

The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church

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INTRODUCTION

The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church (hereinafter referred to as “the commission”) is charged by the Canons (Title I, Canon 1, Section 2(n)(8) to “. . . study and make recommendations concerning the structure of the General Convention and of the Church . . .” and to “. . . review the operation of the several Committees and Commissions to determine the necessity for their continuance and the effectiveness of their functions and to bring about a coordination of their efforts.”

The agenda of the commission originates from (1) specific referrals by resolutions of the preceding General Convention; (2) the commission’s review of “. . . the operation of the several Committees and Commissions . . .”; (3) resolutions introduced at preceding General Conventions but not adopted (at times because of lack of time for full consideration); (4) matters requested for consideration by other committees, commissions, organizations or individuals; and (5) matters identified by members of the commission.

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

The composition of this commission, with date of expiration of term and diocese of each member, is as follows:

The Rt. Rev. David S. Ball	1994	Albany
The Rt. Rev. William A. Beckham	1994	Upper South Carolina
The Rt. Rev. Daniel Swenson	1991	Vermont
The Rev. Gayle Harris	1994	Washington
The Rev. William Malottke	1991	Springfield
The Rev. Lorentho Wooden	1991	Southern Ohio
Mrs. Margaret (Peg) Anderson, <i>Secretary</i>	1994	Arizona
Mr. John K. Cannon, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	1991	Michigan
Mr. Charles M. Crump, <i>Chair</i>	1994	West Tennessee
Mrs. Diana Dillenberger-Frade	1991	Honduras
Mrs. Rosella A. Jim	1991	Navajoland
Mrs. Audrey M. King	1994	Newark

Executive Council Liaison

The Rev. Canon Roswell O. Moore	1991	California
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The commission voted to authorize Bishop Beckham and Bishop Swenson with respect to the House of Bishops, and the chairman, Mr. Crump, and the Rev. Mr. Malottke as to the House of Deputies, to accept or reject, on behalf of the commission, any non-substantive amendments proposed in the respective Houses.

The full commission met three times during the triennium: at the Episcopal Church Center, March 28-29, 1989, and at Toddhall Retreat and Conference Center, Columbia, Illinois, on February 4-6, 1990, and November 6-8, 1990.

1. GENERAL CONVENTION**A. Communication and Accountability**

We recognize that the General Convention reflects the polity of our Church as a confederation of dioceses in a representative democracy. As such, the mutual flow of communication and accountability—from those represented to those who represent them, from the individual representatives to the larger body, from the legislative to the executive and from the executive to the legislative—is of critical importance. Such communication and accountability requires provisions for the implementation of policies and programs adopted by the General Convention for the common good and effective order.

In that mutual flow of communication and accountability, we see four stages that need to be lifted up and strengthened.

First, is the responsibility of the deputies to communicate to their constituents the actions taken and positions established by General Convention. We commend for their usefulness in that process resources such as:

Summary of General Convention Actions

Policy for Action III (The Social Policies of the Episcopal Church as adopted at General Convention 1982, 1985, and 1988, and Executive Council 1982-1989).

Legislative Flow Report (such as that issued in August, 1988). To that end, we propose the following canonical amendment:

Resolution #A206

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.1.4 be amended by designating the present text as “(a)” and by adding the following new Clause (b):**

- 1 *(b). It shall be the duty of each seated Deputy to communicate to the electing jurisdiction the actions taken and the positions established by the General Convention.*

In support of the deputies' responsibility to report, we believe that adequate resources should be made available to them and, therefore, we submit the following resolution:

Resolution #A207

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That the Communication Office of the Episcopal Church Center make available the following:**

1. **A summary of actions of the immediate past General Convention prepared under the direction of the Secretary of the General Convention.**
2. **A summary of the current positions of the Episcopal Church on social issues.**

Second, is the responsibility of each diocese to provide a suitable forum for reporting the actions of General Convention and to implement its recommendations.

To that end, we propose the following canonical amendment:

Resolution #A208

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.1.4 be amended by adding the following new clause (c):**

- 1 *(c). It shall be the responsibility of each Diocese to provide a forum in which the Deputies*
- 2 *to the General Convention from that jurisdiction have opportunity to report.*

In the implementation process we offer as a model for consideration by the several jurisdictions the following canonical provision of the Diocese of Springfield (Canon 33:7(g):

The Department of National and World Mission (of which the Senior Deputy to the General Convention of the Church and the senior delegate to the Provincial Synod and the senior delegate to the Triennial Meeting of the Women of the Church shall be members *ex officio* with right to seat, voice and vote in all deliberations) whose duty it shall be to bring to the attention of the Diocese matters arising from the actions of the General Convention, the Provincial Synod and the Triennial Meeting of the Women of the Church; to suggest ways and means of implementing such actions as relate to the extra-diocesan mission of the Church; and to undertake such programs as it may see fit to keep the Diocese aware of its responsibilities to the Church's work in the nation and throughout the world.

The commission recommends that each diocese designate similar membership and responsibility to the appropriate diocesan body.

