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**MINUTES**  
OF  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
OF THE  
**THIRTY-SIXTH**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
OF THE  
**Presbyterian Church of Australia**



HELD IN SYDNEY, JUNE, 1977

---

**Melbourne:**

**BROWN PRIOR ANDERSON PTY LTD, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRINTERS**  
**5 EVANS STREET, BURWOOD 3215**



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# MODERATORS

## OF THE

### General Assembly of Australia

Rev. John Meiklejohn, D.D.*	1901
Rev. Alexander Hay, D.D.*	1902
Rev. David Bruce, D.D.*	1903
Rev. P. J. Murdock, M.A.*	1905
Rev. T. E. Clouston, D.D.*	1906
Rev. Peter Robertson*	1907
Rev. John Ferguson*	1909
Rev. W. S. Rolland*	1910
Rev. J. Laurence Rentoul, M.A., D.D.*	1912
Rev. George Davidson, M.A., D.D.*	1914
Rev. Ronald G. Macintyre, C.B.E., C.M.G., M.A., D.D.*	1916
Rev. John Walker, D.D.*	1918
Rev. James Gibson, M.A.*	1920
Rev. John Matthew, M.A., D.D.*	1922
Rev. James Crookston*	1924
Rev. R. Scott-West, D.D.*	1926
Rev. Alexander Crow*	1928
Rev. Donald A. Cameron, M.A.*	1930
Rev. G. R. S. Reid, M.A., D.D.*	1933
Rev. John MacKenzie, M.A., D.D.*	1936
Rev. John Flynn, O.B.E., D.D.*	1936
Rev. R. Wilson Macauley, B.A., D.D.*	1942
Rev. Alexander C. Grieve, B.A.*	1945
Rev. Julian R. Blanchard, C.B.E., B.A., D.D.	1948
Rev. Richard Bardon, B.A.*	1951
Rev. Sir Francis W. Rolland, O.B.E., M.C., M.A.*	1954
Rev. David J. Flockhart, M.A.*	1957
Rev. Alan C. Watson, M.A., D.D.*	1959
Rev. Hector Harrison, O.B.E., M.A., B.D.	1962
Rev. William Young, B.A.*	1964
Rev. Norman Faichney, B.A.	1967
Rev. James Frederick McKay, C.M.G., O.B.E., M.A., B.D.	1970
	1971
Rev. Gillam Albert McConnel Wood, B.A.	1973
Rev. Neil MacLeod, M.A., B.D.	1974
Rev. Kenneth Joseph Gardner	1977

\* Deceased





**Thirty-Sixth  
General Assembly  
of the  
Presbyterian Church of Australia  
1977**

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**Officers**

---

**Right Reverend the Moderator:**

REVEREND KENNETH JOSEPH GARDNER  
P.O. Box 291, Brisbane North Quay 4000.

**Clerk of Assembly:**

REVEREND EDWARD R. PEARSONS  
156 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000.

**Deputy Clerk:**

RAYMOND P. W. JELL, Esq., A.R.E.I., J.P.  
P.O. Box 291, Brisbane North Quay 4000.

**Business Convener:**

REVEREND NORMAN MONSEN  
G.P.O. Box 100, Sydney 2001.

**Procurator:**

F. MAXWELL BRADSHAW, Esq., M.A., LL.M.  
472 Bourke Street, Melbourne 3000.

**Law Agent:**

LINDSAY J. MOORE, Esq., LL.B.  
P.O. Box 122, West Wyalong 2671.

**Treasurers:**

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (N.S.W.) PROPERTY TRUST  
G.P.O. Box 100, Sydney 2001.

# ROLL

## NEW SOUTH WALES (Elected by the State Assembly)

### Ministers:

Rt. Rev. H. G. Durbin  
Rev. D. F. Murray  
Rev. J. Mullan  
Rev. J. Bruce  
Rev. C. R. Thomas  
Rev. R. A. Caldwell  
Rev. M. J. K. Ramage  
Rev. I. Cox

### Elders:

Mr. L. J. Moore  
Dr. P. E. Lush  
Mr. H. I. M. Macfarlane  
Mr. D. R. Brierley  
Mr. A. G. Spalding  
Mr. P. J. Graham  
Mr. H. W. Ross  
Mr. C. R. Brierley

### BATHURST

Rev. E. L. Noble  
Mr. K. B. Latham

### CANBERRA

Rev. J. T. Mercer  
Mr. C. R. Martin

### DUBBO

Rev. R. J. Lee

### HASTINGS

Rev. K. C. McAlpine  
Rev. K. G. Hamill  
Dr. D. B. Patterson  
Mr. A. J. Beard

### HAWKESBURY

Rev. D. K. Robson  
Rev. R. E. Spring  
Mr. R. C. Daley  
Mr. P. Smith

### HUNTER

Rev. H. V. Barratt  
Rev. J. Baillie  
Rev. H. G. Peffer  
Mr. D. Atcheson  
Mr. G. B. Oliver  
Mr. K. D. Green

### ILLAWARRA

Rev. D. E. Hawkins  
Rev. G. D. Penman  
Mrs. H. Rutherford  
Mr. C. Tindell

### KURINGAI

Rev. N. Monsen  
Rev. P. G. Logan  
Mr. I. C. McKinnon  
Mr. T. A. Beale

### MOREE

Rev. R. A. Osborn  
Rev. D. A. Cook  
Mr. W. Porter-Young  
Mr. R. J. Uebergang

### MURRUMBIDGEE

Rev. P. M. Clark  
Mr. R. Watson

### NEW ENGLAND

Rev. K. C. Auld  
Mr. G. A. C. Dandie

### NORTH SYDNEY

Rev. P. E. Boase  
Rev. R. O. Walder  
Mr. J. B. Rae  
Mr. H. R. McM. Murray

### NORTHERN RIVERS

Rev. N. S. Wilce  
Rev. D. L. Blakely  
Mr. S. Patch  
Mr. W. H. Chawner

### ORANGE

Rev. G. A. Morrow  
Mr. C. Wheeler

## SYDNEY

Rev. S. J. Clements  
Rev. A. W. Fraser

Mr. J. Van Werven  
Mr. D. G. Massie

## SYDNEY SOUTH

Rev. K. D. Allen  
Rev. Dr. J. G. Miller  
Rev. B. D. Bowtell

Mr. L. E. Aspinall  
Mr. R. J. Hay  
Mr. R. Lucas

## SYDNEY WEST

Rev. R. T. C. Williamson  
Rev. A. G. Ingram

Mr. R. S. Mackenzie  
Mr. P. Burke

## WAGGA WAGGA

Rev. I. G. Stewart  
Rev. R. I. C. Davidson

Mr. S. McDonald

## YOUNG

Rev. G. R. George

Mr. F. Knight

## QUEENSLAND

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. M. W. Roberts  
Rev. N. T. Barker  
Rev. D. J. Durham

Mr. D. F. L. Skerman  
Mr. R. P. W. Jell  
Mr. R. H. Crowther

## BRISBANE

Rt. Rev. K. J. Gardner  
Rev. R. J. Allan

Mr. A. Allison  
Mr. V. Houseman

## BRISBANE NORTH

Rev. G. C. Lake

Mr. K. Gillies

## CARPENTARIA

Rev. E. G. Bout

Mr. W. H. Miller

## MACKAY MARYBOROUGH MOWBRAY

Rev. K. P. Richardson  
Rev. A. R. Wilson

Mr. G. R. E. Nelson  
Mr. D. T. Gallagher

## ROCKHAMPTON

Rev. J. M. Wilson  
Rev. P. L. Gordon

Mr. A. C. Shepherdson  
Mr. K. Shepherdson

## TOWNSVILLE

Rev. H. G. D. Todd

Mr. J. M. Ball

## DARLING DOWNS

Rev. J. C. Morrow  
Rev. E. B. Hosking  
Rev. A. B. L. Bailey

Mr. L. R. Huskisson  
Mr. C. H. Peake  
Mr. R. J. Dunn

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

(Elected by the General Assembly)

