

YOUR WORLD

ITS PEOPLE AND
ITS PROBLEMS

*Highlights
of an
Opinion Poll*

What Are Episcopalians Like?

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP THE Episcopal Church? What do they know, think, and do about the social relations conditions and needs of their communities and of the world?

These questions were asked as part of a recently completed national study of social education and action in the Episcopal Church.

The study asked also:

What opportunities do Episcopalians have through the Church to get to know and do things about the world in which they live? What use is being made of these opportunities?

These are not idle questions. They go to the very heart of the responsibility of the Church for people and for society. They touch a vital center of Christian life and work.

These questions have a background. For more than fifty years, the Episcopal Church has encouraged its members to study the world of human relations and to do things which would bring it closer to the Christian goal. Leadership, money, and program have been provided through special commissions and through the national and diocesan departments for social relations and social service. Hundreds of parishes have done many things to relieve human need and to improve social conditions and human relations. *What has been the result in terms of the kind of people Episcopalians are?*

To find out, a few thousand Episcopalians were asked more than one hundred questions about the world, its people and its problems. They were asked what they know, what they think, and what they do.

They were asked also some questions about their families, how they make their living, their income, where they live, and about their age.

It was called an Opinion Poll.

It was not possible to ask everybody. It was decided, therefore, to ask a national random sample* of Episcopalians. This is the scientific way to find out something about millions of people and things without checking each one.

We asked the same questions of bishops, priests, and lay people. We asked men, women, and youth; married and single; rich and poor; the much schooled and little schooled; in all walks, conditions, and manners of life.

We asked them questions but do not know who answered what. All we know is that certain answers came from certain parishes. We do not even know the names of persons chosen in each parish for the Poll. Only the rector knows that but he cannot find out what answers these people gave.

The Poll was scientific and confidential.

We asked many questions and here is a sample of what we found out. The full story will be ready for publication at a later date.

In this sample report, a few comparisons are given of what bishops, priests, and lay

*The random sample worked this way: A number of people were picked in a number of parishes all over the country. Parishes and people were chosen according to a mathematical formula, which gave all types of people and all shades of opinion an equal chance to be represented.

people think about a few of the questions asked.

The full report will compare opinions of men and women, people with high, middle, and low incomes, people with much and little schooling, people who go to church often and who go seldom, and so on.

This sample report sticks pretty much to reporting how many people said what. For the most part conclusions are left to the reader.

Here is what some bishops, priests, and lay people said. *What do you think? What would be your answer?*

RELATIONS WITH OUR NEIGHBORS THE WORLD OVER



WILL we have to fight another world war? In one way or another, this question plagues most of the people of the world.

At the present time, lay Episcopalians take a dimmer view of this than either priests or bishops.

Only 66 per cent of the lay people think the world is big enough for the United States and Russia to live in without fighting; whereas about

80 per cent of the clergy believe they do not have to come to blows.

THREE-QUARTERS, or 76 per cent of the lay people say the United States should finance foreign aid programs such as Point Four.

The bishops and priests are even more enthusiastic—95 per cent of the bishops and 88 per cent of the priests are for financial aid to “underdeveloped” countries, to help them raise their standard of living.

UNESCO is very much in the news. In association with the United Nations, it encourages development of education, science, and culture, the world over, and promotes programs to conquer poverty, disease, and illiteracy. Yet, not all Episcopalians knew what UNESCO stands for. Those who knew were only 50 per cent of the bishops and priests, and 33 per cent of the lay people.

RELATIONS WITH OUR FELLOW CITIZENS



CIVIL rights and liberties are among the most urgent social questions of contemporary society.

Half or 50 per cent of the priests believe that freedom of speech is getting to be not much more than a figure of speech.

Almost as many bishops, 43 per cent, agree with them, but fewer lay people, or 37 per cent.

If some people try to suppress free speech, what do other people do about it? Roughly, the same proportion of bishops, priests, and lay people say they discussed it with friends: that is about 60 per cent.

When it came to doing something more than just talk, the picture is different. Only

6 per cent of the lay people had written a letter about it;

15 per cent of the priests, and

32 per cent of the bishops.

Do people of different colors and religious beliefs get a square deal in this country?