Third, we call to the attention of the several dioceses the responsibility of the Secretary of General Convention under Joint Rule 13 to identify those certain resolutions which specifically call for diocesan action. In order to secure information from each jurisdiction on its action implementing such resolutions, we propose the following amendment to Canon I.6.2 concerning the annual Diocesan Report:

THE BLUE BOOK

Resolution #A209

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.6.2 is hereby amended by adding at the end of the present Section, the following:**

- 1 *It shall also include information concerning implementation by the Diocese of resolu-*
- 2 *tions of the previous General Convention which have been specifically identified by*
- 3 *the Secretary of General Convention under Joint Rule 13 as calling for diocesan action.*

Fourth, to complete the circle of communication and accountability, we propose the following amendment to Canon I.4.1 concerning the report of the Executive Council to the General Convention:

Resolution #A210

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.4.1(b) is hereby amended to read as follows:**

- 1 **(b). The Executive Council shall be accountable to the General Convention and shall**
- 2 **render a full *published* report concerning the work with which it is charged to each**
- 3 **meeting of the said Convention. *The report shall also include information on the im-***
- 4 ***plementation of all concurred resolutions of the previous General Convention calling***
- 5 ***for action by the Executive Council, by its officers and staff and by the jurisdictions***
- 6 ***of the Church.***

B. Reduction in Size of the House of Deputies

This commission presented two proposals at the 1988 General Convention in Detroit, Michigan.

- a. Proportional Representation - Resolution A168
- b. Three in Each Order - Resolution A169
(Refer to Pages 402-406 in the 1988 *Blue Book*.)

Each of these resolutions was defeated decisively. On reconsidering this issue this commission agrees with the action of the General Convention and has decided not to introduce any further proposals to reduce the size of the House of Deputies for the following reasons:

1. The present system provides for better and more inclusive representation for the dioceses and more reporting back to the dioceses of the work of General Convention.
2. Reduction in size to three in each order or by proportional representation does not effectively address the question of unwieldiness.
3. Such reductions would not result in appreciable financial savings.

C. Amendment to House of Deputies Rule 37

House of Deputies Rule 37 presently limits a speaker during debate to no longer than five minutes. Experience in the House of Deputies during recent General Conventions is that during the later portions of each Convention the House, to accelerate the consideration of its business, has reduced the time of each speech, sometimes in stages, and usually ending with a not more than one-minute requirement. This commission believes that the circumstances that force such restrictions could be somewhat alleviated, though probably not eliminated, if speeches were shortened to three minutes, rather than five, at the beginning of Convention, as well. It, therefore, recommends that the House of Deputies adopt the following Resolution:

Resolution #A211

Resolved, That House of Deputies Rule of Order 37 be amended to read as follows:

- 1 **Except by leave of the House, no member shall speak more than twice in the same**
- 2 **debate, nor longer than five *three* minutes at one time.**

D. Pre-Convention Orientation of Deputies

At each of the recent General Conventions, approximately one-half of the deputies were serving for the first time. The volume of resolutions to be considered in the ten legislative days necessitates an orderly flow of business based upon knowledge of the legislative process by the deputies.

Pre-Convention orientation of all deputies, but with special concern for first-time deputies, at both the diocesan and provincial levels, is being held and should be encouraged. Such sessions should include a summary of the Rules of Order, a review of the *Blue Book*, a schedule of legislative sessions, committee meetings and joint sessions, and the handling of the flow of paper through the use of deputies' handbooks.

At the suggestion of this commission, the Office of Communication has prepared an orientation video, copies of which should be available through diocesan offices.

E. Amendments to Constitution and Canons

Regarding Place and Date of General Convention

Article I, Section 7 of the Constitution provides that the time and place of the General Convention shall be fixed by a preceding Convention. In practice, this is done as to place, after a detailed process set forth in Canon I.1.14, but not as to the dates of either beginning or ending.

Canon I.1.14 sets forth the procedure whereby the place of a succeeding Convention is recommended to the General Convention. The Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements recommends sites to the General Convention, from which list the Convention recommends from three to five sites. From these sites the Joint Committee, with the advice and consent of a majority vote of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of both Houses, the Presidents of the Provinces and the Executive Council, determines the site and makes all arrangements and commitments subject to the approval of the Convention. The site is appointed by the Convention "at the General Convention next preceding such Convention."

Canon I.1.14(f) provides that if there is a change of circumstances indicating the "necessity or advisability of changing the site" of the next succeeding Convention, the Joint Committee shall investigate and make recommendations to the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council. Article I.7 of the Constitution then provides that for "sufficient cause" the Presiding Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, shall appoint another place or date or both.

From the above it may be noted that the President of the House of Deputies is included in the list of those involved in the initial selection of a site but not in changing the site. As the House of Deputies is a very substantial part of the General Convention, this commission believes the President should be involved also in the decision to change a place previously appointed by the General Convention. The amendments hereinafter proposed will effect this change.

As previously stated, in practice the precise date of General Convention is not fixed by the preceding Convention, but is recommended by the Joint Committee in its *Blue Book* report proposing an agenda to be enacted upon on the first day of Convention.

