's Church World Service—

the interdenominational \$25-million agency which was established to feed the hungry, and give clothing and shelter to the homeless.

MacCracken had for 15 years served as officer and then director of this agency, founded by 17 denominations in 1946, in a cooperative effort to feed the world's hungry.

Four years later, Church World Service was incorporated into the NCC. Here its policy of feeding the hungry—regardless of the type of government of the country in which they reside—was upheld by MacCracken, despite growing pressure from people like Stockwell.

MacCracken contended: "We must care about the agonizing people of God wherever we can reach them. . . . Is it necessary to ask every question before we act?"

But Stockwell maintained: "At the same time we meet needs we must also be engaged in a sophisticated political analysis of the root causes of poverty and oppression."

When Stockwell fired MacCracken, a national church uproar ensued—including the disgusted protest of a member of the Church World Service Committee, the Rev. Osborne Scott.

Scott is an ordained clergyman of both the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church. He is also a professor of Black Studies at City University of New York.

"Isn't that stupid!" said Scott. "This is a Watergate!"

Scott's charge of "stupidity" referred to NCC's press office, which began issuing press releases expressing "deep appreciation for the distinguished leadership which Mr. MacCracken has given Church World Service for the past 15 years." (Why then was he fired? Explained an NCC newsletter: "The reasons were complex and rooted in organizational factors.")

Prof. Scott, who met with NCC President Sterling Cary and General Secre-

tary Claire Randall about the firing of MacCracken, wrote of these meetings:

• "This power struggle, during a time when our national leadership has been exposed to questions of honesty and integrity, is not only disturbing but embarrassing. I sense the same type of manipulation, hidden agenda and questionable integrity reflected within the structure of the Church and those involved in its leadership."

• "The communications which have been issued to rationalize this action [MacCracken's firing] only serve to emphasize the questionable nature of the act. . . . I have sensed within the staff a sense of frustration, insecurity, and in some respect intimidation which, in spite of the will to carry on, cannot but be reflected in the overall efficiency of the organization."

One of these "communications" was the Rev. Mr. Stockwell's assurance: "The policies of the Church World Service in effect before Mr. MacCracken's departure are the same policies in effect today."

Moreover, reported the NCC, Stockwell "emphatically declared that it is not in the business of promoting violent revolution." This statement was made by Stockwell, and issued as a news release in June 1974.

On Oct. 27, 1975, the *New York Times* reported that among contributors to an anti-South African propaganda film ("Last Grave at Dimbaza") was Church World Service. (There was no such Church World Service contribution to any such film as "The Last Hundred Thousand Graves in Uganda".)

How much of the money given by trusting church members to feed the hungry was diverted into this political propaganda film?

The Rev. Mr. Stockwell was not available for comment, but his assistant, Robert Powell, angrily refused to disclose the amount given. It was learned elsewhere that \$5,000 in Church World Service funds were diverted from the hungry, in order to finance what could be called "Project Let Them Eat Celluloid."

More Hypocrisy

Another officially related agency headquartered in the NCC building (the Interchurch Center) is the Corporate Information Center.

This organization, which operates on a \$195,000 budget, has organized a group of denominational executives into a

Why, if the concern of these religious denominations is simply social justice, have they introduced no such resolution concerning IBM business in Uganda?

group entitled "Church Project on U.S. Investment in South Africa."

For each of the past three years, this organization's denominational executives have pooled their church's stockholdings in IBM, in order to promote a stockholders' resolution designed to inhibit, or eliminate, IBM's doing business in South Africa. (The volume of IBM business in South Africa amounts to approximately one-tenth of 1 per cent, according to IBM headquarters.)

In 1975, the stockholders' resolution asked that IBM stop selling computers to South Africa.

Voted in support of this measure were:

- United Church of Christ—1,035 shares
- American Baptist Home Missions Society—6,800 shares
- Episcopal Church—10,260 shares
- Disciples of Christ—1,037 shares
- Reformed Church in America—1,575 shares
- United Methodist Church (three divisions)—27,097 shares
- Roman Catholic Orders (Capuchins, Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, Mt. St. Joseph Female Ursuline Academy, Sisters of Charity in Cincinnati, Home Mission Sisters of America)—3,404 shares
- National Council of Churches—480 shares

These 52,048 shares owned by these religious bodies earned what IBM computed as approximately \$957,000 in dividends over the past three years—during which period similar anti-South African resolutions were introduced by these people.

But none of the Church Project personnel present at IBM's April 28, 1975, stockholders' meeting in Pittsburgh were willing to answer the following questions:

• Why have these religious denominations accepted nearly one million dollars in dividends from their stockholdings, thus doing business—however indirectly—with South Africa?

• Why have none of the local churches of these religious denominations announced a "collection plate policy" of refusing to accept any pledged financial support from any known stockholder or employe of IBM? (Is not the acceptance of such offerings a form of doing business—however indirectly—with South Africa?) Why have they not also agreed to accept substantial salary cuts rather than accepting IBM money?

