

October 5, 1967

TO: All Bishops
All Clergy
Delegates to the Triennial
Members of the House of Deputies
Members of the Executive Council
Christian Social Relations Chairmen
Communication Chairmen

As a result of approval by General Convention of the Presiding Bishop's program on the crisis in American life, there is need for more specific information about it throughout the Church -- especially among those who may be called upon to interpret the program and answer questions.

In response to this need, we are enclosing "Questions and Answers about the Church's Program on the Crisis in American Life."

This material deals only with that part of the program which has been assigned to Executive Council by General Convention, to be carried out within the General Church Program, the program of the national church.

As Bishop Hines said, "No matter what this Church at the national level may decide we can do in human and financial terms, it will only be a token... if, perhaps happily a sacrament..."

"Unless our men, women and young people enlist in diocesan, parish and mission engagement... even the best effort at this level will prove fruitless." In short, each diocese, parish and individual church member will have to work out his own response.

Within 30 days, you will receive "A Summary of General Convention Actions" issued by the secretaries of the two houses of the Convention.

Within ten days, we hope to have in the hands of the Bishop of each diocese six copies of a film strip and accompanying script (approximately 30 minutes in length) which will summarize the most important actions of General Convention in Seattle. (Should you wish a copy of this sent direct to you, please drop us a line.)

Department of Communication

October 2, 1957

TO: All Bishops
All Clergy
Delegates to the Triennial
Members of the House of Deputies
Members of the Executive Council
Christian Social Relations Chairman
Communication Chairman

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ABOUT THE

CHURCH'S PROGRAM ON THE

CRISIS IN AMERICAN LIFE

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Department of Communication

1. Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM ON THE CRISIS IN AMERICAN LIFE PROPOSED BY THE PRESIDING BISHOP AND ADOPTED BY GENERAL CONVENTION?

- A. In the Presiding Bishop's words, this "Church must take its place humbly and boldly alongside of, and in support of, the dispossessed and oppressed peoples of this country for the healing of our national life."

Among the Program's specific aims are:

to bring "people in ghettos into areas of decision making by which their destiny is influenced."

to "encourage the use of political and economic power to support justice and self-determination for all men."⁽¹⁾

2. Q. HOW DOES THIS PROGRAM DIFFER FROM WHAT THE CHURCH HAS BEEN DOING UP TO NOW?

- A. In three main ways:

1. In the General Church Program, the national program of the church, which was just adopted by General Convention, this program is of highest priority. (In contrast to voluntary "Church and Race" appeals of the past.)
2. Sizeable sums of money will be given directly to community organizations of the poor.
3. Administration of the program will be governed by a "new and crucial principle" -- namely that we "will budget some of our money for others to spend on priorities they themselves have set."

It is this principle, "more than the relatively small amounts (of money) involved" which is "the essence of our response to urban crisis."⁽²⁾

3. Q. IS THE PROPOSAL PUT TO THE CHURCH BY THE PRESIDING BISHOP TO BE PRIMARILY A PROGRAM OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL?

- A. Emphatically not. In his address at the opening service of the General Convention, Bishop Hines issued a caution:

- (1) The Presiding Bishop's Keynote Address to the 62nd General Convention.
- (2) An Open Letter of Response to the Presiding Bishop's Call prepared by a special Joint Committee of the 62nd General Convention.

"No matter what this Church at the national level may decide we can do both in human and financial terms, it will be only a token, a symbol, if, perhaps happily a sacrament. . .

"Unless our men, women and young people enlist in patterns of diocesan, parish and mission engagement, which involves them personally as well as financially, even the best effort at this level will prove fruitless.

"If we attempt to use money to 'buy our way' out of responsibility, the less credible we will appear to men and women struggling with their misery, and the less likely we are to build our part of a bridge between our alienation."

And General Convention echoed this concern:

"Internal change and external action are inseparable. The two must proceed together, or neither will go far.