THE BLUE BOOK

The Joint Committee, through the General Convention Manager in the office of the Executive Officer of the General Convention, negotiates the dates with the Diocese, the Convention Center and the hotels within guidelines of dates and length established by prior action of Convention. To regularize this practice, the commission proposes the following constitutional and canonical amendments, which will also accomplish the change recommended above.

Resolution #A212

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Article 1, Section 7 of the Constitution be amended to read as follows:**

- 1 **Sec. 7. The General Convention shall meet not less than once in each three years, at**
- 2 **a time and place appointed by a preceding Convention; but if there shall appear to**
- 3 **the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, acting with the ad-**
- 4 **vice and consent of the Executive Council of the Church or of a successor canonical**
- 5 **body having substantially the powers now vested in the Executive Council, sufficient**
- 6 **cause for changing the place or date so appointed he, they, with the advice and consent**
- 7 **of such body, shall appoint another place or date, or both, for such meeting.**
- 8 *Determination of the dates of commencement and ending of the next succeeding General*
- 9 *Convention and Special meetings may be provided for by Canon.*

Resolution #A213

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.1.14 be amended by adding the following:**

- 1 *(g). Within such guidelines as may have been established by the General Convention*
- 2 *regarding the date and the length of future General Conventions and pursuant to the*
- 3 *reasonable and necessary arrangements and commitments with the Dioceses and the*
- 4 *operators of facilities in the Diocese in which the next General Convention will be*
- 5 *held, the Joint Committee shall fix the date and the length of the next succeeding Con-*
- 6 *vention, report the same to the Secretary of the General Convention and include the*
- 7 *same in its report to the Convention. In the event of a change of circumstances in-*
- 8 *dicating the necessity or advisability of changing the date or length previously fixed,*
- 9 *the Joint Committee shall investigate and make recommendations to the Presiding*
- 10 *Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies who, with the advice and consent*
- 11 *of the Executive Council, may fix a different date or length or both.*

Resolution #A214

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.1.14(f) be amended to read as follows:**

- 1 **(f) In the event of a change of circumstances indicating the necessity or advisability**
- 2 **of changing the site of a future meeting of the General Convention previously deter-**
- 3 **mined by action of the General Convention, the Joint Committee shall investigate and**
- 4 **make recommendations to the Presiding Bishop, to the President of the House of**
- 5 **Deputies and to the Executive Council if such Convention is the next succeeding meeting**
- 6 **or to the General Convention with the approval of the Executive Council with respect**
- 7 **to any later meeting of the Convention.**

2. BISHOPS

A. Voting in House of Bishops

This commission has reviewed the action of the 1988 General Convention in adopting Resolution A170 on first reading, which is a proposed amendment to Article I, Sec. 2, of the Constitution with regard to voting in the House of Bishops. If the amendment is adopted, voting in the House of Bishops will be limited to the Presiding Bishop, Bishops Coadjutor, Suffragan and Assistant Bishops while acting within a Diocese, and the Suffragan Bishops for the Armed Forces and of the Convocation of Churches in Europe. All other bishops, essentially retired bishops, will have seat with voice but no vote.

We have reexamined the rationale for such proposal and find ourselves still in agreement with the reasons stated in the report of this commission to the 1988 General Convention (*Blue Book*, page 407), especially that of assuring that those voting will have “meaningful and current contact with the Church.”

The Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons in its *Blue Book* report is submitting a resolution for adoption on second reading of the amendment to Article I, Sec. 2. This commission recommends the adoption of that resolution.

B. Consents of Standing Committees to Consecration of Bishops-Elect

The Presiding Bishop has referred to this commission for study and recommendation the concern expressed by a number of Standing Committees regarding their responsibility in considering consent to the consecration of bishops-elect.

In recent elections issues have been raised as to the theological views or the personal qualifications and experience of the person elected and of the validity of the election process based on alleged irregularities in the Diocesan Convention proceedings.

It appears that Standing Committees did or might withhold consent to the consecration of a bishop-elect for one, or more, of the following reasons:

1. The stated position of the bishop-elect on theological or social issues.
2. The bishop-elect’s personal qualifications or lack thereof.
3. Alleged irregularities in the election process of the electing Diocesan Convention.

Before attempting to offer recommendations for dealing with the issues raised by the Standing Committees, we should consider their duty and responsibility regarding consent to the consecration of a bishop-elect as expressed in the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

Canon III.21.1(c) provides in part:

“The evidence of the consent of the several Standing Committees shall be a testimonial in the following words . . .

We, being a majority of all the members of the Standing Committee of . . . do, in the presence of Almighty God, testify that we *know of no impediment* on account of which the Reverend A. B. ought not to be ordained and consecrated to the Holy Office . . . ” (emphasis supplied).