• Why, if the concern of these religious denominations is simply social justice, have they introduced no such resolution concerning IBM business in Uganda? (Reports the last U.S. ambassador to Kampala, Dr. Thomas Melady of Philadelphia: "Since President Idi Amin took over in 1971, over 50,000 Ugandans have been killed. I have lived through the horror of seeing 50,000 people brutalized and expelled from Uganda because they were of another ethnic origin.")

"While I served in Uganda, I met several of the wives of prominent Ugandan civilians slain by Gen. Amin's men. One

widow, whose name I cannot reveal, as she still lives in Kampala, asked me if Africans in South Africa suffer more than we do in Uganda. Gen. Amin's men prefer to dispatch their victims with sledgehammers; either that or they force the larger prisoners to take the smaller prisoners and tear off their limbs.")

The anti-South African resolution attracted 1,954,063 IBM share votes. It was opposed by 116,880,321 (more than 98 per cent of the shares). Angry IBM stockholders asked:

• "Are these people prepared to pay South Africa's blacks the same wage

scale [highest of any blacks in Africa] if IBM were to pull out?" (No reply).

• "Why is it that when these people ask for majority rule in South Africa, they monopolize the time and make the majority of the shareholders subordinate to this minority?" (No reply).

• "Why have these religious stockholders shown no such concern about the governments of the Soviet Union and Maoist China—which have regimes far more repressive than South Africa's?" (No reply).

In Milwaukee, the Rev. Carroll Simcox, Editor of *The Living Church* (Episcopal) noted:

"Our leaders have proceeded on the assumption that they know better than the rest of us what is our corporate duty in this matter."

Smear the Critics

The Corporate Information Center's reaction to criticism is similar to that of the NCC's: try to smear the critics.

For example, any of the more than 300 U.S. journalists who have visited South Africa as guests of that government (or the more than 1,000 who have been guests of Israel), the technique is to smear the writer as "an agent of South Africa."

By striking contrast, the NCC has never accused the *Washington Post* of being "an agent of North Korea"—even though that newspaper accepted \$41,035.20 for services rendered in publishing exactly what Kim Il Sung told them to publish, in a series of ads.

Was this money somehow "laundered" or made "clean" because the money went through the advertising rather than the editorial departments of the *Post*, as well as the *New York Times*?

And how is it that such wealthy newspapers can harrumph about "freebies"—in which the comparatively microscopic provision of expenses is made in exchange for no such agreement to print what the host country wants?

Manipulated Conventions

The NCC continues to function by the grace of God, and the treasuries of about eight of its 30 member denominations: (American Baptists, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church U.S. [South], United Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, and the largest contributor, the United Methodists).

The amounts given to support the NCC are determined by the national conventions of these denominations, gatherings which ecclesiastical bureaucrats are thoroughly skilled at manipulating. Such manipulation is manifest in a number of ways, both subtle and otherwise, including the following:

• Generally a majority, or near majority, of delegates are freshmen. If they are not overwhelmed by the amount of required reading matter thrust at them upon arrival (2,275 pages—one million words—at one Presbyterian Assembly), they will generally be over-awed by the platform. Here the bureaucracy carefully mixes hymns, prayers, sermons, and business, with such psychological effectiveness as to suggest that each and every preferred resolution was mimeographed on Mount Sinai. (Unpreferred

resolutions can usually be killed in carefully appointed convention committees—or ruled out of order—or shouted down by establishment allies on the floor.)

• In order to try to reduce or eliminate the budgetary appropriation to the National Council of Churches, one must somehow convince the convention that this will not lead to a point-by-point attempt to revise the entire budget on the floor. While this specter is a non-sequitur, it is generally a sure-fire threat, especially if weary delegates can be persuaded that they may be held in session for hours, or even extra days for a detailed budgetary revision.

• If any local churches dare to cut their support of regional conferences, synods, or dioceses, their pastor is immediately branded by the powers that be. These leaders usually have the power, sooner or later, to ruin his chances for promotion so effectively that he can be marooned in one church for life.

• Financial rebellion against the national or regional structure requires virtually unanimous support from a local congregation. For the local pastor is usually dependent of his livelihood upon the annual campaign for pledged support ("Every Member Canvass"). If he leads a financial rebellion against higher authority, dissidents within the flock might emulate his example.

• At convention, the denomination's entire national bureaucracy along with the bureaucracy's alumni (who are often in preferred parishes) are usually on hand to constitute an army of lobbyists. With a subtle frenzy born out of devotion to the daily bread, they know just how to convince the unwary laity that any objectors to the program presented by the ecclesiastical establishment are the unqualified reincarnations of Judas Iscariot.

• As is the case in gambling establishments, at church conventions the house rarely loses. Laymen have generally been raised to revere church leaders as holy men—rather than the skilled politicians that most of them are. (Extraordinarily skilled politicians, as a matter of fact, since the role requires that they pretend they are not politicians.)