"It is the racist strain in American life, especially in Church life, and not just the poverty pathology of ghetto life, which we are committed to eradicate."⁽³⁾

4. Q. HOW MUCH MONEY DOES THE PROGRAM CALL FOR SPENDING? OVER WHAT PERIOD OF TIME?
- A. Approximately \$3,000,000 per year of the triennium, 1968-70.
5. Q. WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF THESE FUNDS?
- A. Slightly less than \$2-million a year (\$1,916,301) is part of the General Church Program (the national program of the Church), approved by General Convention. This money comes from the dioceses.
- To this will be added a grant from the United Thank Offering of the women of the Church. The Triennial Meeting in Seattle voted \$2,265,917.47 which, hopefully, will be increased to total \$3-million during the period of the triennium.
6. Q. WHAT ARE THE CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH THESE FUNDS WILL BE USED?
- A. Some funds will go to dioceses to assist their efforts to respond to the urban crisis.

(3) Ibid.

Some will be made available to community organizations, either directly or through such vehicles as the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO).

Altogether, approximately \$2 million a year will be made available in grants through these two channels.

7. Q. FOR WHAT WILL THE REMAINING \$1,000,000 BE USED?

- A. In general, it will be used to assist the Church at all levels...local, diocesan and national. This means to:

assist in the formation and support of broad coalitions (churches and otherwise) to search out the resources needed

persuade the private sector of society to commit both large amounts of money and skills

provide Churchmen with opportunities for direct involvement. This means, in particular, churchmen in business and private life who have special skills needed to solve the problems we face.

bring about appropriate local, state and Federal government action

Much of the money included in the \$1,000,000 is for on-going activities such as recruitment and scholarships for seminary training; support of the ecumenical Urban Training Center in Chicago. All of these will be re-examined, to determine how their services can be better utilized for the purposes outlined in the new priority.

That part of the program to be carried out by Executive Council will use some present staff, augmented by new personnel if necessary. Staff services for other Council programs will be adjusted or phased out accordingly.

8. Q. WHAT IS MEANT BY "COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION"?

- A. A labor union is one example of a "community organization." In the 1930's, the workers of major American industries succeeded in achieving sufficient unity of purpose to set up organizations to represent them.

Through these organizations, they were often able to create enough power to negotiate on an equal basis with management on the terms of their pay, hours, benefits and working conditions.

This power to negotiate and to influence their own destiny, to some extent at least, came to the workers only through deliberate organization of their "community."

Today the powerless and voiceless are in the urban ghettos and forgotten rural counties. In many such situations, however, deliberate efforts to create power through community organization have produced two results:

1. The ability to negotiate with city hall, school boards, and the business community on housing, education and jobs.
2. The ability to design and implement their own programs with their own leadership for dealing with these problems.

In summary, any group, must have power -- political, social or economic -- to achieve its rightful goals. To be without power is to be ineffective.

The people with power enter into the American main-stream of decision-making, negotiation and compromise. Ultimately, as a result, they are reconciled to the main body of our society. This is the fundamental purpose, then, of "community organization."

9. Q. WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION?

A. The Executive Council has given support through many dioceses to a wide variety of community organizations and methodologies. Two examples are:

- 1) Central City Organization, East St. Louis, Illinois (CCO). CCO is an ecumenically sponsored organization of the black ghetto of East St. Louis.

CCO has won several political victories, such as better building code enforcement; black representation on urban renewal and city planning bodies; demolition of slum buildings and the opening of equal job opportunities.

CCO has created and administered several neighborhood programs including the building of an \$800,000 low income housing project, pre-school educational classes, employment placement service and neighborhood job corps projects.

- 2) Grundy County, Tennessee (Office of Rural Renewal). The Executive Council and the Diocese of Tennessee have provided staff and an office for this organization, as resources to the rural population of an economically depressed county.

