

STANDING COMMISSION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

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Membership

Mrs. Patricia B. Kilpatrick, <i>Chair</i>	Ohio, V, 2003
The Rev. Canon Gene Robinson, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	New Hampshire, I, 2006
Mrs. Mary S. Kimball, <i>Secretary</i>	California, VIII, 2003
The Very Rev. H. Jay Atwood	Fort Worth, VII, 2006
Mrs. Kit T. Caffey	Central Gulf Coast, IV, 2003
Mr. Justin Chapman	Minnesota, VI, 2006
John Wood Goldsack, Esq.	New Jersey, II, 2006
Hon. Maggie N. Tinsman	Iowa, VI, 2006
Mr. David R. Pitts, <i>Special Representative</i>	Louisiana, IV, 2003
The Rev. John David Lane	Southwestern Virginia, III, 2006
The Rt. Rev. Dorsey F. Henderson	Upper South Carolina, IV, 2003
The Rt. Rev. D. Bruce MacPherson	Western Louisiana, VII, 2006
The Rt. Rev. R. Stewart Wood	Vermont, I, 2003
The Rev. Canon Stephen T. Lane	Rochester, II, Executive Council liaison*

*Canon Lane was transferred to act as liaison to the Anglican Church in Canada

The Very Rev. Cynthia Black (Western Michigan, V) replaced him as Council liaison.

COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES AT GENERAL CONVENTION

The Rt. Rev. D. Bruce MacPherson for the House of Bishops and John Wood Goldsack, Esq. for the House of Deputies to accept or reject, on behalf of the Commission, any non-substantial amendments in such House to any Resolution contained in this Report.

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church (the Commission or SCSC) met three times during the triennium: at Duncan Center, DelRay Beach, FL, March 19-21, 2001, at The Episcopal Church Center, New York, NY, December 3-5, 2001, and Bishop Mason Conference Center, Flower Mound, TX, April 28-30, 2002. These General Principles adopted in 1995 have guided the Commission:

- This church is a national church participating fully in the Anglican Communion.
- This church is one diverse community of Christ's reconciling ministry in the world.
- This church will commit to the dioceses and provinces only that mission and ministry which cannot be accomplished effectively by parishes and congregations.
- This church will commit to national structures only that mission and ministry which cannot be accomplished effectively by dioceses and provinces.
- The form of this church will follow function, and the structure of this church will follow ministry and mission.
- This church must be structured at all levels so that structures do not inhibit deliberate change.

The Future of Province IX

GC Resolution 2000-B005 in part resolved "that the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church be directed to work with the Executive Council and the provincial leadership to study and make recommendations to the 74th General Convention" on "the future of Province IX, working with the Standing Commission on World Mission and the individual dioceses."

Early in the triennium, the desire of three extra-provincial dioceses (Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Cuba) to join or re-join ECUSA was made known to the two Standing Commissions named in the resolution. The matter of their possible incorporation was folded into the work of the two Commissions, with the Standing Commission on World Mission (SCWM) asking the theological and missiological questions, and the Standing

Commission on the Structure of the Church focusing on the structural issues raised by such an incorporation, in the context of the overall future of Province IX. This report should be read in tandem with SCWM's Blue Book Report.

Pursuant to the question of the future of Province IX and the incorporation of these three extra-provincial dioceses, the Standing Commission on Structure convened a meeting in the Dominican Republic in April, 2002. Participants at the meeting included: all the bishops of the dioceses remaining in Province IX (Dominican Republic, Honduras, Central Diocese of Ecuador, Litoral Diocese of Ecuador, Colombia); the bishops of the three extra-provincial dioceses seeking incorporation (Puerto Rico, Cuba, Venezuela); representatives of the Standing Commission on Structure, the Standing Commission on World Mission, the House of Bishops Office of Pastoral Development, the Presiding Bishop's staff, and the Church Pension Fund. The following questions/issues were raised, with the following results:

Should the dioceses which remain in Province IX, following the autonomy processes of Mexico and IARCA, be divided up and assigned to provinces in the continental United States? There is NO support from any of the remaining dioceses of Province IX to be divided up and distributed among the eight continental dioceses of ECUSA. All agreed that such an alternative would divide and weaken the voice and witness of our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters in Christ at all levels of the Church's life and ministry. Such a "non-future" was resoundingly abandoned.