• The law of attrition also favors the establishment. Freshmen delegates to national church conventions usually depart with one of three reactions: (1) acute boredom, (2) unmitigated rage, (3) spiritual exhilaration. Categories (1) and (2) generally avoid all future conventions—some of which, like those of the Methodists and the Episcopalians, go on for 10 days or longer. Category (3) loves all this and will generally return—hardly in any mood to rebel against the producers of such a glorious conclave.

Observed the former Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Clinton Marsh: "A General Assembly is almost consistently more liberal than the constituency. To understand this, one must watch the dynamics of the Assembly. I've watched commissioners [delegates] almost have to take their left arm and push their right arm up to vote, because they are going so contrary to the baggage they brought with them."

What Is to Be Done?

What can the rank-and-file church member do to counteract such an ecclesiastical colossus? After a recent NCC conference proclaimed capitalism un-Christian, *Christianity Today*, the nation's leading interdenominational journal, observed in an editorial:

"The time has come for Christians who believe in capitalism—which they admit can be abused and is indeed in need of correction—to make themselves heard.

"The best way to get their message through to the NCC is to cut off their church's financial support of that body. . . . If the NCC wants to promote the destruction of capitalism, it should do so with money contributed by persons who favor that goal. Much of its constituency does not."

Just how much of the NCC constituency does not is open to question—even though it is hard to imagine more than a minuscule handful of the nation's Methodists, for example, who feel that capitalism is sinful.

It would seem reasonable, rather, to presume that most of the rank-and-file members of those eight denominations (the NCC's financial jugular vein) would agree instead with *Christianity Today's* editorial response to the NCC's capitalism-is-sinful conference:

"What other system do you advocate? Where is there evidence of a better system? Certainly not in the state capitalism of Russia and China, one that makes possible the worst examples of the dehumanization of man. . . . for the foreseeable future, both of these nations will have to depend on the achievements of what this NCC "Hunger Consultation" called a "basically unjust system to keep them going—while they work to kill the goose that lays the golden egg."

Sad to say, however, the average contributing laymen in these eight NCC-financing denominations usually has more than enough of politics in civil government.

There is one way, however, in which the rank-and-file layman can shake down the thunder upon even the most firmly entrenched national ecclesiastical power structure.

Hardly two decades ago, the finances of America's Roman Catholic dioceses were almost invariably concealed from the laity. Then, rather suddenly, dioceses throughout the nation began giving the financial disclosures to which voluntary contributors would seem entitled.

This may have been due in part to the reform effect of the Second Vatican Council. But there was an additional factor: the "book-opener," designed by the small group of reform-minded Catholics who organized the National Association of Laymen.

This unofficial organization designed a rubber stamp, which they offered for less than \$5. It was designed to be stamped on the back of checks made payable to one's local parish. The stamp noted that endorsement of the checks constituted an agreement that all financial records of parish and diocese were to be made available for inspection by the maker of the check.

Protestants whose denominations are continuing to finance the NCC and its continuing series of far-left excesses could do the same sort of thing as these Catholics. Individual Protestants—who are unafraid to protest—could do so with considerable effect, especially at the time of annual fund-raising campaigns (usually in November) in local churches, while pulpits are reverberating with what is known as "the Sermon on the Amount."

In many denominations, the amount asked for is 10 per cent of net income—

or even one-tenth, or tithe, of gross income. This is requested on grounds that since all of one's goods are gifts from God, a significant portion should be set aside for "God's work" (i.e. the Church).

Few Christians will deny the historical fact that the church is the one organization founded by Jesus Christ, who spent his entire ministry accompanied by 12 leaders-in-training, called Apostles. At the same time, even fewer Christians will agree that either the Black Manifesto or the Capitalism-Is-Sinful pronouncement is "God's work."

But how can the individual church member effectively protest his local church giving to a regional structure, which supports a national structure, which in turn supports the NCC? One way is to emulate the Catholic "book-openers"—by ordering a rubber stamp with something on the order of the following:

"Endorsement of this check made in agreement that no funds from this Church will be given to any organization financially supporting the National Council of Churches."

If your local church treasurer cashes your check while your parish continues supporting any diocese, synod or conference which contributes to the NCC—he or she will be guilty of misappropriation of funds.

If your church refuses to accept such a check, don't tear it up—set it aside, in a savings account, until you can find some agency which is both worthy as a cause and trustworthy in expenditures. In almost every congregation the average parishioner can find kindred souls—along with usually sulphuric opposition from many clergy and church board members.

More than one of such protests in a parish—if you seek out, organize and publicize your conviction—can constitute a tidal wave.

Without such a series of grass fires in the grass roots, the NCC under Thompson, Randall, Walker and Stockwell should continue to constitute one of the nation's leading far-left pressure group and tax-exempt lobbies for causes rarely espoused by the rank and file of its individual financial supporters.

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