79 per cent of the bishops think they do not; also,

76 per cent of the priests; but only

52 per cent of the lay people were aware of the fact that millions of Americans suffer discrimination and other injustices because of their race, color, or religion.

WHAT about equal treatment of different races in the Church, they were asked? On the one hand

27 per cent of the lay people believe in segregation in the Church; and

13 per cent of the priests, and

8 per cent of the bishops agree with them.

On the other hand, 89 per cent of the bishops, 84 per cent of the priests, and 71 per cent of the lay people, believe that people of different races should *not* be treated differently in the Church.

THE CHURCH & CITIZENSHIP RESPONSIBILITY



DOES it matter to the Church whether its people are responsible citizens?

Most Episcopalians of all ranks in the Church believe the parish church should encourage people to vote:

95 per cent of the priests, 89 per cent of the lay people, and 88 per cent of the bishops.

But practically none of them believes the parish should endorse candidates for office.

Better than three out of four believe the parish church should encourage its members to study political candidates and issues:

88 per cent of priests, 85 per cent of bishops, and 76 per cent of lay people.

Only one-half of the lay people (50 per cent) and about two-thirds of the bishops and priests (70 per cent and 65 per cent respectively) approve of an effort by the parish on the Sunday before Election Day to get out the vote.

Fewer still would encourage groups within the parish to engage in political action. (Bishops 52 per cent, priests 42 per cent, and lay people 27 per cent.)

More than 10 per cent, however, would encourage the minister to discuss political issues from the pulpit.

MISCONDUCT of public officials is one of the most widely discussed current topics and has become a national political issue. The Poll asked Episcopalians what standards of behavior they apply to public and private persons.

Almost half of the bishops (45 per cent), priests (46 per cent), and almost two-thirds of the lay people (64 per cent), believe in a double standard of behavior for public officials and private citizens. They expect a higher standard of behavior from the public officials than from people not in public office or employment.

WHAT WILL INFLUENCE THE VOTE



THE vote of most Episcopalians will go this year to the man or the party who, they believe, will best handle relations with Russia and help keep the UN a going concern.

These two issues were rated #1 and #2 respectively out of five listed in the poll under the question—which two are most important to you in making up your mind how to vote this year?

The other three issues listed were:

How to keep the cost of living from going up,

How to handle relations between labor and business, and

Whether Government should control business more.

Despite steadily rising prices, the people in the poll rated control of cost of living as only third in importance out of this list of five current election issues.

WHAT IS THE BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH



SHOULD the Church be an ostrich when it comes to social and economic problems? Most Episcopalians, bishops, 87 per cent; priests, 84 per cent; and lay people, 75 per cent, say *No*. Sixteen per cent of the lay people, however, 7 per cent of the priests, and 3 per cent of the bishops believe that the Church should stick to religion and not concern itself with social and economic problems.

BUT, fewer in each group approve of efforts on the part of the Church to influence government policy, programs and legislation. Forty-one per cent of the lay people and 18 per cent of the priests and bishops believe

that it is not proper for the Church to state a position on practical political issues.

Thus, Episcopalians vote heavily for the idea that the Church should express general concern about social issues: 87 per cent bishops, 84 per cent of priests, and 75 per cent of lay people. However, they are much more cautious when it comes to specific issues. Only 66 per cent of bishops, 64 per cent of priests and 44 per cent of lay people are for having the Church take a position on specific issues.

MUZZLING THE VOICE OF THE PROPHETS



SOME lay people would put a muzzle on the clergy when it comes to a number of controversial social issues, and are quite lukewarm about their speaking on others.

80 per cent of the lay people said the clergy should not speak out on the issue of prayers in the schools.

60 per cent were against having the clergy speak out on labor legislation such as the Taft-Hartley law.

44 per cent took the same position about birth control.

Although about two-thirds of the lay people think it is all right for the clergy to speak on political corruption and anti-Semitism;

slightly more than 25 per cent in each case turned thumbs down on any such talk from the clergy.

About 85 per cent of the bishops and priests would give the clergy a free tongue on the issues of political corruption, prayers in schools and anti-Semitism. However, only about 70 per cent approve of talking about birth control; and fewer still or about 55 per cent approve of clergy discussing labor legislation.