What are the intentions of the extra-provincial dioceses about their own future in and with Province IX? The Bishops of these three dioceses expressed their intention to ask to be incorporated into ECUSA, to place themselves under the metropolitan authority of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, and to become part of Province IX. Each bishop reported that appropriate resolutions requesting such incorporation had been passed by their respective Diocesan Conventions. [This may have been a bit of a stretch with regard to the resolution passed by Cuba. Please see note at the end of this report.] The bishops of the dioceses of Province IX were unanimously supportive of such an application for incorporation and excited about what their joining might mean for the future of Province IX. A resolution expressing that support read, in part: "That the Committees on Structure and World Mission present to the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America in 2003, the formal request for the incorporation of the Diocese of Venezuela and the re-incorporation of the dioceses of Cuba and Puerto Rico as members of the General Convention of the United States of America." And "That the Bishops of the IX Province fully support the initiatives by the diocesan conventions of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela requesting that the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America accepts these dioceses as members in good standing with this Church."

What does all this mean for the process of autonomy, which has been central to ECUSA's approach to mission and ministry in this region? While the autonomy process has guided our relationships in the past (resulting in the new Anglican provinces of Mexico and Central America), there seems to be NO support for or movement toward autonomy from ECUSA for the remaining Province IX dioceses. Indeed, after frank and open discussions about the past and present, the group expressed its belief that the unintended effect of assuming that all the dioceses of Province IX would one day exist in their own autonomous provinces was a gradual pulling back – from both sides – by ECUSA and by these Province IX dioceses. Sadness was expressed by all for this state of affairs, and there was great interest in reversing this trend. The incorporation of the three extra-provincial dioceses and the revitalization of Province IX was seen to be a timely opportunity for reinvigorating the relationship between Province IX and the rest of ECUSA.

What does all this mean for the regionalization process within Province IX and the Caribbean? During the past few years, several attempts have been made to gather dioceses of the Caribbean in regions ("the Caribbean region" and ARENSA). Such a division of these dioceses not only left out Honduras, but contributed to the notion that all of these dioceses were headed toward autonomy. This meeting unanimously made clear that such a "regionalization" in Province IX is counterproductive and undesirable.

Who will lead the newly-reorganized and revitalized Province IX? In recent years, there has been no duly constituted Synod meeting in Province IX. Therefore, the leadership had been irregularly elected by an Executive Committee. Plans were put in place for an interim period of leadership, until a duly constituted Synod could meet and elect Synod officers. That transition has now occurred, and Province IX is now functioning according to the same canons and guidelines as the other eight provinces of ECUSA.

It is important to note here that it is Province IX's hope to operate much as the other eight provinces do and be accorded the same rights and bear the same responsibilities. Rather than being regarded as a "missionary" province, with exceptional staffing, funding and program, they hope to be one of nine equal provinces of the church, all the while recognizing the special circumstances which exist in that region. In June, 2002, the Provincial Leadership Conference (the presidents, vice presidents and program coordinators) met in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and spent considerable time with the people and staff of the Diocese of Puerto Rico. Bishop Allen, of Honduras, also attended that meeting, and for the first time in several years, the voice of Province IX was present. They were warmly welcomed and heard. Province IX was also a full participant in the December meeting of the Provincial Leadership Conference, and the PLC welcomed its "return to the table."

What work needs to be done regarding the Church Pension Fund and these three dioceses which seek reincorporation into ECUSA? Church Pension Fund Vice President Linda Curtiss, and her new assistant, The Rev. Efrain Huerta, newly named Director of Companion Pension Relations (who had not yet begun his job with CPG), were present to discuss the ramifications of the three extra-provincial dioceses' incorporation into ECUSA. The very complicated issue of how to incorporate the new dioceses into the Church Pension Fund was discussed. One of the issues brought to light in these discussions – which is true for ALL the dioceses of Province IX – is that the church pension compensation formula for clergy is based upon the notion that a base amount of compensation is provided by Social Security – an assumption that is not true for the dioceses of Province IX, since they are obviously not part of the United States' Social Security system. Ms. Curtiss noted that some different formula may need to be developed for these non-U.S. dioceses, based on different assumptions and realities. The calculations which will need to be done to explore pension fund options will largely depend on the three dioceses' provision of relevant data. Church Pension seems very willing and eager to serve the church in this incorporation process, but cannot proceed without sufficient data from the dioceses themselves (not always easy to obtain).

It is important to note that the subject of pensions for the clergy of the three dioceses seeking incorporation was the LAST topic to be undertaken. We are aware that some people in the Church hold the opinion that the application for reincorporation into ECUSA by these three dioceses is being driven by the need for adequate pensions. As a result of this meeting, it seems clear to the Standing Commission on Structure that the issue of pensions is NOT the driving force, but rather one of several issues and needs addressed by the application for incorporation. Such a narrow accusation, in our view, underestimates the mission and ministry of our brothers and sisters in Christ and trivializes their appropriate and faithful aspirations for incorporation into ECUSA.

NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting and conclusions denoted above, the Standing Commission on World Mission encountered some further developments with the Diocese of Cuba which seemed to indicate a less-than-enthusiastic support in the Diocese of Cuba for the proposed incorporation. Indeed, a closer look at the "enabling" legislation passed by the Diocesan Convention indicated that a formal application for incorporation into ECUSA had not been completed. (Also, see the SCWM Blue Book report.)

Therefore, the following TWO resolutions are presented jointly by the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church and the Standing Commission on World Mission. They are based on clear and well supported resolutions for incorporation from the Diocesan Conventions of Puerto Rico and Venezuela. While we support the incorporation of the Diocese of Cuba into ECUSA, a resolution to that effect will await a formal and well supported petition from the Diocese of Cuba – which, if received, will be prepared as a supplementary resolution.

Resolution A141 Admit Diocese of Puerto Rico

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 2003 General Convention admit the Diocese of Puerto
2 Rico to the Episcopal Church USA and recognize it as a diocese in union with General Convention; and be
3 it further
4 *Resolved*, That the General Convention designate the Diocese of Puerto Rico as a member diocese of
5 Province IX of the Episcopal Church; and be it further
6 *Resolved*, That the Diocese of Puerto Rico be entitled to all rights pertaining to membership in the
7 Episcopal Church as provided in the Constitution and Canons, including, but not limited to, voice and vote
8 in the House of Bishops and House of Deputies, in accordance with the rules of those houses; and be it
9 further
10 *Resolved*, That the Diocese of Puerto Rico be obligated to undertake all responsibilities pertaining to
11 diocesan membership in the Episcopal Church as provided in the Constitution and Canons, including, but
12 not limited to, conforming its constitution and canons to the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of
13 the Episcopal Church; submitting annual diocesan and parochial reports to the General Convention Office;
14 contributing annually to the apportionment budget of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society; and
15 reporting fully on any financial assistance it receives from the General Convention budget; and be it
16 further
17 *Resolved*, That this convention affirm that the clergy and lay employees of the Diocese of Puerto Rico will
18 be eligible to participate in companion pension plans administered by the Church Pension Fund, with
19 benefits adapted to the particular needs of the Diocese and consistent with applicable law; and be it further
20 *Resolved*, That this convention urge the Church Pension Fund to work with the Diocese of Puerto Rico to
21 develop a plan to cover the unfunded period of time for those of its clergy who previously participated in
22 the Church Pension Fund when the Diocese was a member of the Episcopal Church; and be it further
23 *Resolved*, That the portion of this resolution accepting the Diocese of Puerto Rico into union with the
24 General Convention become effective by written directive by the Presiding Bishop to the Bishop of the
25 Diocese on such date after January 1, 2004 on which the Secretary of the General Convention certifies to
26 the Presiding Bishop that the Secretary has received from the Diocese written evidence that the Diocese
27 has successfully undertaken all the foregoing responsibilities pertaining to membership in the Episcopal
28 Church as provided in the Constitution and Canons; and be it further
29 *Resolved*, That this convention re-affirm the principle that dioceses of this church that are not located
30 within the United States may seek autonomy according to the procedures set forth in Resolution 235a of
31 the 1991 General Convention or may join other provinces of the Anglican Communion.

EXPLANATION

On Jan. 14, 2003, the Rt. Rev. David Andres Alvares, Bishop of Puerto Rico wrote to the Commission chair: “This is to inform you that in a special Convention of the Diocese of Puerto Rico, held on the 11th of January at the Diocesan Center in Saint Just, a Resolution was approved to ask for Incorporation into the Episcopal Church in the United States. The Convention dealt with the ecclesiological, canonical, financial and administrative aspects. After receiving reports on them, the Resolution was presented as follows: ‘Resolved by this Special Convention to ask the Standing Commission on Structure and the Standing Commission on World Mission of the Episcopal Church in the United States to present to the General Convention to meet in the city of Minneapolis in July of 2003, our request for Incorporation and Canonical Conformity in that Province of the Anglican Communion with all the responsibilities, rights and privileges it conveys.’ In a secret vote by orders, the results for the clergy were 54 in favor to 11 against. For the laity the results were 63 in favor to 22 against, for a total of 117 in favor and 33 against.”

The Standing Commission on World Mission regards this as a well supported resolution from the Diocese of Puerto Rico and supports incorporation for reasons set forth in its Blue Book Report.

