ECCLESIASTICAL BUREAUCRACY

In our introduction I spoke of the efficiency of the organization of the National Council of Churches. There has developed an ecclesiastical bureaucracy paralleling the federal bureaucracy in Washington. In fact, the National Council of Churches has so many ramifications, subdivisions, and committees functioning that we doubt whether very many even connected with it know all about it. We are photographically reproducing the chart which was published in the *Workbook*. This is indeed "a superchurch" in action. The Council is taking over step by step the various functions of the denominations and performing them in the name of efficiency and nonduplication.

There is definitely an aversion to the whole concept of the church as set forth in the Scriptures. According to the Bible, each individual Christian is to be a witness and a worker for Christ. He has the Bible in his hand, he hides it in his heart, he goes out and testifies, he wins the lost! He worships on the Lord's Day with God's people in the House of God. The great work of the church is to be done through the local churches and by the individual members. But now the great work of the church is to be done on the high level where the planners direct the operation from the top down to the bottom. The Bible has been the "guidebook"; now the "planners" set the message and program! The NCC leaders recognize that there is a gap between them and the people, but they are trying to fill it, and the next triennium will have that emphasis.

NEW PRESIDENT

The National Council elected as its new president Mr. J. Irwin Miller, a layman, 51 years of age, a millionaire, a business executive, who is on the left side so far as the social program of the National Council is concerned. He accepts it. By electing a layman and a businessman, they are seeking to meet the criticisms which have been heaped up against the Council.