Rev. R. W. Traill

Mr. A. G. Matheson

## ONKAPARINGA

Rev. E. M. Johnston

Mr. R. W. Arstall

## PENOLA

Rt. Rev. R. Robinson

Mr. I. Ferguson

## TASMANIA

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rt. Rev. A. C. Stubs

Mr. A. J. Kilner

Rev. R. S. Miller  
Rev. F. W. F. White

Rt. Rev. W. A. Loftus  
Rev. H. L. Dunn  
Rev. C. A. Harrison  
Rev. E. R. Pearsons  
Rev. R. C. Russell

Rev. P. H. R. Lockett

Rev. R. Williams

Rev. K. J. Gibson  
Rev. J. C. Flavell  
Rev. D. Carruthers

Rev. C. C. Flavel

Rev. T. J. Diggins

Mr. J. L. C. Young

Rev. M. A. Thomson

Rev. R. W. Price

Rev. J. H. Price

Rev. W. F. Gilmour

Rev. F. A. Hoad

Rev. Dr. E. J. Norton  
Rev. J. Beatty

Rev. G. Lyman

Rev. H. Prenter

Rev. S. L. Chant

Rev. J. H. Treloar

**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**  
(Observers)

Rev. D. B. Fraser

**TASMANIA**

Mr. R. J. Gardam  
Mr. H. O. Ives

**VICTORIA**

Mr. F. M. Bradshaw  
Mr. C. H. Fraser  
Mr. R. G. Hanna  
Mr. F. Newall  
Mr. W. E. Nixon

**BALLARAT**

Mr. A. McHattie

**BENDIGO**

Mr. C. Igoe

**FLINDERS**

Mrs. R. J. Nathan  
Mr. M. J. Bierton  
Mr. D. F. Jeeves

**GEELONG**

Mr. J. A. Ramage

**GIPPSLAND**  
**GOULBURN VALLEY**

Mr. H. Evans

**HAMILTON**

**LATROBE VALLEY**

**MALLEE DOWNS**

Mr. A. Scott

**MAROONDAH**

Mr. H. Boer

**MELBOURNE**

Mr. E. D. Eastham

**MELBOURNE EAST**

Mrs. V. Hardie

**MELBOURNE NORTH**

Mr. A. Coombe  
Mr. B. D. Bayston

**MELBOURNE WEST**

Mr. E. J. Guy  
Mr. J. T. Rourke

**MORTLAKE**

Mr. R. M. Clegg

**NORTH-EAST**

Mr. G. P. Heywood

**WIMMERA**

Mr. D. J. Goodwin

## JUDICIAL COMMISSION

### New South Wales

Rt. Rev. H. G. Durbin  
Rev. N. Monsen  
Rev. S. Russell-Scott  
Mr. K. C. Auld  
Mr. D. R. Brierley  
Mr. A. Duff  
Mr. L. J. Moore  
Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane

### Queensland

Rt. Rev. K. J. Gardner  
Rev. M. W. Roberts  
Mr. R. N. Chesterman  
Mr. R. P. W. Jell

### Victoria

Rt. Rev. W. A. Loftus  
Rev. H. L. Dunn  
Rev. C. A. Harrison  
Rev. D. V. Morey  
Rev. E. R. Pearsons  
Rev. R. C. Russell  
Mr. B. D. Bayston  
Mr. F. M. Bradshaw

### South Australia

Rev. R. Traill  
Mr. A. G. Mathieson

### Tasmania

Rt. Rev. A. C. Stubbs  
Rev. R. S. Miller

### Assembly Representatives

Rev. N. T. Barker (Q)  
Rev. G. C. Lake (Q)  
Mr. C. H. Fraser (V)  
Mr. W. R. Hobbs (V)  
Mr. F. Newall (V)  
Mr. I. Nixon (V)

Rev. J. Mullan (NSW)  
Rev. P. Boase (NSW)  
Rev. Dr. J. G. Miller (NSW)  
Rev. A. G. Ingram (NSW)  
Rev. J. J. T. Campbell (Q)  
Rev. F. W. F. White (Tas)

### Chairman: The Moderator

## COMMITTEES

### Beneficiary Fund Committee

Rev. P. E. Boase (C) (NSW)  
Rev. F. Avent (NSW)  
Mr. P. Graham (NSW)  
Mr. M. Kretchmer (NSW)

Rev. F. A. Haod (V)  
Rev. G. C. Lake (Q)  
Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane (NSW)  
Mr. J. Surling (NSW)

### Church and Nation

Rev. C. E. J. Egan (C) (NSW)  
Rev. Professor C. Miller (NSW)  
Rev. D. E. Hawkins (NSW)  
Mrs. J. Baker (NSW)

Rt. Rev. W. A. Loftus (V)  
Rev. J. J. T. Campbell (Q)  
Mr. A. G. Spalding (NSW)  
Mr. J. Grant (NSW)

### Code Committee

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Mr. F. M. Bradshaw (V)  
Mr. B. D. Bayston (V)

Rev. R. S. Miller (Tas)  
Rev. M. W. Roberts (Q)  
Mr. L. J. Moore (NSW)

### Corresponding members only:

Rev. J. Mullan (NSW)

Mr. R. P. W. Jell (Q)

### College Committee

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Rt. Rev. W. A. Loftus (V)  
Rev. E. R. Pearsons (V)  
Mr. F. M. Bradshaw (V)

Rev. K. P. Richardson (Q)  
Rev. M. W. Roberts (Q)  
Rev. S. J. Clements (NSW)  
Rev. J. F. Boyall (NSW)

### Defence Forces

Rev. R. C. Russell (C) (V)  
Rev. K. J. Gibson (V)  
Rev. W. F. Gilmour (V)  
Rev. E. J. Hale (V)

Rev. A. J. McAllister (V)  
Rev. C. Egan (NSW)  
Rev. J. Reid (NSW)  
Rev. R. J. Allen (Q)

### Corresponding member only:

Rt. Rev. A. C. Stubbs (Tas)

**NOTE:** The Rev. A. J. MacAllister has been appointed to succeed the Rev. R. C. Russell as convener of this committee when outstanding matters affecting the relationship of the Presbyterian Church of Australia with the Defence Forces have been concluded. This succession will take place by mutual agreement between the Rev. R. C. Russell and the Rev. A. J. MacAllister.

### Finance Committee

Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane (C) (NSW)  
Rev. N. Monsen (NSW)

Mr. D. R. Brierley (NSW)  
Mr. J. G. Menzies (NSW)

Mr. A. G. Spalding (NSW)  
Mr. D. M. Allan (Q)

Mr. H. O. Ives (Tas)  
Mr. W. R. Hobbs (V)

#### Immigration

Rev. R. J. Allan (C) (Q)  
Rev. T. C. Arnold (Q)  
Rev. R. O. Walder (NSW)

Rev. G. F. Leighton (Q)  
Rev. A. C. Barr (V)

#### Maintenance of the Ministry

Rev. R. A. Caldwell (NSW)  
Rev. A. G. Ingram (NSW)  
Rev. N. Monsen (NSW)  
Mr. D. R. Brierley (C) (NSW)

Rev. H. A. Stamp (V)  
Mr. P. J. Graham (NSW)  
Mr. J. C. Mackillop (NSW)  
Mr. A. Allison (Q)

#### Public Worship and Aids to Devotion

Rev. A. A. Dougan (C) (NSW)  
Rev. J. Bruce (NSW)  
Rev. D. F. Murray (NSW)  
Rev. M. J. Ramage (NSW)  
Rev. J. Reid (NSW)

Rt. Rev. K. J. Gardner (Q)  
Rt. Rev. W. A. Loftus (V)  
Mr. G. R. Thomas (NSW)  
Mr. C. R. Brierley (NSW)  
Mr. R. Smart (NSW)