Canon III.21.1(c) gives no clarification of the term “no impediment.” However, under Canon III.21.1(a), the testimonial required to be signed by a constitutional majority of the electing Convention includes the representation that:

“ . . . we know of *no impediment* on account of which the Reverend A.B. ought not to be ordained and consecrated to that Holy Office. We do, moreover, jointly and severally declare that we believe the Reverend A.B. to be of such sufficiency in good learning, of such soundness in the Faith, and of such virtuous and pure manners and godly conversation as to be able to exercise the Office of a Bishop to the honor of God and the edifying of His Church, and to be a wholesome example of the flock of Christ” (emphasis supplied).

Furthermore, it has been suggested that the appropriate standards found in Canon III.7.12 providing for ordination to the Priesthood should be applied. Under this Canon, the Standing Committee of a Diocese must certify:

“ . . . that the Reverend A.B., Deacon, . . . has presented to us satisfactory certificates that since . . . the date of ordination to the Diaconate . . . the Reverend A.B. has lived a sober, honest and godly life, and has not written, taught, or held anything contrary to the Doctrine, Discipline, or Worship of this Church; and we hereby recommend the Reverend A.B. for ordination to the Priesthood.”

The criteria set forth in Canons III.21.1(a) and (c), III.7.12, as well as the list of offenses for which a bishop may be tried under Canon IV.1, and the Declaration required of priests and deacons under Article VIII of the Constitution, should provide ample standards for judging the personal qualifications and the stated position of a bishop-elect on theological and social issues. Therefore, it seems inappropriate for Standing Committees and bishops to request additional information or statements from bishops-elect.

In order that the foregoing be considered by all Standing Committees as uniform standards for judging the qualifications of bishops-elect, the commission recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution #A215

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon III.21.1(c) be amended by adding the following new paragraph after the first complete paragraph of this clause:**

- 1 *The criteria set forth in Canons III.21.1(a) and (c) and III.7.12, the list of offenses for*
- 2 *which a Bishop may be tried under Canon IV.1, and the capacity and demonstrated*
- 3 *ability of the Bishop-elect to meet the standards of the Declaration in Article VIII*
- 4 *of the Constitution are the standards by which the Standing Committees and Bishops*
- 5 *shall determine the qualification of the Bishop-elect before giving consent to*
- 6 *consecration.*

Biographical information normally gathered by a Diocesan Nominating Committee, if made available to the Standing Committees, should assist them in judging the qualifications of a bishop-elect.

This commission is not unmindful of the position taken by some that each diocese should be the sole judge of the qualifications of the person elected. Others point out the fact that a person elected and consecrated as a bishop within a diocese becomes a bishop not only of the Episcopal Church but of the entire Anglican Communion.

This commission recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution #A216

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon III.21.1(c) be amended to read in part as follows:**

1 (c) If the election of a Bishop shall have taken place more than three months before
2 the meeting of the General Convention, the Standing Committee of the Diocese elect-
3 ing shall by their President, or by some person or persons specially appointed, *except*
4 *as provided in Sec. 5 of this Canon*, immediately send to the Standing Committees
5 of the several Dioceses a certificate of the election by the Secretary of Convention of
6 the Diocese, bearing a statement that evidence of the Bishop-elect's having been duly
7 ordered Deacon and Priest and the certificates as to mental and physical examination
8 as required in Sec. 1(a) of this Canon have been received and that a testimonial in
9 the form set out in Sec. 1(a) of this Canon has been signed by a constitutional majori-
10 ty of the Convention, and a summary of biographical information relating to the
11 Bishop-elect;

To establish a procedure for dealing with alleged irregularities in the election process, this commission recommends adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution #A217

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, That Canon III.21 be amended by adding a new section as follows:

Sec. 5.

1 (a). *Within ten days after the election of a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor or a Suffragan*
2 *Bishop by a Diocesan Convention, delegates constituting not less than 10% of the*
3 *number of delegates casting votes on the final ballot may file with the Secretary of*
4 *the Convention written objections to the election process setting forth in detail all alleged*
5 *irregularities. Within ten days after receipt thereof, the Secretary of the Convention*
6 *shall forward copies of the same to the Bishop, the Chancellor and Standing Commit-*
7 *tee of the Diocese, and to the Presiding Bishop, who shall request the Court of Review*
8 *of the Province in which the Diocese is located to investigate the complaint. The Court*
9 *of Review may invite response by the Bishop, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee*
10 *and any other persons within the electing Diocese. Within thirty days after receipt of*
11 *the request, the Court of Review shall send a written report of its findings to the*
12 *Presiding Bishop, a copy of which report the Presiding Bishop, within fifteen days,*
13 *shall cause to be sent to the Bishop, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee and the*
14 *Secretary of the Convention of the electing Diocese.*

15 (b). *If such election shall have taken place within three months before a meeting of*
16 *the General Convention, the Report shall be sent with the evidence of election and*
17 *testimonials as provided in Section 1(a) of this Canon.*

18 (c). *If such election shall have taken place more than three months before the meeting*
19 *of the General Convention, the report of the Court of Review shall be sent to the Stand-*
20 *ing Committees of the several Dioceses, with the Certificate of the Secretary of the*
21 *electing Convention relating to consent to consecrate. Likewise, the Presiding Bishop*
22 *shall include such report in the communication to the Bishops having jurisdiction.*
23 *The Secretary also shall send a copy of the Report to each of the delegates who filed*
24 *objection to the election process.*

3. COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

A. Review of Committees and Commissions

Pursuant to the directive of Canon I.1.2(n)(8), the commission during the past triennium reviewed the operations of the several committees and commissions of General

Convention to determine the necessity of their continuance and the effectiveness of their functions. The recommendation found in subsection C below is a result of this review process.

