

CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGO PROTESTANT COUNCIL

Draft of Revision

(MINUTE 332. MEETING 13.

1935

It was agreed that;

a. A Sub-committee be appointed to draft a new and revised Constitution of the Council embodying the decisions and suggestions of the Council.

b. This proposed Constitution, which is appended to these Minutes, having been approved by the councillors present, be submitted to all participating missions for their ratification as therein provided.)

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Article 1. NAME. The name of this organization shall be CONSEIL PROTESTANT DU CONGO. (CONGO PROTESTANT COUNCIL.)

Article 2. OBJECT. Its object shall be to unify and develop the work of Protestant Evangelical Missions in the conventional basin of the Congo, to foster the Native Christian Church; and to relate the Protestant Christian Community effectively to the Authorities, and to Christian bodies in other lands.

Article 3. PARTICIPATING BODIES.

Section 1. THOSE PROTESTANT EVANGELICAL MISSIONS working in the conventional basin of the Congo which have expressed their adherence to the Constitution of the Council, and whose admission has been approved by the Council shall be regarded as Participating Missions.

Section 2. OTHER ORGANISATIONS engaged in work related to that of the Participating Missions may be accepted by the Council as Associated Bodies.

Article 4. MEMBERSHIP.

Section 1. COUNCILLORS. Each participating mission having 25 or more missionaries on its active staff shall elect two councillors; and each participating mission having less than 25 missionaries shall elect one councillor. Each participating mission shall elect at least one alternate councillor.

Section 2. HONORARY MEMBERS. All Presidents and Secretaries of the Council shall, on retirement from Office, become Honorary Members of the Council. (This relationship to continue for the duration of their active missionary service in Congo.)

Section 3. PERSONAL or SUSTAINING MEMBERS. Any member of a Protestant Evangelical Church, interested in the work of Missions in Africa, may become a personal member of the Council by payment of an annual subscription of not less than £1 or \$ 5.00.

Section 4. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS. Each Associated body shall be entitled to appoint an Associate Member of the Council.

Section 5. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS. The Secretary of the C.P.C. and the Secretaries of all Standing Committees of the Council shall be Ex-officio Members of the Council.

Section 6. ADVISORS. Advisors may be co-opted by a majority vote of the Council for a specified time .

Article 5. CREDENTIALS.

Section 1. CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION. A certificate of election, on a form provided by the Council for the purpose, shall be presented by the electing or appointing body on behalf of each Councillor, Alternate Councillor, or Associate Member.

Section 2. SUBSTITUTES AND PROXIES. In the absence or disability of a councillor, a Participating Mission may be represented by an Alternate Councillor; or by a Substitute, who must be a member of its staff; or by a Proxy. Power of proxy may be held by the Secretary of the C.P.C., or by a member of any participating Mission. The appointment of a Substitute or Proxy shall be notified in writing to the Council by the Councillor of the Mission concerned or by a competent officer of that Mission.

Article 6. VOTING.

Section 1. EACH PARTICIPATING MISSION shall be entitled to as many votes as it has Councillors, whether represented directly or by proxy. The Officers of the C.P.C. shall have power to vote on all questions. Secretaries of Standing Committees shall have the privilege of the floor on all questions, but shall vote only on questions relating to the work of their respective committees. Honorary, Personal, and Associate Members as well as Advisors shall have the privilege of the floor but no vote.

Section 2. DISSENTING VOTES. Any voting member dissenting from an action of the Council may at the time of voting request that his dissenting vote be recorded. Any Mission not represented in the meeting of the Council by any of its members may like-wise record its dissent from any action taken by the Council, provided such dissent is declared in writing to the Secretary within four months after the publication of the Minutes, by the Councillor or Councillors of that Mission. If the entire vote of a mission, through its Councillor or Councillors, is recorded as dissenting, that Mission shall be free of all responsibility, financial or otherwise, consequent upon the action taken.

Article 7. OFFICERS.

Section 1. THE OFFICERS of the Council shall be the President, Vice-President, and General Secretary .

Section 2. THE PRESIDENT and VICE-PRESIDENT shall be elected by the Council for a term of two years, and shall be eligible for re-election. The function of the President is to preside at all meetings of the Council, and at any General Conferences of Protestant Missions which may take place during his term of office. The Vice-President shall serve in the absence or disability of the President.

Section 3. THE SECRETARY shall be elected by the Council and he shall be eligible for re-election at the close of each term of service. As the Executive Officer he shall, on behalf of the Council, transact all its business. He shall act as Secretary only when actually on the field. The Council shall make provision for the performance of his duties during the furlough, absence, or disability of the Secretary.

Article 8. STANDING COMMITTEES.

Section 1. FORMATION AND NUMBER. The Council may from time to time establish or discontinue a standing committee related to any phase of the work of the participating missions. Subject to such action of the Council there shall be standing committees on Education, Literature, Medical Work, Women's Work, Sunday Schools, Languages, and the Native Church.

Section 2. ORGANIZATION. The Council shall elect for a term of two years, a Secretary for each standing committee. Secretaries shall be eligible for re-election. The Council may refer to the Secretary of a standing committee any matter within the purview of that Committee. Each Secretary shall endeavour to advance the work of his committee through correspondence, with special attention to matters referred to the Committee by the Council. Each participating mission may designate correspondents to work with the Secretaries of Standing Committees.