#### Reception of Ministers

Rev. N. Monsen (C) (NSW)  
Rt. Rev. H. G. Durbin (NSW)  
Rev. R. A. Caldwell (NSW)  
Rev. G. R. Fullerton (NSW)  
Mr. D. R. Brierley (NSW)

Rev. R. S. Miller (Tas)  
Rev. M. W. Roberts (Q)  
Rev. E. R. Pearsons (V)  
Mr. J. C. Mackillop (NSW)

#### Relations with other Presbyterian Churches

Rt. Rev. K. J. Gardner (C) (Q)  
Rt. Rev. J. M. Wilson (Q)  
Rev. I. W. D. Barlow (Q)  
Rev. J. J. T. Campbell (Q)

Mr. R. P. W. Jell (Q)  
Mr. G. Rutherford (Q)  
Mr. F. M. Bradshaw (V)  
Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane (NSW)

#### Corresponding members only:

Rt. Rev. A. C. Stubs (Tas)

Rev. J. F. Boyall (NSW)

#### Stewardship and Promotion

Rev. D. F. Murray (C) (NSW)  
Rev. N. Monsen (NSW)  
Mr. J. C. Mackillop (NSW)  
Mr. J. G. Menzies (NSW)

Rev. T. C. Arnold (Q)  
Mr. J. G. Sticpewick (NSW)  
Mr. A. G. Spalding (NSW)  
Mr. G. Newby (V)

#### Corresponding members only:

Mr. R. J. Kent (WA)  
Mr. H. O. Ives (Tas)

Mr. A. G. Mathieson (SA)

#### Ad hoc Committee on the Australian Inland Mission

Rev. N. Monsen (C) (NSW)  
Rev. F. B. Bray (NSW)  
Rev. J. C. Harris (NSW)  
Mr. D. MacDonald (NSW)

Rev. J. Knapp (Q)  
Rev. D. B. Fraser (WA)  
Rev. R. Williams (V)  
Mr. A. G. Spalding (NSW)

#### Ad hoc Committee on Christian Education

Rev. C. R. Thomas (C) (NSW)  
Rev. Dr. J. G. Miller (NSW)  
Mr. G. Hustwit (NSW)  
Mr. G. Smith (NSW)

Rev. T. S. Fishwick (Tas)  
Rev. N. W. Wallis (Q)  
Rev. J. M. Hagans (V)

#### Ad hoc Committee on Overseas Missions

Rev. M. W. Roberts (C) (Q)  
Rt. Rev. K. J. Gardner (Q)  
Rev. M. M. Y. Kim (Q)  
Rev. A. M. Wylie (Q)  
Deaconess N. Smith

Rev. Dr. E. J. Norton (V)  
Rev. K. D. Allen (NSW)  
Mr. R. Benn (Q)  
Mr. D. J. Burnett (Q)

#### Corresponding members only

Rev. R. T. C. Williamson (NSW)

Mr. P. Kahl (NSW)

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA  
THE THIRTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*First Sederunt*

*At Sydney and within the Scots Church, Margaret Street, on Thursday, the twenty-third day of June 1977, at 10 a.m.*

1. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia convened, Public Worship was conducted by the Right Reverend the Moderator, the Rev. Neil McLeod, M.A., B.D. Constitution
2. Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane, Secretary of the General Purposes Committee moved that the Assembly:— Appointments
  - (1) Confirm the appointment of Rev. E. R. Pearsons as Clerk of Assembly.
  - (2) Appoint Mr. R. P. W. Jell as Deputy Clerk.
  - (3) Appoint Rev. Norman Monsen as Business Convener.
  - (4) Confirm the appointment of Mr. L. J. Moore, LL.B. as Law Agent.
- The motion was seconded and approved. Mr. Jell made the declaration "de fidei". Declaration  
"de fidei"
3. The Clerk laid on the Table the Roll of Assembly, intimated changes since publication of the White Book, and moved that it be given interim authority and presented for final confirmation at the afternoon sederunt. Roll of  
Assembly

The motion was seconded and approved.
4. The Clerk submitted apologies for non-attendance from Rev. P. L. Gordon and Mr. A. J. Kilner and moved that they be sustained. Apologies

The motion was seconded and approved.
5. The Clerk intimated that the Board of Nominators had unanimously agreed to nominate to the House, the Reverend Kenneth Joseph Gardner as Moderator of this Assembly. Moderator  
elected
6. The Clerk moved that the Assembly accept the nomination and elect the Reverend Kenneth Joseph Gardner as Moderator of this Assembly.
 

The motion was seconded and approved with acclamation.
7. The Reverend Kenneth Joseph Gardner was conducted to the Chair by the Very Rev. Hector Harrison, O.B.E., M.A., B.D., welcomed and inducted with prayer by the retiring Moderator. Thereafter he delivered a suitable address. Induction of  
Moderator
8. The Right Rev. W. A. Loftus, B.A., D.P.A. moved that the Assembly request the Rt. Rev. the Moderator to transmit through the Governor-General the following address to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth: Loyal  
Address

"To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty,  
May it please your Majesty,  
We, your faithful subjects, Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Australia convened in General Assembly at Sydney in the State of New South Wales on the Twenty-third day of June, 1977, take leave to assure your Majesty of our loyalty and devotion to your Person and to the Throne.  
We rejoice with your Majesty in celebrating the Silver Jubilee of your accession to the throne and praise God for the gifts of His Grace by which you have been endeared to all your people.  
We pray that God may continue to your Majesty, to His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, and to your family all spiritual grace needful for the discharge of the duties of your high office and afford you His Providential care, protection and provision in the years ahead.  
We have the honour to be your Majesty's faithful servants, Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.  
Signed in our name and in our presence and at our appointing.  
K. J. GARDNER  
Moderator"
- The motion was seconded and approved. The Assembly sang the National Anthem.
9. The Clerk laid on the Table communications of greeting from Knox Presbyterian Church, Toronto, Canada and from the Uniting Church in Australia. Communica-  
tions

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Assembly receive these communications.

Business  
Committee  
Report

10. The Clerk moved that the Assembly:  
Request the Moderator to convey to the Uniting Church Assembly the  
thanks of this Assembly for the Uniting Church Assembly's fraternal  
greetings and to reciprocate with every good wish.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

11. The report of the Business Committee was laid on the Table and  
received.

The Rev. Norman Monsen moved the Deliverance.  
That the Assembly:

- (1) Determine the hours of meeting to be—  
Morning Sederunt—10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. with luncheon 12.30 p.m.  
to 2 p.m.  
Afternoon Sederunt—2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.  
Evening Sederunt—7 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. with extension if necessary.
- (2) Declare the times for speakers to be—  
Convener of General Purposes Committee 10 minutes for presenta-  
tion of reports with 5 minutes allotted to each clause of the  
Deliverance.  
All other speakers 5 minutes applicable to each clause in the Deli-  
verance. Times to be extended on a motion duly moved, seconded  
and approved.
- (3) Appoint the Business Committee as follows—  
The Business Committee of the State within the General Assembly  
is appointed to meet, the Clerks, the Business Convener of G.A.A.  
(Convener); the Executive to act during the Assembly to comprise  
the Clerks, Lay Officers and members of the Business Committee  
who are members of the Assembly; Business Convener to be Con-  
vener of Executive.
- (4) Approve the order of business for Thursday, 23rd June, 1977—  
  - (a) General Purposes Committee;  
supplementary report of Reception of Ministers (Private Sitting)
  - (b) Appeal—Rev. J. Mullen
  - (c) Deputations—Order of the Day 5 p.m.
  - (d) Communications
  - (e) Appointment of—  
Standard Commissions  
    - (i) Assembly Minutes
    - (ii) General Assembly of Australia.
  - (f) Date, Time and Place of next Assembly.
  - (g) Close.

The motion was seconded and approved.