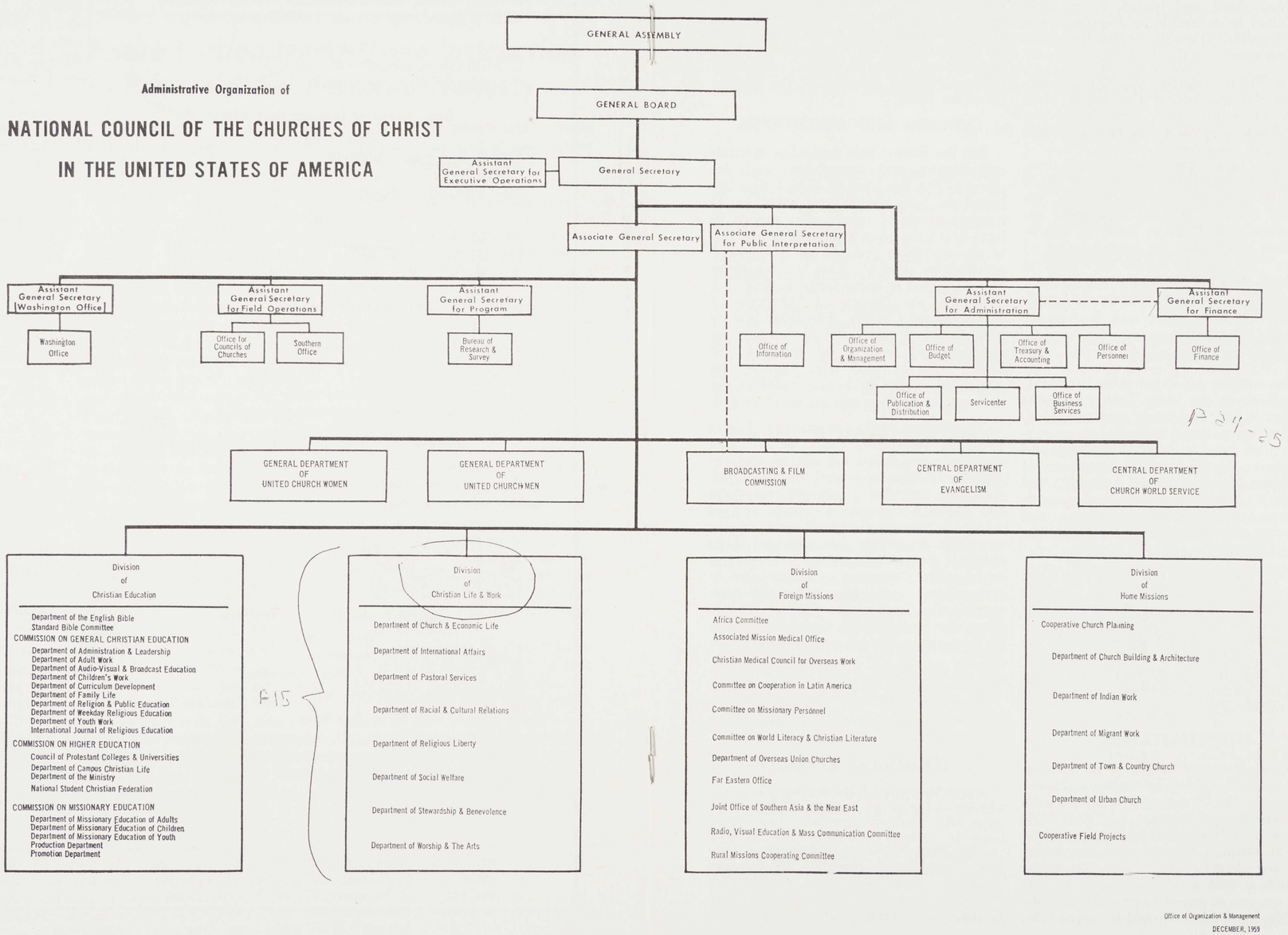
CHURCH IN RETREAT

The seriousness of this situation wa: pointed up again and again throughou the San Francisco meeting, but Dr Theodore A. Gill, who is a man in ar extra, extra hurry, declared in one ad dress: "We don't have the luxury o calm contemplation. The gun is at th church's head. We can never forge that the church is in retreat, that we min ister in a situation in which we ar already losing. We must put up or shu up." The one-world church will be th putting up. Again, one is constantl aware of the departure on their part from the simple and glorious Gospel of salvation and grace which is offered in the Bible. The church is in retreat because it has put its confidence in itself. The world has come in to offer its attractions. Modernism, which stultifies and destroys, has taken over denomination after denomination with its inclusive program and policy.

There is no hope unless men are willing to forsake this great apostasy and return again to the Bible and to churches whose task will be to minister and to declare this glorious Word of God. Here is the line of difference and distinction. It is the line between the historic testimony of the church and the revolutionary leaders who now are seeking to divert it to these unbiblical purposes and plans.

The Ecclesiastical U.N. -- Ramifications of a Powerful Bureaucracy

(Photographically reproduced from the *Workbook* for the Fifth General Assembly of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., December 4-9, 1960)



JAMES A. PIKE

Bishop James A. Pike, bishop of the California Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church, is another one of the young leaders corresponding to McCord, Spike, Blake. He was very much in prominence throughout the Assembly. He spoke on "Horizons in Home Missions" on one occasion, and one thing which is refreshing about him is that he does not mince words; he comes right out into the open. He declared: "Many of our clergy operate in a real atmosphere of fear. Whether we like to admit it or not, McCarthyism is on the upsurge, and many prophetic voices are stilled because they have not learned to cope with the implied charge of 'disloyalty.' Still others are stilled by the hands of a few wealthy members in the congregations who put their threats on a purely economic basis."

Obviously, these men are afraid of any reaction that may develop in this country in the life-and-death struggle with godless Communism. They have a right to fear it. Furthermore, they should be made to fear it by loyal Americans who are deeply concerned about the implications of the program that they are advocating.

Bishop Pike exemplifies the twisting which has taken place. What he considers Christian principles of righteousness and moral responsibility are just the reverse from what men in our position would consider these principles to be. On the basis of his concept of moral responsibility, he wants to become militant and to drive with all the energy the church possesses toward these revolutionary goals.

He insisted: "Instead of adhering to Christian principles of righteousness and moral responsibility, we have often dealt with our religion in terms of a 'cheap tranquilizer.' A living Christianity will disturb peace of mind as much as it will provide for it."

As I came in close contact with these men, saw them in action, I could not help but utter a prayer for them that in some way they could be led to see the truth of the Gospel as it is in Christ and then that their energies and their gifts could be used in the defense of the glorious historic Christian faith which alone can give liberty and the dynamic motivation which Christ desires His Church to possess.