

National Council of Churches 1964

By CARL McINTIRE

"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil"
(Exod. 23:2).

It seems incredible that the National Council of Churches in one year could have done so much to disrupt its own churches. This body has become *the* issue in hundreds of churches. Some are withdrawing, many are withholding funds! It was in 1964 that the "hushed-up revolution" in the churches burst out into the open. The issues drawn between the conservatives and the liberals in the 1964 political campaign focused public attention on NCC officials and the Council's activity. The NCC consists of thirty-one Protestant and Orthodox denominations and 40 million Americans and it has presumed to be "the conscience" of the nation and the "voice of the churches."

1. The NCC Leaders Report to the President

The Interchurch News, a publication of the NCC, volume five, number five, January, 1964, carried the headline "Churchmen Confer at White House." President Johnson is photographed with five. We read: "President Johnson gets first-hand report on General Assembly actions in his office. Standing (l. to r.) behind J. Irwin Miller and Bishop Reuben Mueller are Bishop B. J. Smith, Dr. Robert Spike, and Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, NCC Race Commission officers." The story began, "Five leaders of the National Council of Churches met with President Lyndon B. Johnson at the White House at 3 p.m. on Dec. 9, at his request." Reporting that President Johnson spoke in appreciation of the work of the National Council of Churches in the area of Civil Rights, Bishop Mueller added, "My first act as new president of the Council was to re-establish the Commission on Religion and Race and make J. Irwin Miller a member of it. He was appointed by President Kennedy to the chairmanship of the national Interfaith Committee on Religion and Race."