12. The report of the General Purposes Committee was laid on the Table  
and received.

The Right Reverend K. J. Gardner moved the deliverance. Clauses (1)  
to (6) were seconded and approved.

13. The debate ancnet the report and deliverance of the General Purposes  
Committee was adjourned.

14. The House adjourned to meet at 2 p.m., which having been duly  
intimated by the Moderator, the sederunt was closed with the Benediction.

E. R. PEARSONS

R. P. W. JELL

Clerks

General  
Purposes  
Committee

Debate  
Adjourned  
Adjournment

Constitution

Roll

Greeting

Associate

### Second Sederunt

*At Sydney and within the Scots Church, Margaret Street, on Thursday, the  
twenty-third day of June 1977 at 2 p.m.*

15. The Assembly met pursuant to adjournment and was constituted with  
prayer.

16. The Clerk moved that the amended roll of Assembly be adopted. The  
motion was seconded and approved.

17. The Business Convener laid on the Table a greeting from the students  
of the Presbyterian Theological Hall, Hawthorn, Victoria.

18. It was moved by Rev. R. T. C. Williamson

That the Assembly:

Associate the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian  
Church of the New Hebrides, Pastor Jack Louhman.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pastor Louhman addressed the House briefly.



19. The debate resumed on the report of the General Purposes Committee. Debate Resumed  
 Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane moved Clauses (7) to (11).  
 The motion was seconded and approved.
20. The debate on the report and deliverance of the General Purposes Committee was adjourned. Debate Adjourned
21. A Communication was laid on the Table by the Business Convener from the General Purposes committee on membership of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Communication
- It was moved by Rev. E. B. Hosking—  
 That the Assembly request—  
 (1) the appropriate Committee to examine and report upon the desirability or otherwise of being affiliated with the World Council of Churches, and its agencies, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and bring a recommendation to the next Assembly. World Council of Churches and World Alliance of Reformed Churches  
 The motion was seconded and approved.
- (2) The Previous Question was moved. Previous Question  
 It was seconded and disapproved.
- (3) It was moved that the Assembly—  
 (a) Determine that payment of affiliation fees to the World Council of Churches be suspended in the interim period pending reception of the report. W.C.C. Affiliation Fees  
 The motion was seconded and approved.
- (b) Determine that payment of affiliation fees to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches be suspended in the interim period. World Alliance Affiliation Fees  
 The motion was seconded and disapproved.
22. It was moved by Rev. C. R. Thomas—  
 That the Assembly:  
 Advise the Joint Board of Christian Education of Australia and New Zealand that the Presbyterian Church of Australia does not wish to take up her option on membership of the Joint Board under clause 21 of the Joint Board's constitution. Joint Board of Christian Education  
 The motion was seconded and approved.
23. The supplementary report of the General Purposes Committee on Reception of Ministers was laid on the Table and received. Reception of Ministers  
 The Rev. S. J. Clements moved the Deliverance;  
 That the Assembly—
- 1.a. Grant the prayer of the petition of the Reverend Gerret-Jan Abbas.
  - b. Receive the Reverend Gerret-Jan Abbas as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia subject to his satisfactory completion of one year of approved study, his completion of six months membership and his reception of an exit certificate.
  - 2.a. Grant the prayer of the petition of the Reverend Robert Alfred Kerr Boan.
  - b. Receive the Reverend Robert Alfred Kerr Boan as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia subject to his satisfactory completion of two years of approved study and his reception of an exit certificate.
  - 3.a. Grant the prayer of the petition of the Reverend Graham Lawrence Chipps.
  - b. Receive the Reverend Graham Lawrence Chipps as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia subject to his satisfactory completion of one year of approved study and his reception of an exit certificate.
  - 4.a. Grant the prayer of the petition of the Reverend Ross Coxhead.
  - b. Receive the Reverend Ross Coxhead as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia subject to his satisfactory completion of one year of approved study and his reception of an exit certificate.
  - 5.a. Grant the prayer of the petition of the Reverend David John Newman.
  - b. Receive the Reverend David John Newman as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia subject to his reception of an exit certificate.
- Clauses 1 to 5 were seconded and approved.
24. The debate was adjourned. Debate Adjourned
25. Rev. Kelvin James Gibson, newly appointed Chaplain-General, being present in the House, was congratulated on his appointment by the Moderator. Mr. Gibson suitably responded. Chaplain-General
26. The debate on the General Purposes Committee report and deliverance was resumed. Debate Resumed

Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane moved clauses (12) and (13).

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance of the General Purposes Committee was approved with acclamation as follows:

That the Assembly—

- (1) (i) Appoint Rt. Rev. K. J. Gardner (Chairman), Rt. Rev. W. A. Loftus, Rt. Rev. A. C. Stubs, Rev. Norman Monsen, Rev. E. R. Pearsons, Rev. M. W. Roberts, Rev. R. C. Russell, Messrs. D. R. Brierley, F. Maxwell Bradshaw, C. Homer Fraser, R. P. W. Jell, Hector MacFarlane, L. M. Moore and R. W. Ralph a Commission to appoint the following committees of this Assembly.
- (a) Ad hoc committee on the Australian Inland Mission;
  - (b) Ad hoc committee on Christian Education;
  - (c) Ad hoc committee on Overseas Missions;
  - (d) Beneficiary Fund Committee;
  - (e) Church and Nation Committee;
  - (f) Code Committee;
  - (g) College Committee Executive;
  - (h) Committee on Relations with Other Presbyterian Churches;
  - (i) Defence Forces Chaplaincy Committee;
  - (j) Finance Committee;
  - (k) Immigration Committee;
  - (l) Maintenance of the Ministry Committee;
  - (m) Reception of ministers Committee;
  - (n) Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee;
  - (o) Stewardship and Promotion Committee.
- (ii) Request the Commission to appoint the Committees in relation to section (I) of the report, such committees being as follows:

*Queensland*

Immigration  
Missions  
Relations with other churches

*Victoria*

Code  
College  
Defence Forces

*New South Wales*

All others

- (iii) Declare that four members shall form a quorum of the Commission and that the Moderator or his deputy be chairman thereof.
- (iv) Direct all committees when appointed to discharge such functions respecting them that are derived from the constitution of the Church, regulations thereunder, directions of the General Assembly, or any practice that has developed, and to report to the next Assembly on their future powers and functions.
- (v) Authorise the Commission to lay down such guidelines for the Committees which it considers necessary to supplement the policies and work of the Assembly until the next meeting of the G.A. of A.
- (2) (i) Appoint the National Journal Committee as follows—Rev. B. K. Burton, Rev. K. W. Burton (Convener), Rev. G. Fair-service, Rev. R. S. Miller, Rev. E. N. Paxton, Rev. E. R. Pearsons, Mr. R. J. Kent, Mr. A. G. Matheson, Mr. R. A. Walters, Mrs. J. E. Sticpewich.
- (a) engage staff and make editorial arrangements and terminate the same.
  - (b) enter into necessary agreements.
  - (c) determine the remuneration of editor and staff and provide a full report of action taken to the next General Assembly.
- (ii) Recommend to State Assemblies that an endeavour be made to ensure that a copy of the National Journal will go to every Presbyterian Family in Australia.

- (3) Direct the Code Committee to work upon bringing up to date the published constitution and law of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and in particular to publish, if the Finance Committee considers sufficient funds are available, a corrected version of the Scheme of Union of 1901 and, if necessary, of Basic Documents on Presbyterian Polity.
- (4) Remit to State Assemblies, and through them to presbyteries, under Barrier Act procedures, for approval or disapproval—
  - (i) that Article (vii) of the Articles of Agreement anent BOEMAR be repealed;
  - (ii) that Article (ix) of the Articles of Agreement anent Board of Christian Education be repealed; and,
  - (iii) that Article (xvi) of the Articles of Agreement anent Australian Capital Territory be repealed.
- (5) Declare that the true formula to be subscribed by Elders is as follows—

I own and accept the Subordinate Standard of this Church, with the explanations given in the Articles contained in the Declaratory Statement as an exhibition of the sense in which I understand the Holy Scriptures, and as a confession of my faith. I further own the purity of worship practised in this Church and the Presbyterian government thereof to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto, and I promise that through the grace of God I shall firmly and constantly adhere to the same, and to the utmost of my power shall, in my station, assert, maintain, and defend the doctrine, worship, and government of this Church; and the questions to be answered by Elders as their ordination and induction are as follows—

(I) Do you believe the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only rule of faith and practice?