Resolution A142 Admit Diocese of Venezuela

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 74th General Convention admit the Diocese of
2 Venezuela to the Episcopal Church USA and recognize it as a diocese in union with General Convention;
3 and be it further

4 *Resolved*, That the General Convention designate the Diocese of Venezuela as a member diocese of
 5 Province IX of the Episcopal Church; and be further
 6 *Resolved*, That the Diocese of Venezuela be entitled to all rights pertaining to membership in Episcopal
 7 Church as provided in the Constitution and Canons, including, but not limited to, voice and vote in the
 8 House of Bishops and House of Deputies, in accordance with the rules of those houses; and be it further
 9 *Resolved*, That the Diocese of Venezuela be obligated to undertake all responsibilities pertaining to
 10 diocesan membership in the Episcopal Church as provided in the Constitution and Canons, including, but
 11 not limited to, conforming its constitution and canons to the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of
 12 the Episcopal Church; submitting annual diocesan and parochial reports to the General Convention Office;
 13 contributing annually to the apportionment budget of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society; and
 14 reporting fully on any financial assistance it receives from the General Convention budget; and be it
 15 further
 16 *Resolved*, That this convention affirm that the clergy and lay employees of the Diocese of Venezuela will
 17 be eligible to participate in the Church Pension Fund, subject to the rules of the Church Pension Fund; and
 18 be it further
 19 *Resolved*, That this convention urge the Church Pension Fund to work with the Diocese of Venezuela to
 20 develop a plan to cover the unfunded period of time for those of its clergy who previously participated in
 21 the Church Pension Fund when the diocese was a member of the Episcopal Church; and be it further
 22 *Resolved*, That this convention re-affirm the principle that dioceses of this church that are not located
 23 within the United States may seek autonomy according to the procedures set forth in Resolution 235a of
 24 the 1991 General Convention or may join other provinces of the Anglican Communion.

EXPLANATION

The Standing Commission on World Mission regards this as a well supported resolution from the Diocese of Venezuela and supports incorporation for reasons set forth in its Blue Book Report.

The General Convention

Resolution A143 Constitution Article I, Section 7

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Article I, Section 7 of the Constitution is amended to read:
 2 Section 7. The General Convention shall meet not less than once in each three years, at a time and place
 3 appointed by a preceding Convention; but if there shall appear to the Presiding Bishop, acting with the
 4 advice and consent of the Executive Council of the Church or of a successor canonical body having
 5 substantially the powers now vested in the Executive Council, sufficient cause for changing the place or
 6 date so appointed, the Presiding Bishop, with the advice and consent of such body, shall appoint another
 7 place or date, or both, for such meeting. the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements.
 8 Special meetings may be provided by Canon.

Resolution A144 Canon I.1.14(a)

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Canon I.1.14 is amended to read as follows:
 2 (a) At each meeting of the General Convention the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and
 3 Arrangements shall submit to the General Convention its recommendations for sites for the meeting of
 4 the General Convention to be held as the ~~second~~ third succeeding General Convention following the
 5 General Convention at which the report is made...
 6 (c) From the sites approved by the General Convention, the Joint Committee, with the advice and consent
 7 of a majority vote of the following: The Presidents and the Vice-Presidents of both Houses of
 8 Convention, the Presidents of the Provinces and the Executive Council, shall determine the site for
 9 such General Convention and proceed to make all reasonable and necessary arrangements and
 10 commitments for that meeting of the General Convention. ~~The site shall be recommended before the~~
 11 ~~meeting of the General Convention next preceding that Convention.~~
 12 (d) ~~Subject to the Constitution, the General Convention shall appoint a site at the General Convention next~~
 13 ~~preceding such Convention.~~

- 14 (e)(d) Upon the final selection of and the arrangements for the site for that General Convention, the Joint
15 Committee shall advise the Secretary of General Convention, who shall communicate the
16 determination to the Dioceses.
- 17 ~~(f) In the event of a change of circumstances indicating the necessity or advisability of changing the site of
18 a future meeting of the General Convention previously determined by action of the General
19 Convention, the Joint Committee shall investigate and make recommendations to the Presiding Bishop,
20 to the President of the House of Deputies, and to the Executive Council if such Convention is the next
21 succeeding meeting or to the General Convention with respect to any later meeting of the Convention.~~
- 22 (g) (e) Within such guidelines as may have been established by the General Convention regarding the date
23 and length of future General Conventions, and pursuant to the reasonable and necessary arrangements
24 and commitments with the Dioceses and operators of facilities within the Diocese in which the next
25 General Convention will be held, the Joint Committee shall fix the date and the length of the next
26 succeeding Convention, report the same to the Secretary of the General Convention and include the
27 same in its report to the Convention. In the event of a change of circumstances indicating the necessity
28 or advisability of changing the date or length previously fixed, the Joint Committee shall investigate
29 and make recommendations to the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, who,
30 with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, may fix a different date or length or both.