The review was accomplished utilizing a questionnaire circulated to each of the committees and commissions. Responses were received from all but two groups. The questionnaire made inquiry as to (i) charge and function, (ii) work accomplished and yet to be done, (iii) the possibility of new opportunities, (iv) budget amounts and usage, (v) size, and (vi) possible reallocations of work.

Not surprisingly, most committees and commissions believe their present size is optimal for performing their assigned tasks. The median size is 12. Most believe they are accomplishing the work with which they are charged. Also, not surprisingly, but a matter to be analyzed, is that almost all of the annual budget of each group is spent on travel, lodging and meal expenses in connection with meetings of the group. Given the individual and collective experience of the members of this commission, there is a conviction that meeting costs can and must be reduced.

B. Meeting Costs

Given escalating transportation costs particularly and other expenses generally, this commission urges each other committee or commission seriously to explore and implement, as this commission has done, ways of accomplishing its tasks at the lowest cost reasonably possible. Among the ways this can be achieved are:

- (i). Utilize the expertise of the General Convention Office to make meeting arrangements at the least cost, considering air fares and lodging and meals.
- (ii). At the beginning of each triennium, have the General Convention Office identify, given the residences of the several members of the group, the two or three locations that produce the least transportation cost for the group.
- (iii). Utilize nonprofit conference centers, religious houses and seminaries for lodging and meals. (This commission held most of its meetings at a centrally located conference center at a cost of \$49 per person per day, which included single room and private bath, three daily meals, use of meeting rooms and local transportation to and from a major airport.)
- (iv). Where age permits, have members use airline senior discount tickets.
- (v). Consider meeting over a Saturday night for discount fares.
- (vi). Assign discrete elements of work to subgroups which can meet by conference telephone after first exchanging information by mail.
- (vii). Work from a predefined agenda and distribute material before the meeting, thus reducing its duration.

C. Joint Commission on AIDS

The 1988 General Convention established the Joint Commission on AIDS, to be concerned with the theological, ethical and pastoral questions inherent in the AIDS crisis. The commission early in this triennium adopted a Statement of Purpose of the Joint Commission on AIDS and Guiding Concepts in Implementing Purposes, which appear to be largely educational and programmatic in nature.

In order that the commission's work continue and become even more effective, this commission recommends adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution #A218

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____, concurring, **That the Executive Council establish**
2 **a Commission on AIDS whose duty it shall be to focus the Church's attention on the**
3 **theological, ethical and pastoral questions inherent in the AIDS crisis; to develop recom-**
4 **mendations and strategies to increase awareness throughout the Church of the AIDS**
5 **crisis; to facilitate communication with and among the several organizations, institu-**
6 **tions and programs engaged in AIDS ministries within and related to the Church; and**
7 **to advocate to the Church and to the world concern for those affected with AIDS;**
8 and be it further
- 9 *Resolved*, **That the Commission on AIDS shall consist of 1 Bishop, 2 Presbyters or**
10 **Deacons and 3 Lay Persons;** and be it further,
- 11 *Resolved*, **That the Commission on AIDS shall be a Commission of Executive Coun-**
12 **cil; shall report annually to the Executive Council on its activities and progress; and**
13 **shall report to the General Convention in 1994 and thereafter.**

As the subject matter of the Joint Commission on AIDS properly falls within the scope of the work assigned to the Standing Commission on Health, this commission recommends amendment of the Canons by adoption of the following resolutions:

Resolution #A219

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.1.2(n)(4) be amended**
2 **by changing the period at the end thereof to a comma and by adding the following:**
3 **"including all aspects of the AIDS crisis";** and be it further,
- 4 *Resolved*, **That Canon I.1.2(o) be deleted.**

In making the foregoing recommendations, the commission recognized and in this report emphasizes that under Canon I.1.2(a) standing commissions of General Convention are created to study and make recommendations to the General Convention on major subjects considered to be of continuing concern to the Church and joint commissions to do the same on specific matters of concern during a single interval between two regular meetings of the General Convention. Their purpose is to investigate, study and make recommendations for legislation to be considered by General Convention. However, under Canon I.4.1(a), it is the Executive Council which has the duty to carry out the program and policies adopted by the General Convention, and it has charge of the unification, development and prosecution of the missionary, educational and social work of the Church. Therefore, a commission of the Executive Council has authority to develop and carry out programs.

D. Appointment of Committee Members

Members of joint and standing committees and commissions, boards and agencies are appointed by the Presiding Bishop and by the President of the House of Deputies. Without presuming to infringe upon their prerogative in selecting their appointees, this commission believes a procedure should be established whereby prospective appointees will receive a brief explanation of the duties and responsibilities of membership and the opportunity to consider seriously the required commitment of time and effort prior to final appointment.