(II) Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, and read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of your faith; and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power to assert, maintain and defend the same?

(III) Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practised in this Church?

(IV) Do you own the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto; and do you promise that through the grace of God you will firmly and constantly adhere to, and to the utmost of your power, in your station, assert, maintain, and defend the same?

(V) Do you adhere to your acceptance of the Call of this Congregation, to exercise among them the office of Ruling Elder?

(VI) Do you engage through Divine Grace to discharge with diligence and faithfulness the various duties of your office, watching over the flock, showing yourself a pattern of good works, and giving a conscientious attendance on the meetings of Session, Presbytery, and Assembly, when duly called so to do?

(VII) All these things you profess and promise through grace, as you shall be answerable at the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

- (6) (a) Place the Presbytery of Western Australia after its formation, and the congregations under its inspection, namely, Bicton, Bassendean, Fremantle, Peppermint Grove, and West Leederville, under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of New South Wales pursuant to the provisions of sub-section 3 of section 4 of the Presbyterian Church of Australia Act, 1970, of the state of Western Australia, until such time as the said Presbytery of Western Australia shall, pursuant to the provisions of section 5 of the Presbyterian Church Act, 1976, of the state of Western Australia, declare itself to be the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Western Australia.
  - (b) Advise the General Assembly of South Australia to refer the question of South Australia coming within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of Victoria to the strengthening of South Australia's future welfare.

- (7) Authorise the commission appointed under Minute 26 (i) (i) to complete the membership of the Judicial Commission in accordance with the Articles of Agreement.
- (8) Authorise the Finance Committee to consider, fix and determine the remuneration payable to the following Officers of the Assembly—  
Moderator  
Clerks  
Business Convener
- (9) Authorise the Finance Committee to fix the necessary Assessments on State Assemblies for the next triennium.
- (10) (i) Sustain the petition of Mr. Herbert McGregor.  
(ii) Authorise the Presbytery of Melbourne to take Mr. Herbert McGregor on trials for licence provided that the requirements of Article VIII(a) are complied with.
- (11) (i) Confirm the appointment of Chaplain K. J. Gibson as Chaplain-General (Presbyterian) with effect from 23rd June, 1977, and request the Moderator to inform the Department of Defence (Army Office) of the nomination.  
(ii) Confirm the appointment of the Rev. James Reid as Principal Air Chaplain (Presbyterian) with effect from 23rd June, 1977, request the Moderator to inform the Department of Defence (Air Force Office) of the nomination.  
(iii) Thank Rev. R. C. Russell, O.B.E., for maintaining close contact with the Defence Forces authorities in the interests of Presbyterian Chaplains and authorise and request Rev. R. C. Russell to continue to represent the Presbyterian Church of Australia in any such discussions until the appointment of a Defence Forces Chaplaincy Committee.
- (12) Appoint the next General Assembly to convene in the Assembly Hall, Melbourne, on the second Tuesday in September, 1979, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, and appoint a Commission consisting of the Moderator, Clerks, Business Convener, Procurator and Law Agent, with the Moderator as Chairman, of whom three members shall be a quorum, to appoint another time, place or date of meeting should it become impracticable for the Assembly to discharge its functions at the time or place or on the date appointed.
- (13) Thank and discharge the committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Dissent and  
Complaint

27. The Moderator called for the Dissent and Complaint of the Rev. James Mullan, B.A. against the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales and the United Theological College, Sydney.

The Clerk intimated that there were no respondents present in the House to defend the judgement of the New South Wales Assembly. The documents as printed were received.

The Complainant was heard.

Questions were asked.

It was moved by the Clerk

That the Assembly—

(i) Sustain the complaint

(ii) Declare that the resolution of the N.S.W. General Assembly (B.B. 1974 Min. 143(2)) "That the Assembly approve the establishment of a United Theological College under the constitution from July 1, 1974" was prejudicial to the rights of the Presbyterian Church continuing after the date of union and that the resolution is hereby declared invalid.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Complainant was recalled and the Moderator intimated to him the decision of the Assembly.

Australian  
Presbyterian  
Congress

28. The Business Convener laid on the Table a communication from the Presbyterian Planning Committee in New South Wales and a congress of Presbyterians late in 1979 or 1980.

Mr. D. R. Brierley moved—

That the Assembly:

1. Receive the Communication.

2. Note the N.S.W. proposal for an Australian Presbyterian Congress to be arranged at an appropriate time, and suggest to the State Assemblies and presbyteries that they give this active and sympathetic consideration.

The motion was seconded and approved.

29. The President, Mrs. R. S. Miller, Senior Vice-President, Mrs. F. W. F. PWA  
White, and the Secretary, Mr. R. J. Gardam, of the newly-elected Federal Convention  
Executive of the Presbyterian Women's Association, were presented to the  
Moderator who welcomed them and expressed the appreciation of the whole  
Church for the work of the Association.

Mrs. Miller addressed the House.

30. The Business Convener moved:

Commission  
to confirm  
Minutes

That the Assembly:

Appoint the Moderator and Clerks a Commission to correct and confirm  
the minutes of the first and second sederunts.

The motion was seconded and approved.

31. The Clerk moved:

Commission  
of Assembly

That the Assembly:

Appoint a Commission of the General Assembly which it hereby does  
appoint, consisting of the Moderator (Chairman), Past Moderators,  
Clerks, Business Convener, Procurator and Law Agent of the General  
Assembly, together with members from the States in the following propor-  
tions, viz.: six from New South Wales, six from Victoria, four from  
Queensland, and two each from South Australia, Western Australia (if  
applicable) and Tasmania (any vacancy occurring to be filled by the  
General Assembly of the State affected), sixteen of whom representing  
at least two of the States, shall form a quorum, whereof eight shall be  
ministers, and such Commission of Assembly—

(a) shall be empowered to enter into and determine as they shall cause  
every matter referred to them by or in virtue of any decision or order  
of the General Assembly, and to do everything contained in the  
instructions given to the Commission of General Assembly;

(b) is charged to advert to the interest of the Church on every occasion,  
that the Church does not suffer or sustain any prejudice which it can  
prevent, as it will be answerable, and to this end the General Assembly  
empowers the Commission to consider and determine such emergent  
matters as are deemed urgent and in need of executive or judicial  
action;

(c) is strictly enjoined in all its actings to proceed according to the rules  
and constitution of the Church and to do nothing contrary thereto  
or to the prejudice of the same, declaring that in and for all its actings  
it shall be accountable to and censurable by the Assembly as they  
shall see cause;

(d) is further restrained from enacting, amending or repealing any rules  
or regulations of the General Assembly or from entering into the  
consideration of any overture or motion proposing legislation or from  
meddling with any matter which has not been referred to the Com-  
mission by the General Assembly or which is not of the nature set  
out in Clause (b) of this appointment;

(e) is directed to submit its minutes duly confirmed, and relevant papers  
to the next General Assembly through the Clerk.

The motion was seconded and approved.

32. Rev. N. T. Barker moved:

Call to  
Prayer

1. That this historic Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia  
call our people to earnest prayer and waiting upon God for his guidance and  
blessing in the Church's life and mission in the crucial days ahead of us.

2. Request the Moderator to call a special Day of Prayer on a convenient  
Sunday.

The motion was seconded and approved.