EXPLANATION

The economic realities and competitive market for large conventions requires that the Joint Committee on Planning and Arrangements be able to enter into binding contracts for Convention sites more than three years before the scheduled event. Inability to act earlier and decisively has already resulted in key sites becoming unavailable as General Convention sites.

The proposed changes are both constitutional, requiring passage at two consecutive conventions, and Canonical which can be perfected at a single convention.

General Convention will still be able to select those cities to be considered as potential sites for future Conventions but the Joint Committee on Planning and Arrangements will be able to choose from among the potential sites without further action on the part of General Convention.

Resolution A145 General Convention Model

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of
2 Deputies appoint a Joint Task Force consisting of members of the Standing Commission on Structure of
3 the Church and the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements to prepare a comprehensive
4 model for General Convention with respect to the Structure of General Convention and the General
5 Convention Agenda to be considered for implementation by the 75th General Convention.

EXPLANATION

GC Resolution 2003-C020 charged the Standing Commission on Structure of the Church “to review the structure of General Convention that considers ways to establish greater efficiency, ensure the diversity of representation, make use of all available technology, and shorten the duration of Convention.

The Commission believes the goals set forth in C020 are imperative but cannot be addressed by SCSC without the benefit of discussion with the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements. Working together and with the assistance of the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, the Commission believes in resolving the competing needs of “gathering the family” and shortening the length of Convention to make it more accessible to people who are unable to commit themselves to two weeks away from their families and their business lives. The Church must commit itself to thinking seriously about finding ways to allow people from all backgrounds to participate in the General Convention process.

Provincial Coordinators

Resolution A146 Provincial Coordinators Funding

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 74th General Convention continue to appropriate
2 sufficient funds to ensure the continuation of Provincial Coordinators.

EXPLANATION

During the past triennium General Convention provided \$200,000.00 each year to compensate a paid Provincial Coordinator in each of the eight Provinces. As a result, the Provinces were able to become more pro-active in the mission and ministry of the church and experienced widespread growth in Provincial Program Ministries. The investment in funding Provincial Coordinators has generated the results intended. (See also the report of the Provincial Leadership Conference.)

Legislative Committees

Resolution A147 Legislative Committee Membership

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That all Legislative Committees be appointed in such a manner
2 to include a sufficient number of the members of the Standing Commission or Committee for such area of
3 concern, together with a sufficient number of deputies not serving on the Standing Commission or
4 Committee.

EXPLANATION

At the 73rd General Convention, the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church had very few members assigned to the Legislative Committee on Structure. As a result, the Legislative Committee often lacked a clear understanding of the work performed by the Standing Commission. The Commission believes every Legislative Committee will benefit by having a sufficient number of members from the respective Standing Commission/ Committee to ensure continuity in the work being pursued.

Resolution A148 Filing Resolutions

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Article VI, Resolutions and Memorials, Rule 21(e)
2 of the Rules of Order, House of Deputies be amended to read:
3 (e) Any such Resolution received by the Secretary of the House of Deputies at least ~~ninety (90)~~ thirty (30)
4 days prior to the opening date of the Convention shall be referred to the proper Legislative Committee or
5 Special Committee Chair at least ~~sixty (60)~~ fifteen (15) days prior to the opening date of Convention. The
6 Secretary shall acknowledge receipt of all such Resolutions to the proposer.

EXPLANATION

With the wide use of technology and with most resolutions being submitted electronically the Commission believes the shortened time frame suggested will be reasonable and will ensure that Legislative Committees will receive the materials they need prior to the opening of Convention.

Resolution A149 Special Legislative Committees

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Special Legislative Committees appointed to handle “hot
2 button” issues be appointed sufficiently in advance of General Convention to ensure that existing
3 Legislative Committees not lose vital members, and to allow scheduling of Special Hearings at times when
4 members of Legislative Committees can attend.

EXPLANATION

At the 73rd General Convention a Special Legislative Committee was formed to deal with Human Sexuality issues. While no one disputes the wisdom of such special committees to handle “hot button” issues, the Commission is concerned that such committees be appointed sufficiently in advance of Convention so as not to remove vital members of other Standing Committees or Commissions.

The Commission is also concerned that the hearings of such special committees be held so that members of existing legislative committees can attend without neglecting their own legislative responsibilities.

Budget

The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church will meet three times in the next triennium. This will require \$15,000 in 2004, \$24,000 in 2005 and \$10,000 in 2006 for a total of \$49,000 for the triennium.