The goal is to unite the leadership and existing organizations of the area in order to influence and support:

- agricultural and industrial development
- the shape and scope of job training programs
- tourism
- water conservation
- appropriate legislation

10. Q. ARE THERE DIFFERENT FORMS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION?

- A. Yes, many. Every community organization program must be tailored to a particular community and its problems.**

Some programs concentrate on placing funds in the hands of the poor for material improvements, such as housing rehabilitation, consumer and producer cooperatives, low-cost loans for business. The aim here is to return profits to the ghetto instead of outside.

Other projects are concerned more with such matters as developing voter strength and participation in public policy.

11. Q. WHO WILL SELECT THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS WHICH WILL BE GIVEN GRANTS?

- A. This will be determined by the (elected) Executive Council. Exact procedures for administering the funds will be established by Executive Council at its December meeting.**

It has been proposed that a committee, chaired and appointed by the Presiding Bishop, supervise grants and report quarterly to the Council. Members of such a committee would be drawn from:

- Executive Council
- General Division of Women's Work
- Representatives of community organizations.

12. Q. WHAT IS THE INTER-RELIGIOUS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION (IFCO) AND HOW DOES IT FUNCTION?

- A. IFCO is a not-for-profit corporation legally chartered in the State of New York.**

Its function is to:

1. Serve as a grant vehicle for religious institutions and foundations in the field of indigenous community organization. This means community organization designed to establish social, political and economic power in poverty communities;
2. Evaluate the activities of funded community organizations so that their purposes are achieved, and what is learned is systematically disseminated;
3. Provide organization training for community leaders;
4. Co-ordinate community organization activities of the member religious institutions;
5. Provide complete financial accountability to the member institutions.

The Executive Director is the Rev. Lucius Walker, an American Baptist Negro clergyman with a Master's Degree in Social Work, and nine year's experience in community organization and settlement-house administration in Milwaukee.

IFCO members include:

The Episcopal Church
 The United Presbyterian Church
 The United Church of Christ
 The American Baptist Convention
 The Foundation for Voluntary Service
 The American Jewish Committee
 The National Catholic Committee for Community Organization
 The Catholic Council for Inter-racial Justice
 The Methodist Church

Each member organization is entitled to two board members. Episcopal Church representatives (appointed by the Presiding Bishop) are Dr. Inabel Lindsay, former Dean of the School of Social Work of Howard University, Washington, D.C., and George Esser, Director of the North Carolina Fund, a major community development organization.

13. Q. WILL ALL OF THE FUNDS PROPOSED ANNUALLY IN THE BUDGET FOR THE TRIENNium FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION BE TURNED OVER TO IFCO?

- A. Not likely; decisions concerning the proportion to be disbursed in this manner will continue to be vested in the (elected) Executive Council.

14. Q. CAN DIOCESES MAKE APPLICATION TO IFCO FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION GRANTS IN THEIR AREAS?
- A. Yes.
15. Q. IN ANY CASE, WILL THERE BE FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR DIRECT ASSISTANCE BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO DIOCESES IN CRISIS SITUATIONS AND FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION?
- A. Yes.
16. Q. WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA WHICH WILL BE USED TO SELECT SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONS TO RECEIVE GRANTS?
- A. The (elected) Executive Council, by action of General Convention, is responsible for the following aspects of each grant:
- "1. Initial appraisal of the purposes and ends sought to be obtained by the proposed grant recipient;
 - "2. Initial appraisal of the ability of the proposed grant recipient to attain such purposes and ends;
 - "3. Proper accounting by the grant recipient for the proceeds of such grant and audit thereof, in accord with customary procedures;
 - "4. Evaluation of the administration and execution of the grant and of the progress towards the attainment of the purposes and ends sought thereby;
 - "5. The programs contemplated... shall be administered, implemented, and carried out without regard to race, creed, or ethnic origin."⁽⁴⁾
17. Q. REFERENCE HAS BEEN MADE TO GIVING FUNDS WITH "NO STRINGS ATTACHED." DOES THIS MEAN THAT THE CHURCH WILL EXERCISE NO CONTROL OVER THE USE OF FUNDS GIVEN TO VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS?
- A. No, it does not. The criteria just quoted show that proposed programs must indicate some capacity to achieve their objectives and the organization administering them must exercise the fiscal accountability customarily expected of other grant recipients.
- "Otherwise, " in the language adopted by General Convention, "neither the Episcopal
- (4) Resolution No. 6 submitted by the Joint Committee on Program and Budget, adopted by the 62nd General Convention.