33. It was moved by Mr. L. J. Moore, LL.B.,  
Law Agent—

Appreciation

That the Assembly:

(1) Place on record its sincere appreciation of the forthright leadership  
of the Very Reverend Hector Harrison, O.B.E., M.A., B.D., and Neil McLeod,  
M.A., B.D., particularly during the recent years in standing firm upon the  
established principles of Presbyterianism and in encouraging others to do likewise.

(2) Express deep appreciation to the Procurator, Mr. F. Maxwell Brad-  
shaw, M.A., LL.M., for his devotion to the Presbyterian Church as an Elder  
over many years and to Presbyterian Polity and for the encouragement and  
professional legal advice freely and graciously given to so many as Procurator  
of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Mr. H. I. M. MacFarlane seconded the motion which was approved with  
acclamation.

The Moderator conveyed to the gentlemen concerned the appreciation of the whole Church.

34. The Business Convener moved—

That the Assembly—

Authorise Rev. K. D. Allen to maintain any necessary contacts regarding Missions pending the appointment of the ad hoc committee on Overseas Missions.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Commission

35. The Clerk moved—

That the Assembly:

Commission the Rev. Hector L. Dunn to represent this Assembly to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1978.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Appointment  
of next  
Assembly

36. The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly—

Resolve to convene in the Assembly Hall, 156 Collins Street, Melbourne on Tuesday, the ninth day of September 1979, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon and appoint a commission consisting of the Moderator, Clerks, Business Convener, Procurator and Law Agent, with the Moderator as Chairman, of whom three members shall be a quorum, to appoint another time, place or date of meeting should it become impracticable for the Assembly to discharge its functions at the time or place or on the date appointed. The motion was seconded and approved.

Dissolution

37. The Business of the Assembly having been completed the Moderator after briefly addressing the House, intimated that the Assembly would next convene in terms of Minute 36 and dissolved the Assembly with praise, prayer and the pronouncing of the Benediction.

E. R. PEARSONS

R. P. W. JELL

Clerks

#### CERTIFICATE

The Minutes of the first and second sederunts having been carefully corrected are confirmed as authorised in terms of Minute 30 thereof.

K. J. GARDNER,

Moderator

#### REPORTS

##### Board to nominate the Moderator-General

The Assembly will appreciate that, due to the confused situation that Church Union has brought within the Church, difficulties have arisen in relation to nominating a Moderator-General which the regulations governing same could never have envisaged. Nevertheless, your Board has striven at all times to be as faithful as has been possible to the procedures laid down by the Church. The Board has unanimously agreed to submit the nomination of the Reverend Kenneth Joseph Gardner, Minister of the Ann Street Presbyterian Church, Brisbane, to be Moderator of this General Assembly.

HECTOR HARRISON

Convener

##### General Purposes Committee

Since its appointment on the 1st May, 1974, there have been four meetings of the full committee and five meetings of its executive. The committee has sought to watch over the interests of continuing Presbyterians, to take steps to prevent interference with them, and to prepare for the on-going work of the Church following union.

The committee is seeking in its report to cover all aspects of the Church's activities that require attention before the next General Assembly two years from now. In doing this it is aided by the very limited spheres of activity of the General Assembly of Australia. It has no general powers of government: in that the state assemblies are supreme. Such powers of government as it possesses are conferred by particular articles in the Articles of Agreement. There is no general appellate jurisdiction relating to matters of government arising in the state churches. Certainly there were issues that consumed much time in meetings of the General Assembly for as far back as we care to trace. But these issues are unlikely to concern future Assemblies to anything like the same extent.



The matters on which the committee is reporting may be grouped under the following heads:

1. Setting up a committee system;
  2. Authority to committees to proceed with certain tasks;
  3. Repeal of certain articles in the Articles of Agreement;
  4. Elders' formula and ordination questions;
  5. Western Australia;
  6. Nomination of Chaplain General and Principal Air Chaplain;
  7. Petitions for ordination; and,
  8. Reception of ministers. This will be a matter for a separate supplementary report and deliverance, and will not be dealt with in this report.
1. **Committees.** It would seem to be the fixed determination of the continuing Presbyterian Church in each of the states that never again will they be parties to setting up a bureaucratic structure that pays no more than lip service to the Presbyterian system. To that end much thought was given to the committee structure by those organisations existing prior to the decision to unite, which were dedicated to the preservation and continuance of the Presbyterian Church. The culmination of this activity was the committee structure approved by a meeting of representatives of the various state organisations held at North Sydney in April, 1974. This committee has proceeded on the basis of the recommendations adopted at that meeting.

The committee has acted on the assumption that no future General Assembly of Australia is likely to desire to have very considerable administrative functions. The justification for large committees is to spread responsibility and draw on a range of talent when the task of a committee is administratively heavy. Our above premiss therefore makes large committees unnecessary. Further, large committees have proved too expensive to convene, and in fact tend to hand over their functions to an executive. It becomes then a matter of only the state where the executive is situated knowing anything of the working of the committee. But even in that state the committee and its executive is free from control by the local assembly just because it is federal. At the General Assembly of Australia, hardly anyone knows enough to watch the proposals of such a committee critically, and the practice has been for a committee to obtain approval in detail of all its actions since the previous Assembly, and as far as possible obtain a blank cheque for the future.

It is therefore suggested that small committees be appointed consisting of not more than eight members, of whom all but two or perhaps three members are in the same state church, and that the committee be based upon the appropriate state capital. After much thought the distribution of committees determined upon was that three committees be based on Brisbane, three on Melbourne, and the remainder on Sydney. This decision was due to the fact that the New South Wales Church has more man power to call upon than in any of the other states, and further that it is easier of access. The executive of the General Purposes Committee is really constituted on the lines proposed, and its members would testify to the utility and advantage of this type of committee structure.

In some instances a committee of the old cumbersome type is provided for in the Articles of Agreement. It is necessary therefore to appoint ad hoc committees with the object of dealing with the subject matter of the relevant Articles with a view to the repeal of the Article in question under Barrier Act procedure. At this stage it is not sought to insert a substitute provision for the Article repealed. That may be done later arising out of experience.

Committees the composition of which is governed by the Articles of Agreement are the Board of Ecumenical Mission and Relations and the Board of Christian Education. To some extent the same applies to the College Committee; but it would seem that it could fit into the proposed committee structure without changing its constitution.

In ordinary circumstances one could be sure that the General Assembly would jealously assert its right to appoint its own committees. In our present circumstances, however, there has neither been the time nor the opportunity to give proper consideration to the matter. Having regard to these facts and also to the very limited sphere of activity that will be open to most committees during the coming two years, it is asked that the Assembly on this occasion delegate the composition of the committees to a selection commission. The same would apply to all members of the Judicial Commission who fall to be appointed by the General Assembly. The committees to be appointed in this manner would be—

Ad hoc committee on the Australian Inland Mission; Ad hoc committee on Christian Education; Ad hoc committee on Overseas Missions; Beneficiary Fund

Committee; Church and Nation Committee; Code Committee; College Committee Executive; Committee on a National Journal; Committee on Relations with Other Presbyterian Churches; Defence Forces Chaplaincy Committee; Finance Committee; Immigration Committee; Maintenance of the Ministry Committee; Reception of Ministers Committee.

2. **Authority to committees to proceed with certain tasks.** The function of committees of church courts, as James Henry Thornwell has pointed out (Collected Writings, Vol. 4, p. 150), is to prepare and arrange business for the court that appoints them, or to execute some specific trust by the order and direction of the body to which they are responsible. In so far as the committees appointed have recognised duties, either under the Articles of Agreement, regulations thereunder, or by tacit approval, they should obviously discharge those duties until the next Assembly. The committee also suggests that all Assembly committees at this juncture should have regard to their functions or possible functions. Certain specific functions must be carried on in the meantime, and certain specific directions require to be given to some committees. It is recommended that the Commission referred to above be instructed to indicate any necessary tasks for the committees, and that the Finance Committee determine the honoraria for Assembly officers and the yearly assessments to the regular state assemblies.