This commission, therefore, makes the following recommendation:

1. The appointing officers submit to the Secretary of the General Convention or to the Secretaries of the respective Houses, lists of prospective appointees to interim bodies.

2. The Secretary involved send to each prospective appointee a statement of the proposed appointment, of the estimated requirement of time, and a request that the prospective appointee sign and return a form indicating willingness and ability to be appointed and agreeing to the commitment of time and effort.

3. Upon the basis of the replies, the appointing officers make their appointments with notification by the Secretary involved.

E. Joint Commissions

Canon I.1.2(a) provides for the establishment of standing and joint commissions, the latter "to study and make recommendations on specific matters during a single interval between meetings of the General Convention," as distinguished from standing commissions, which deal with major subjects of continuing concern. To make it clear that joint commissions cease to exist at the end of one interval, unless extended by the General Convention, the commission recommends the adoption of the following Resolution:

Resolution #A220

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, **That Canon I.1.2(a) be amended by inserting, after the first sentence, the following:**

- 1 *Joint Commissions shall cease to exist at the end of the single interval for which they*
- 2 *are created unless extended by action of the General Convention.*

4. INTERPRETATION OF CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

At the 1973 General Convention, three legislative proposals were introduced in the House of Deputies seeking a method to obtain an official interpretation of the Constitution and Canons. Two of these proposed the creation of a Judicial Council and a third proposed the establishment of a Standing Commission on the Constitution and Canons to interpret matters pertaining to the Constitution and Canons. Instead of adopting any of these proposals, the General Convention referred the subject to the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church.

The Structure Commission recommended to the 1976 General Convention the creation of a Joint Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons, with authority to prepare and issue advisory opinions on any constitutional or canonical question. That Convention did create a Joint Commission on Constitution and Canons, but did not approve the recommendation giving the commission authority to render advisory opinions.

The question has continued to arise, resulting in a proposal to the 1988 General Convention by the Diocese of San Diego, requesting the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church and the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons to consider the creation of a National Court of Appeals or Review and report to the 1991 General Convention.

Recognizing that interpretations may be sought infrequently and being mindful of budget restraints which limit the creation of additional organizations, this commission does not recommend the creation of a Judicial Council or Court of Review. Furthermore, there is no machinery within the Church, nor does it seem appropriate to create such, to enforce the opinions of a Judicial Council.

However, in order that there may be provision for the resolution of constitutional or canonical questions, without the creation of an additional body with attendant expense,

the commission reiterates its recommendation to the 1976 General Convention that the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons render advisory opinions on constitutional and canonical questions. To accomplish this, the commission recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution #A221

Resolved, the House of _____, concurring, That Canon I.1.2(n)(2) be amended by adding a new subparagraph (iii) as follows:

1 *Upon request of any one of the following: the Presiding Bishop; the President, Vice-*
2 *President, or Secretary of the House of Deputies; Vice-President or Secretary of the*
3 *House of Bishops; Secretary or Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Socie-*
4 *ty or of the General Convention; the General Convention; the Executive Council; any*
5 *Diocesan Bishop, Convention, Standing Committee, or Executive Council; render an*
6 *advisory opinion on any question involving the interpretation of the Constitution or*
7 *Canons of the Episcopal Church. Copies of requests by a Diocesan officer or organiza-*
8 *tion shall be sent by that officer or organization to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the*
9 *Diocese. Opinions requested by others may be rendered at the discretion of the Com-*
10 *mission. Opinions shall be sent to the party or parties requesting an opinion, with*
11 *copies being sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese from which an opinion*
12 *was requested, to the Presiding Bishop, to the President of the House of Deputies and*
13 *to the Secretary of the General Convention, who shall cause the same to be indexed*
14 *and preserved and a copy sent to the Archivist. Copies of opinions may be sent by*
15 *the Commission to other interested parties.*

5. MISSIONARY DIOCESES

A. Autonomy Process

The 1982 General Convention adopted a resolution (A162s) setting forth the policies and procedures whereby a missionary diocese could become autonomous. Although in the interim missionary dioceses have achieved this status, it has become apparent that changes should be made to strengthen the provisions relating to finances, particularly audit procedures, clergy pensions and the amount and duration of continuing financial assistance.

The commission recommends the adoption of the following resolution to replace the original A162s:

Resolution #A222

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That any Diocese of this Church
2 seeking to withdraw from this jurisdiction of the Anglican Communion in order to
3 form or join an autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion under the authority
4 of Title I, Canon 11, Sec. 3(f) shall be subject to the following requirements effective
5 August 1, 1991:

6 1. Notice of such intention shall be given to the Secretary of the General Convention,
7 after having been approved by Diocesan or Provincial authority, through the normal
8 decision-making process, including the affirmative action by its Convention or Synod,
9 that such status will be requested. Such request shall be sent by the Secretary of the
10 General Convention to the following:

- 11 The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church,
- 12 The Standing Commission on World Mission,
- 13 The Executive Council,
- 14 The Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society,
- 15 The Executive for World Mission.