Article 9. PUBLICATIONS. The Council shall arrange for the publication of such periodicals, reports, and special publications as may be required; and shall control the use of literature funds by suitable regulations.

Article 10. AUXILIARY AGENCIES. The Council may create or participate in such Auxiliary Agencies as may contribute to the achievement of its object; provided that the financial commitments of the Council therein, if any, shall have been ratified by the participating bodies.

Article 11. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS.

Section 1. NOMINATIONS. At each annual meeting, the Council shall name a nominating committee which shall nominate candidates for all vacancies expected to occur before the next meeting. Nominations may also be made in writing by any three Councillors; whether able to attend the meeting or not. Every nominee must be an active member of a Participating Mission, except as he may already have been released from such relation for special services to the Council.

Section 2. ELECTIONS. So far as possible elections shall take place at meetings of the Council. In case of emergency, a ballot may be taken by mail. In case of elections held during a

Council meeting, a majority of the voting power in attendance shall be required to elect. In the case of ballot by mail, a majority of the votes received within four months of the mailing of ballots shall be required.

Article 12. OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Section 1. MISSIONS AND ASSOCIATED BODIES. Adherence to the Constitution implies sympathy with the Object of the Council set forth in Article 2, and moral and financial support commensurate with the resources of the Mission or organisation. Under special circumstances the Council may, at its discretion, waive the obligation of financial support for a given period.

Section 2. MEMBERS. Members shall seek to promote the Object of the Council, by attending Council meetings whenever possible, by keeping their Missions and Societies fully informed as to the work of the Council, by contributing their advice and suggestions, and by sustaining its work by thought and prayer.

Article 13. WITHDRAWALS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS.

Section 1. WITHDRAWALS. The Council may by a two-thirds vote request the withdrawal of a participating or associated body, for sufficient cause. Any participating or Associated body may withdraw from the Council by giving written notice of its intention one year in advance, and by fulfilling all its financial obligations to the Council up to the end of the year in which withdrawal takes place.

Section 2. DISQUALIFICATION. The Council, may by a three-fourths majority vote, members of the Mission concerned not voting, disqualify any member for cause. In the case of Councillors, the Mission shall have the right to substitute a new Councillor.

Section 3. TERMINATION OF SERVICE. Membership in the Council shall terminate whenever a member ceases to be an active member of the body he represents. This provision shall not apply in the case of personal members.

Article 14. FINANCE.

Section 1. BUDGET. At each annual meeting of the Council, budgets shall be presented for anticipated expenditure over the period of two years. This budget shall include provision for the salary, allowances, furlough and travel expenses of the Secretary, and any other financial obligation accepted by the Council; for the maintenance of the office and services of the Council; and for the upkeep of its property. It shall distribute this budget equitably among the supporting bodies, indicating the share of each.

Section 2. ADMINISTRATION. The Council shall make suitable provision for the receipt and disbursement of funds and for safeguarding its financial interests.

Section 3. AUDIT. The Council shall provide for an annual examination and audit of its accounts, and shall issue an annual financial statement showing the state of all funds and accounts at the close of the previous fiscal year. This statement shall be incorporated in the Minutes of the Council.

Article 15. MEETINGS

Section 1. MEETINGS. The Council shall meet at least once each year, place and date to be determined by the Council. In the absence or unsuitability of such arrangement it shall meet at the call of the Secretary, notice of the meeting being given at least three months in advance.

Section 2. EMERGENCY MEETINGS. Should an emergency make necessary a meeting of the Council for which three months notice cannot be given, the Secretary shall summon all Councillors whose attendance can be secured within the time available; at the same time notifying all other Councillors as to the nature of the emergency making necessary such meeting.

Section 3. QUORUM. Representation of a majority of the participating missions shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. In the absence of a quorum, the meeting shall act as an emergency committee only, and its minutes must be subject to ratification at the earliest possible moment either by the next meeting of the Council or by correspondence.

Article 16. EMERGENCY CONVENER. In the absence or disability of the Secretary, the President or Vice-President may call a meeting of Council.

Article 17. ACTION BY CORRESPONDENCE. The Secretary shall submit to correspondence vote any questions that he or the Council may deem necessary. A majority of the replies received within four months of the submission of the question shall be necessary for the approval of a measure by correspondence.

Article 18. MINUTES.

Section 1. CIRCULATION OF MINUTES. Copies of the Minutes of each meeting of the Council, including a report of all interim actions, shall be sent to all members of the Council, to the Home Office of each participating and associated body, to related National and International missionary organizations, and to such others as the Council may direct.

Section 2. CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES. The Minutes shall be deemed approved if no corrections are proposed in writing to the Secretary within four months after publication. Any corrections so proposed shall be considered at the next Council meeting.

Article 19. AMENDMENTS. This constitution may be amended by the following procedure. Notice of the general tenor of the proposed amendment shall be given to all Councillors at least three months previous to the meeting of the Council. The Council at its meeting shall draft the exact form of the amendment and submit it for ratification. A two-thirds majority of the replies received within nine months shall be necessary to ratify the amendment.

Article 20. RATIFICATION. The revised Constitution or any part thereof shall be declared ratified if approved by three-fourths of the voting councillors replying before the annual meeting of the Council 1936.

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