The Assembly will be asked to authorise the Committee on a National Journal to proceed with the publication of Australian Presbyterian Life from Sydney. It is thought that the time has come for the Code Committee to be instructed to work upon bringing up to date the published constitution and law of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, certainly to the extent of a correct version of the Scheme of Union of 1901. This is doubly necessary because of the potential confusion that may be created because of inconsistent constitutional documents contained in the Schedules to the Acts passed in five states in 1970 or 1971 under which union has taken place. If at some future time it were possible to repeal this legislation, at the same time preserving all rights acquired thereunder, it would be most desirable. It is also essential for our theological students to have copies of **Basic Documents on Presbyterian Polity**. The Code Committee will be asked to attend to this should there be insufficient supplies.

3. **Repeal of certain of the Articles of Agreement.** As pointed out earlier, certain of the Articles of Agreement provide for a committee system that is too cumbersome for our present requirements. If these articles are repealed, the General Assembly will be able to appoint such committees as it may desire to cover the subject matters dealt with under the repealed articles without the restrictions such articles required until such time as it sees fit to replace these articles with other articles. In addition, the article on the Australian Capital Territory serves no useful purpose and should be repealed.

The committee therefore recommends the repeal of the following articles, and that the necessary remit be sent down to state general assemblies and presbyteries for the purpose—

- (a) Article (vii) anent Board of Ecumenical Mission and Relations;
- (b) Article (ix) anent Board of Christian Education; and,
- (c) Article (xvi) anent Australian Capital Territory.

4. **Formula and ordination questions for elders.** In the vote on church union in the early twenties of this century the elders voted heavily against union, the constraint of their ordination vows being given as an explanation of this by some analysts of the vote. Accordingly there was a desire in certain quarters to relax the terms of subscription of elders in the hope of facilitating church union thereby.

Of course, there was then no question but that section VI of the Basis of Union, the first operative part of the Scheme of Union of 1901, read as follows—

“Formula to be signed by ministers and elders at their ordination or induction and by probationers on receiving licence—

Then followed the formula”.

At that time there was also a move by certain boards of management in Victoria for representation in the courts of the Church. This move emerged in the Assembly of 1926 in the form of an overture for such representation. The presentation of this overture resulted in the following extraordinary minute—

“112. The overture relative to the representation of Boards of Management in Church Courts was introduced by the Rev. George Tait. It was moved by the Rev. George Tait and seconded by the Rev. G. S. Brodie—

That the Assembly approve the overture, and, under the relative Article in the Deed of Union, send the following Formula and Questions to Presbyteries and State Assemblies for report to the next Assembly—”

Then followed the formula and elders' questions as now printed in “Con-



stitution and Procedure and Practice", page 24, paragraph 124, page 66, paragraph 225; but without any indication that these had any bearing on persons other than managers, or really what these documents had to do with them.

Error is added to error in this minute. Firstly there is the fact just mentioned that there is nothing in the form of the motion to indicate to whom it refers, except the reference to boards of management at the beginning, and the reference to "Elder" and "Eldership" in the fifth question. Since no matter was before that Assembly with reference to the eldership, it is interesting how a motion came to be prepared containing almost hidden therein this reference to the eldership. Further, if there were power to make this change with respect to elders, it would involve an amendment of the Basis of Union, not the Articles of Agreement; but they purport to be dealing with the "relative" (presumably meaning "relevant") "Article". If instead they had regarded the correct part of the constitution, the Basis of Union, they should then have realised that there is no power to alter the introductory words of section VI, "Formula to be signed by ministers and elders at their ordination or induction and by probationers on receiving licence". While, pursuant to section III, the formula itself may be altered, the inalterable introductory words of section VI mean there is to be only one formula, and there is no way of having a formula for ministers and another formula for elders. Then again, it was remitted in vacuo, whereas an alteration to a written constitution should always by appropriate words be fitted into its place in the constitution.

But worse was to come. On the return of the remit to the 1928 Assembly it was described for the first time as being relative to a formula for elders, and no further reference was made to boards of management.

Minute 59 of the 1928 Assembly reads, "It was moved by the Rev. George Tait—"That the remit be sustained and declared the law of the Church; the words "and elders" be omitted from paragraph VI of the Deed of Union; the following added as paragraph VII—"'. Once again the new formula and questions were set out.

So this time, in addition to the other irregularities, the inalterable introductory words to section VI are purported to be altered by mere resolution of the Assembly, without even an attempt at Barrier Act procedure, and the formula itself was purported to be adopted without regard to the requirements of section III, for alteration of the formula.

Thus, there are two separate grounds for saying that the former position stands, namely, that there is no constitutional power to enact a separate formula for elders, and secondly, if there were, the method adopted would certainly not be the way to do it.

It is therefore recommended that for future ordinations and inductions of elders the correct formula and questions be used, as the assembly is in duty bound to require, the law of the Church not having been validly altered.

**5. Western Australia.** As everyone knows, the smaller states took very heavy punishment in the voting on church union in 1973. Obviously extreme pressures were directed to ensuring that the very satisfactory results of the 1972 voting in most places were not repeated. One result of what happened in 1973 is that it is impossible to have a meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Western Australia. In fact it is not even possible at present to constitute a single presbytery in that state.

In this situation the Parliament of Western Australia has passed the Presbyterian Church Act, 1976, which enables a presbytery to be constituted after the date of union, which will be known as the Presbytery of Western Australia. This presbytery will function subject to such state General Assembly as the General Assembly of Australia may determine for this presbytery and the congregations under it pursuant to section 4(3) of the Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1970 of the state of Western Australia.

The committee recommends to the General Assembly that the Presbytery of Western Australia when erected, and the continuing congregations of that state, be placed under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of New South Wales.

If the abovementioned action be taken by the Assembly, Western Australian and not New South Wales church law will apply in Western Australia. (The Act requires this.) Once it is possible for a General Assembly to be constituted in Western Australia, the Presbytery of Western Australia may elect to constitute itself such Assembly, whereupon the former relation of that state to the General Assembly of Australia and the other state churches will revive.

**6. Chaplains.** It is necessary for the Assembly to nominate a Chaplain-General (Presbyterian), as the former occupant has entered the Uniting Church. The office of Principal Air Chaplain has also become vacant due to the retirement of the Rev. A. J. McAllister, and a nomination for this office is also required.

The committee nominates the Rev. K. J. Gibson as Chaplain-General and the Rev. James Reid as Principal Air Chaplain.

7. **Petition for ordination.** The committee has received a petition for ordination from Mr. Herbert McGregor, a home missionary of many years standing in the Victorian Church. Due to the unusual circumstances in which the Church is placed at present, the committee will seek to present this petition (printed separately in the White Book).

8. **Reception of ministers.** This matter is always taken in a private sitting of the Assembly, and therefore a supplementary report and deliverance with respect to this matter will be issued.

K. J. GARDNER  
Convener

### PETITION 1

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. This Petition humbly sheweth:

THAT Mr. Herbert McGregor was born on the 31st day of January, 1922. He is married with two children and was educated at St. George's Road School, Glasgow, Scotland. He is by trade a fitter and turner.

THAT he migrated to Australia in 1949 and was subsequently ordained and inducted into the office of the eldership within the Session of Springvale in 1952.

THAT feeling the Call of God to the Ministry of the Presbyterian Church, he entered the service of the Home Mission Department of the Victorian Church and has served as a Home Missionary for fifteen years.

THAT during this period he has completed the following courses set by the Home Mission Department: a course in Psychology at the Cairn Miller Institute, a preachers' course at the "Otrira Lay Training Institute", eleven Home Mission courses at Mt. Martha, Retreat House, Cheltenham, Tallangatta and Ringwood. He has also completed the necessary training as a Probation Officer and an Industrial Chaplain.

