

meets once every three years and the General Board meets three times each year. At first glance one may have the impression that both the General Assembly and General Board are truly democratic and are representative groups reflecting the mind of the member denominations. It should first be pointed out that the General Board which meets three times per year has tremendous power. The Workbook for the Fifth General Assembly of the N.C.C., page 31, states this concerning the power of the General Board:

"Which has full ad-interim powers except the right to change the Constitution and By-laws and approve new member communions."

The General Board which meets nine times more frequently than the General Assembly, is in fact the controlling body of the National Council of Churches. It is significant therefore to compare the distribution of votes in the General Assembly with the General Board. The attached listing of member denominations and the allowed number of votes in the General Assembly and in the General Board is most revealing.

When the General Board assembles for its meetings it appears that it needs very few denominational delegates pledged to support its program in order to control effectively the operation of the National Council of Churches. In the General Assembly the delegates from the denomination represent 90% of the total votes, whereas in the General Board they represent only 59%. At San Francisco at the First General Assembly there was a repeated emphasis encouraging metropolitan areas to have paid Council Secretaries instead of having a local minister serving as a Council Secretary in addition to his own pastorate. It seems that this kind of emphasis would result in even more paid votes and less denominational representatives.

Under the General Board is a General Secretariat which is headed by the General Secretary, Dr. Roy G. Ross. Dr. Ross seems to be a very capable and energetic man dedicated to the direction and program of the ecumenical movement. In a sense Dr. Ross is a real power behind the whole organizational structure. In his report on December 5, 1960 to the General Assembly he made this statement which indicates his idea concerning the authority of the National Council of Churches.

"When the National Council of Churches was formed in Cleveland there was relatively little emphasis on the role of the Council as an agency for overall planning . . . It was due to an assumption and a fear - a responsibility of separate and largely autonomous units of the Council even as it there-to-for had been a segmented function of separate boards within the denominations and a fear lest the Council might become a super-church arrogating to itself functions which would limit the sovereignty of the churches, at times have changed during a decade. Individual communions now realize that they can - must have total program strategies and they are accordingly establishing overall denominational planning bodies with executive staff for the development of such strategies."

There are four main divisions in the organization of the National Council and the one which concerns us the most is the division of Christian Life and Work. Some of the activities of this division can be seen in its various departments such as Department of Church and Economic Life, Department of International Affairs, Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, Department of Religious Liberty, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Worship and the Arts, etc. It was in this division where the Fifth World Order Study Conference made its pronouncement advocating the recognition of Red China. The involvements of this division in international affairs is quite deep, and its pronouncements seemed to have a socialistic one-world ring to them. The Chairman of this division for the past triennium was Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam. A significant point is that the Vice-Chairman serving directly under Bishop Oxnam, was