16 **2.** There shall be a trial period from the date of such notice until the second succeeding
17 General Convention. The purpose of the trial period is: (a) to allow the dioceses con-
18 stituting the proposed province to develop and put in place the necessary structures
19 and programs for its operation and begin to experience the functioning of said pro-
20 grams and structures, and (b) to allow a diocese joining another autonomous province
21 of the Anglican Communion to develop and put in place such diocesan structures and
22 programs.

23 **3.** During the trial period, the Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society
24 and the Executive for World Mission shall provide the necessary technical assistance
25 for the Diocese or Province to institute the following procedures:

26 (a). Establishment of appropriate diocesan or provincial structures (such as a Con-
27 stitution, Canons and Prayer Book) and other structures for decision-making ap-
28 propriate to the culture, customs and conditions of the jurisdiction.

29 (b). Establishment of accounting, reporting and external control procedures necessary
30 to ensure the normal checks and balances, to be reported to the Treasurer of the
31 Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in acceptable form.

32 (c). Development of a five-year program and budget projection with the appropriate
33 authority in the Diocese or Province, the text of which will describe in detail the
34 goals and objectives of the Diocese or Province during this period. The Treasurer
35 of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and the Executive for World Mis-
36 sion are to attach to the goals and objectives any commentary they feel is necessary.

37 (d). Establishment of an adequate Pension Plan and Fund for Clergy of the Diocese
38 or Province.

39 (e). In the case of a new Province to be formed, the establishment of a Covenant
40 Committee representing the proposed Province and including three members of the
41 Episcopal Church appointed by the Presiding Bishop. The purpose of the Covenant
42 Committee is to establish and monitor the continuing relationship between the pro-
43 posed Province and the Episcopal Church, including a five-year program and budget
44 projection. The Covenant Agreement between the Episcopal Church and the pro-
45 posed Province needs to be ratified by each separating Diocese of the Episcopal
46 Church and by the appropriate bodies of the Episcopal Church and the new Province.

47 **4.** During the trial period, the Diocese or the Province shall report every eighteen months
48 the progress of the Diocese or Province to the Secretary of the General Convention,
49 who shall send copies to those to whom such notice of intention has been given in
50 accordance with Paragraph 1.

51 **5.** The Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and the Executive
52 for World Mission shall determine and report to the Standing Commissions on Struc-
53 ture and World Mission and the Executive Council the estimated amount and dura-
54 tion of financial support to be required for the Diocese or Province following approval

55 of the right of the Diocese to withdraw in order to form or join an autonomous Pro-
56 vince of the Anglican Communion. The Standing Commissions shall report their find-
57 ings and recommendations to the next General Convention.

58 6. Prior to making their reports to the General Convention, the Structure Commit-
59 tees of the House of Bishops and of the House of Deputies shall have received assurance
60 from the Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and the Executive
61 for World Mission that the procedures stated in Paragraph 3 are in place and shall
62 have received the report of the amount and duration of financial support stated in
63 Paragraph 5; and be it further

64 *Resolved*, That the Structure Committees' recommendations to General Convention
65 shall be one of the following:

66 (a). The request be granted;

67 (b). Extension of the trial period be granted for no more than one additional three-
68 year period;

69 (c). The request not be granted; and be it further

70 *Resolved*, That the Reports of the Structure Committees shall include appraisals of
71 the readiness of the Diocese or Province to become autonomous and the reasons for
72 the Committees' recommendations, including, without limitation, findings of fact
73 relating to the items set forth in Paragraph 3.

B. Retention Of Provisions for Missionary Dioceses and Missionary Bishops

It has been requested that the continued use of the terms "Missionary Diocese" and "Missionary Bishop" in the Constitution, Canons and Rules of Order be considered and reviewed by the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church, as well as by the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons. The question is whether there is any clear definition of the term "Missionary Diocese" and whether the Church actually has any such dioceses.

After careful consideration, this commission has concluded that there is, indeed, a definition found in Canon I.11.1 which reads:

. . . Missionary Dioceses . . . shall constitute jurisdictions for which this Church as a whole assumes a special responsibility.

The term "missionary" reflects the fact of a special position in relation to the whole Church rather than a negative value judgment. By using this term, the Canon calls the attention of the entire Church to our responsibilities as the family of Christ to our brothers and sisters with special needs. It also affirms our calling to mission as reflected in the corporate title of the Church, "The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America" (Canon I.3).

This commission believes that to remove the designation "missionary" would not only mask the reality of the status of these dioceses but also would effectively hide them from our attention.

Therefore, this commission recommends the retention of the terms "Missionary Dioceses" and "Missionary Bishops" in the Constitution, Canons and Rules of Order.

6. ENVIRONMENT

The commission reviewed the Report of the Presiding Bishop's Consultation on the Environment and Sustainable Development with special attention to the Theology of

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Creation upon which it is based. Recognizing the critical importance of the issue of the environment, this commission recommends that the Standing Commission on Human Affairs continue its consideration and study of the environment for possible recommendation for future legislative action by General Convention rather than the establishment of a new Standing Commission on the Environment and Sustainable Development. The commission also wishes to call attention to the fact that it is the responsibility of the Executive Council to carry out the program and policies adopted by the General Convention.

7. LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Having received information regarding the formation of a Standing Committee on Planning and Development of the Executive Council, this commission has offered its support and assistance in the planning process. The Rev. Canon Roswell Moore, Executive Council Liaison member of this commission, attended the May, 1990, meeting of the Committee.

As various matters within the purview of this commission have long-range planning implications, the commission will continue to follow the work of the Committee.

8. RESOLUTIONS REFERRED TO THE COMMISSION

The following concurred resolutions of the 69th General Convention were referred to this commission for action and have been disposed of as follows:

- A067a National and Diocesan Structures and Local Congregations. See Items 1A and 3A.
- A074 Balance of Women and Men on Church Bodies. Referred to Committee on the State of the Church.
- A170 Voting in House of Bishops. See Item 2A.
- A176 Availability of Past Actions of General Convention and Executive Council. Secretary of General Convention reports this is in process by development of customized database.
- A177 Amendment of Joint Rule III.13. Adopted by 1988 General Convention.
- A179a Autonomy Process. See Item 5A.
- B049 Review of Committees and Commissions. See Item 3A.
- C001 National Court of Appeal. See Item 4.
- D031 Monitoring of General Convention Resolutions. See Item 1A.
- D129a Program Coordinator for Liturgy and Music. Expressed concern to Executive Council that this position has not been filled.
- D159 Amend Canon I.1.1, Size of House of Deputies. After consideration, the commission determined to make no recommendation as to reduction in size. See Item 1B.

The following resolutions deal with steps toward autonomy by various Dioceses and Provinces. The commission has requested further information on their progress toward autonomy, and has been notified that none of them will be seeking authorization for autonomy at the 1991 General Convention. See Item 5A.

STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

- B020a Dominican Episcopal Church
- B021a Haiti
- B028a Autonomous Dioceses
- B029 Mexican Episcopal Church
- B031a Diocese of Central Philippines
- B033s Andes/Arensa
- C045s Autonomous Province in Central Region of Americas
- C049 Central Region of Americas Autonomy
- C050 Central Region of Americas Autonomy
- DI15 Episcopal Church of the Andes

With respect to the following resolutions, the commission determined that no action by this commission was required:

- A008 Article IV, Standing Committees Vacancies
- A029 Joint Rule VI.17(a), Episcopal Church Women
- A150a Future Sites of General Convention
- A171 Canon I.1.4, Early Deputy Elections
- A172 Canon I.1.14(b), General Convention Sites
- A174a Canon I.4.3, Presiding Officer Titles
- A175a Canon I.1.5(b), Duties of General Convention Registrar
- A178 Amend House of Deputies Rule of Order 21(b), Provinces to Introduce Resolutions
- A185 Companion Dioceses
- A193 Site Selection for 1991 General Convention
- A194 Sites for 1994 General Convention
- B003 Bishop of Navajoland
- B010a Diocese of Central and South Mexico
- B027 Autonomous Dioceses
- B042 Theological Groundwork
- B046 Amend House of Bishops Rule on Interim Resolutions
- D035 Quotas for Women on Committees
- D076 Amend House of Deputies Rule 7, Inclusive Language
- D077 House of Deputies Rules 7, 12, 13, 17, 21, 51, 53, Inclusive Language
- D097s Decentralized Church Structure
- DI33a House of Deputies Rule IV.7, Committee Numbers
- DI64s Election of Presiding Bishop's Fund Board

FINANCIAL REPORT OF PAST TRIENNIUM

	<i>1989</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1991</i>
Appropriated	\$14,700.00	\$11,300.00	\$2,600.00
Expenses	\$ 8,047.65	\$ 9,085.99	\$ 125.00*

*Estimated

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT TRIENNIUM

1. Continue the evaluation of Committees, Commissions, Boards and Agencies, as well as evaluation of the following:
 - a. Committees mandated by General Convention to report to Executive Council, i.e., Committees on the Status of Women, on Racism and on Economic Justice.
 - b. Executive Council Committees made up entirely of Executive Council members.
 - c. Committees created by Executive Council but with outside members (e.g., Social Responsibility in Investments.).
 - d. Program Advisory Committees developed by staff.
 - e. Task forces.
2. Review of the whole relationship of General Convention, the Executive Council and its professional staff.
3. Continue to monitor the process of Missionary Dioceses seeking autonomy.
4. Consideration of material referred by the General Convention, the Presiding Bishop, the President of the House of Deputies, the Executive Council, and others.

PROPOSED BUDGET OF COMMISSION FOR THE NEXT TRIENNIUM

The commission estimates its costs for the next triennium as detailed below and submits the following resolution:

	<i>1992</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1994</i>
Meetings	\$16,400.00	\$11,000.00	\$2,600.00

Resolution #A223

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That there be appropriated from the Assessment Budget of General Convention for the expenses of the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church, the sum of \$30,000.00 for the triennium 1992-94.**