Church, nor the Executive Council or any officer or agency thereof, shall undertake to exercise any supervision or control whatsoever over any grant once made, or the administration and execution thereof by the recipient, or the ends and purposes sought to be attained thereby."(5)

18. Q. DOES THIS MEAN THAT SOME OF THE MONEY WILL GO TO GROUPS WHICH ADVOCATE VIOLENCE?

- A. No. The General Convention specifically directed that "none of the funds may be utilized for the benefit of or in connection with the activities of any individual or group which advocates the use of violence as a part of its program."(6)

19. Q. APART FROM THAT, WILL SUPPORT FOR BLACK COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS INCREASE THE GROWING SEPARATION OF WHITE AND BLACK COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA?

- A. No. Direct help to organizations "among the ghetto poor is not a substitute for, but a needed tactic toward full integration and a genuinely open American society. Multi-racial community at every level, not separatism, is our goal.

We are realists, however, about inter-group power relationships. We know that the 'have-nots' must share in the power of the 'haves' before a community can be open to either."(7)

20. Q. IS THE PROGRAM INTENDED ONLY FOR THE LARGE URBAN AREAS?

- A. No. It aims at rural slums as well as city tenements; programs in any impoverished community will be carefully appraised.

Whereas the program's major concern is for those who are "both black and poor" no segment of American society is untouched by the growing separation between "haves and have-nots."

21. Q. WILL THE PROGRAM BE CARRIED OUT BY THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH ALONE, OR WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS?

- A. No. In proposing this program, the Presiding Bishop appealed to Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Jewish churchmen to join in a mobilization of resources.

There are serious responses on the part of leaders of several major church bodies,

(5) Ibid.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Open Letter of Response

pledging efforts to seek similar resources from their churches.

22. Q. IN CONNECTION WITH THE "RE-ORDERING OF PRIORITIES" IN THE GENERAL CHURCH PROGRAM FOR 1968-1970, WHAT PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN MOST AFFECTED BY THIS RE-ORDERING?

A. In preparing the program for 1968-1970, General Convention's Program and Budget Committee attempted to avoid any cuts which would cripple essential services from the Executive Council to agencies, dioceses, and districts.

There will, for example, be more dollars available for the Church's work overseas in 1968 than there were in 1967, but many of the new programs proposed by the Overseas Department could not be undertaken.

A general belt-tightening will be called for throughout the program of the Executive Council. This will involve realignment and reorganization both of Department structure and of staff assignment.

In short, establishment of priorities with regard to the crisis in American life, and in other areas of the Church's work at home and overseas, means that money and personnel will be devoted to work which is considered most urgent.

Other matters will have secondary attention. Some will obviously be curtailed.

23. Q. DOES THE PROGRAM DUPLICATE THE EFFORT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WHICH IS SPENDING HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR SUCH WORK?

A. No, it does not. This program is not a Church counterpart of the Government's "War on Poverty" because "it is not based on the welfare principle of helping those who suffer, while doing little or nothing to alleviate conditions causing suffering.

"Rather it is based on the principle of assisting the poor to organize themselves so that they may stand on their own two feet, rise out of their poverty and determine their own destiny.

"This program affirms that they have the God-given capacity, if resources are supplied, to solve the problems of which they have become victims in an affluent, industrialized, predominantly white society."⁽⁸⁾

(8) Final Report of the Joint Committee on Program and Budget of General Convention to the 62nd General Convention of the Episcopal Church.