FAMILY LIFE & RELATIONS



CONFLICTING Church loyalties often create tensions which prevent peace and harmony in family life and relationships. These tensions can be acute especially in Roman Catholic-Protestant marriages, due to the Roman requirement that a pledge be signed before such marriages that any children must be brought up as Roman Catholics.

About one out of five, or 20 per cent of Episcopal lay people, believes "it is all right for an Episcopalian who marries a Roman Catholic to agree to let their children be brought up as Roman Catholics."

A few priests, 7 per cent and bishops, 5 per cent agree with them.

The General Convention of 1949 took an opposite view and said that "under no circumstances" should any Episcopalian agree "as a condition of marriage, that the children

be brought up in the practice of another communion."

Most, but not all, Episcopalians agree: 86 per cent of priests, 85 per cent of bishops and only 61 per cent of lay people.

PROTECTING THOSE IN NEED

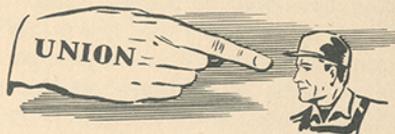


ONE of the important domestic issues, touching on protecting the dignity of persons, is whether the names of persons receiving public relief should be made public. Less than half of the bishops, 46 per cent, priests, 47 per cent, and lay people, 43 per cent, are opposed to exposing to the public the names of persons receiving public aid.

Some are uncertain but a large number are positive that these names should be "available for anyone who wants to see them": bishops 39 per cent, priests 43 per cent, lay people 48 per cent.

The professional social service organizations insist that names of people receiving help is a confidential matter. Many church, civic, and government leaders agree with them.

MAKING A LIVING



ONE of the great national issues today is whether a man should be "forced" to join a union. The problem is posed usually in terms of whether there should be a union shop—as there is in the auto industry, in the coal industry, and in a modified form in the steel industry or a non-union shop.

Most Episcopalians are against the union shop: 75 per cent of the priests and 73 per cent of the bishops and lay people. Some are uncertain, but slightly more are in favor of the union shop than are uncertain:

Favor Union Shop: priests 13 per cent, bishops 9 per cent, and lay people 18 per cent. Most Episcopalians, however, believe that employed people should have the right to organize and join unions and that the federal government should protect this right:

Favor right to organize: priests 76 per cent, bishops 84 per cent, and lay people 64 per cent. Only 11 per cent of the priests, 7 per cent of the bishops, and 20 per cent of the lay people were opposed. The balance were uncertain or did not answer.

CONTROL of the economic life of the country is another problem facing the nation and its people. Three questions dealing with federal control of wages, prices, and profits, were asked.

Most Episcopalians accept some types of government control over the economic life

of the country in times of national emergencies.

Control of wages is approved by 85 per cent of the bishops, 80 per cent of the priests, and 74 per cent of the lay people.

Control of prices is approved by 80 per cent of the bishops, 73 per cent of the priests, and 66 per cent of the lay people.

Control of wages and profits ("if wages are controlled then profits should also be controlled") together is approved by 81 per cent of the priests, 76 per cent of the bishops, and 71 per cent of the lay people.

Do Episcopalians tend to see both sides of these economic issues as the above answers seem to suggest? The full report on the Poll will have something to say about this.

CHURCH CO-OPERATION



EPISCOPALIANS generally favor inter-church co-operation on the local, national, and world levels. There are slight differences, however, in the degree to which approval is given in these areas—as is indicated in this table:

PERCENTAGE WHO APPROVE
CO-OPERATION

	Bishops	Priests	Laity
Local Council of Churches	78	65	65
National Council of Churches	87	69	57
World Council of Churches	86	75	65

HOW RESPONSIBLE DO PEOPLE WANT TO BE



MOST Episcopalians, regardless of church rank, tend to lean towards a "faith in the man on horseback" psychology, (point of view). They feel that the United States needs a few courageous, tireless and devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith more than it needs laws or political movements.

In June of this year, it would appear that Episcopalians would have leaned towards the "strong man" in the following way:

72 per cent of the lay people
61 per cent of the bishops, and
59 per cent of the priests.

On the other hand, those definitely against this point of view were:

28 per cent of the priests
25 per cent of the bishops, and
22 per cent of the lay people.

The remainder were uncertain or did not answer this question.



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