THAT in 1974 he sought the advice of his Presbytery (the Presbytery of Geelong) as to the possibility of ordination. Presbytery referred him to the Theological Education Committee of the Victorian Assembly.

THAT in preparation for this Petition, the Senatus of the Theological Hall set him studies in 1975 and 1976. During that period he has satisfactorily completed Old Testament (1), New Testament (1), Theology (1), Church History (3), Practical Training and Presbyterian Polity.

NOW THEREFORE your Petitioner prays the Venerable the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and authorise the Presbytery of Melbourne to take him on trials for licence or do otherwise as the Assembly in its wisdom may deem fit.

Your Petitioner will ever pray etc.

DATED this 10th day of February, 1977.

This Petition is supported by the Presbytery of Melbourne. The Petition is also supported by the Rev. J. Buck, A. R. Wallace and Dr. J. Roodenburg. The Theological Education Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria has also indicated its support for the Petition. The Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria has also indicated its support for the Petition.

### COMPLAINT

Complaint of the Rev. James Mullan against a decision of the New South Wales General Assembly.

I, James Mullan, dissent and complain to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia against the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales given on 20th May, 1974 anent approving the establishment of a United Theological College under the constitution from July 1, 1974 on the grounds that the rights of the Presbyterian Church continuing after the date of union to determine its own theological education has been prejudiced by a majority decision of the N.S.W. General Assembly.

(Signed) James Mullan

The following associated themselves with the Dissent:

The Rev. K. D. Allen, J. Anderson, J. Bailie, D. L. Blakey, F. B. Bray, J. Bruce, F. J. Burke, A. B. Clark, I. Cox, S. H. Crean, A. A. Dougan, C. E. J. Egan, B. M. Gee, J. D. Gilman, H. J. Hillman, D. E. Hawkins, C. T. Jones, R. W. Kirkby, G. S. Lang, J. McDonald, J. W. Martin, G. A. Morrow, D. F. Murray, E. L. Noble, C. S. Petrie, I. A. Pollard, J. Richardson, R. M. Riek, D. H. Robinson, J. D. Roxburgh, N. L. Secombe, C. R. Thomas, R. O. Walder, J. E. Webster, N. S. Wilce, and Messrs. H. W. Bruce, W. H. Chawner, P. J. Graham,

C. W. Gunning, H. R. Hamilton, H. MacFarlane, J. C. Mackillop, C. McLeod, R. J. C. Morison, S. Patch, K. M. Smith, A. Spalding, I. Sticpewich, E. E. Wheat, Miss J. F. Morrow, Mesdames I. A. Pollard and J. Sticpewich.

### RECEPTION OF MINISTERS

Petitions to be admitted into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia have been received from the following persons:

The Reverend Gerret-Jan Abbas  
The Reverend Robert Albert Kerr Boan  
The Reverend Graham Lawrence Chipps  
The Reverend Ross Coxhead  
The Reverend David John Newman

Following is a precis of the information contained in the Petitions, Information Sheets, Reports from the Presbyteries and other relevant documents.

#### **The Reverend Gerrat-Jan Abbas**

Mr. Abbas is married with four children. (Age—43 years.)

He was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Sydney on 27th February, 1972.

Studies were completed at Moore Theological College. He had obtained previously a Diploma in Industrial Chemistry from a Dutch institution of a similar nature to the Australian Colleges of Advanced Education.

After ordination Mr. Abbas served as a curate and curate-in-charge in several parishes in the Diocese of Sydney.

Mr. Abbas became a communicant member of the Presbyterian Church of Australia when he joined the Babinda Congregation (Queensland) in 1957 by transfer from the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. He was subsequently an elder at Gordonvale and North Mackay, being, on occasion, a member of presbytery. The Presbytery of Carpentaria reports that "there was no actual resignation". On 28th February this year he joined the Congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Cairns, where he is serving as supply minister.

His reasons for wanting to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church are satisfactory.

He is recommended by the Presbytery of Carpentaria.

A one year course of training has been commenced by Mr. Abbas at the Queensland Theological Hall.

#### **The Reverend Robert Allen Kerr Boan**

Mr. Boan is married with one child. (Age—33 years.)

He was ordained as a Baptist minister in Northern Ireland on 28th May, 1974.

On immigrating to Australia he became the minister of the Mt. Barker Baptist Church in Western Australia. Mr. Boan approached the Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and has served under that committee in the charges of Seaford/Somerville and Gisborne.

Mr. Boan completed the two year diploma course at the Bible Institute, Glasgow, the three year course at the Irish Baptist College, Belfast and the University of London Diploma in Theology.

He is a communicant member of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

His reasons for wanting to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia are satisfactory.

He is recommended by the Presbytery of Flinders.

The Theological Education Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria set him a course of studies over a period of two years. In 1976 he completed the first year of the course satisfactorily and, in addition, passed four subjects towards the Licentiate in Theology of the Australian College of Theology. He is continuing his studies this year.

#### **The Reverend Graham Lawrence Chipps**

Mr. Chipps is married with one child. (Age—29 years.)

He was ordained a deacon in the Diocese of Perth on 11th February, 1973.

At the end of 1973 he resigned from the Anglican ministry and commenced studies at the Churchlands Teachers College. In February, 1976 he commenced as a primary school teacher with the Western Australian Education Department.

His theological studies were completed at Moore College. In addition, he holds a Diploma in Religious Education from the Melbourne College of Divinity and a Diploma of Teaching from the Western Australian Teacher Education Authority.

He is a member of the Bicton Congregation (W.A.).

His reasons for wanting to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia are satisfactory.

He has not, as yet, been recommended by a presbytery but the Presbytery of Western Australia will consider this matter on the 28th of this month when it is confidently expected he will be recommended.

Mr. Chipps has commenced a one year course of studies under the guidance of the N.S.W. authorities.

#### **The Reverend Ross Coxhead**

Mr. Coxhead was married but the marriage was terminated under the new legislation by his wife seeking a divorce. (Age—34 years.)

He was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Sydney on 15th December, 1974. He acted subsequently as a curate and curate and priest at two parishes in the Diocese of Sydney.

His studies were completed at Moore Theological College.

On 1st June, 1976 he became a communicant member of Cronulla Congregation (N.S.W.).

His reasons for wanting to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia are satisfactory.

The authorities of the Diocese of Sydney speak well of Mr. Coxhead and he is under no censure whatsoever. He is recommended by the Presbytery of Sydney South.

Mr. Coxhead has commenced a one year course of studies with the N.S.W. authorities.

#### **The Reverend David John Newman**

Mr. Newman is a widower with two children. (Age—46 years.)

He was ordained by the New South Wales Conference of the Methodist Church on 6th March, 1958.

His studies were completed at the United Faculty of Theology.

Mr. Newman had a long and distinguished career as a Methodist minister, having been probationer at Boggabri and Wilcannia and Superintendent at Wallamba River, Culcairn, Albury and Billina.

He became a communicant member of the Ballina-Alstonville Congregation (N.S.W.) on 1st October, 1975. At present he is acting as a supply minister in the Presbytery of Rockhampton.

His reasons for wanting to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia are satisfactory.

He is recommended by the Presbyteries of Northern Rivers and Rockhampton.

A one year course of studies was set for Mr. Newman at the Theological Hall in Queensland. This course of studies has now been satisfactorily completed.

We have had correspondence with the Reverend Peter William Swinn, an ordained Anglican minister, resident in England. He is a graduate of Clifton Theological College. We understand that there is a possibility that Mr. Swinn may be engaged as a supply minister in an Australian Presbyterian parish. There is, of course, no petition from this minister but we report the matter to the Assembly for any action which may be deemed appropriate.

We would like to note that the previous convener of the Reception of Ministers Committee, the Reverend R. Blackwood, has been courteous and helpful during the transition period.

S. J. Clements,  
Acting Convener

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