

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

North Florida	TE Bill Lamkin
North Georgia	RE John White
North Texas	RE Harry Hargrave
Northern California	RE Jeff Shaver
Northern New England	TE Doug Warren
Ohio Valley	TE Petros Roukas
Pacific	TE Alec Ream
Pacific Northwest	RE Dan Joner
Palmetto	TE Robert Slimp
Philadelphia	TE Stephen Smallman
Piedmont Triad	RE Howie Burkhalter
Pittsburgh	TE Phillip Hardin
Potomac	TE David Coffin
Rocky Mountain	TE Kevin Allen
Siouxlands	TE Kevin Carr
South Coast	TE Peter Jones
South Texas	TE David Wilcher
Southeast Alabama	TE Patrick Curles
Southern New England	TE Brad Evans
Susquehanna Valley	TE John MacRae
Tennessee Valley	TE Cal Boroughs
Western Carolina	RE Scott Carter
Westminster	RE Roger Schultz

/s/ TE Ligon Duncan, Chairman

/s/ Frederick (Jay) Neikirk, Secretary

**30-54 Ad Interim Study Committee on Women in Military**

After the singing of "To God Be The Glory", TE Stephen Leonard, Chairman, led in prayer, and presented the report. He presented the majority position of the committee. [See text and action at 30-57 below. Also see Index, p. 760 for a reference to all relevant text in 2001 and 2002 GA Minutes.]

**30-55 Assembly Recessed**

The Assembly recessed at 5:30 p.m. with prayer by TE Stephen Leonard to reconvene following worship this evening.

**Seventh Session – Thursday Evening  
June 20, 2002**

**30-56 Assembly Reconvened**

The Assembly reconvened at 9:10 p.m. with prayer by TE Ron Bossom.

**30-57 Ad Interim Study Committee on Women in Military (continued)**

The Chairman introduced TE Peter Lillback who also spoke to the report. **Recommendations 1-4 were moved** by the Chairman as a unit. He then yielded to TE Stephen Clark, who presented the **minority report** [Recommendations 1-3] as a **substitute** motion. The **substitute** motion was **defeated**. **Recommendations 1-4 were adopted.** The following commissioners requested that their negative vote on the motion be recorded: TE Rob Bailey, TE Tom Becker, TE Robert Bell, TE Christopher Bennett, TE Robert Boidock, RE John Bise, RE Rock Brockman, TE Richard Burguet, TE John Ceselsky, TE David Coffin, RE Sam Couch, RE Henry Darden, TE Clint Dowda, RE Scott Etnoyer, TE Timothy Fary, TE Bruce Finn, TE Stephen Fisher, TE Edward Foster, Jr., RE Tim France, TE J. Scott Fuller, TE Charles Garland, TE Preston Graham, RE Edwin Hackenberg, TE Rob Hamby, RE Paul Hammond, TE John Haralson, TE Mark Herzer, TE Giorgio Hiatt, TE Albert Hitchcock, TE Clay Holland, RE Erik Hom, TE Chris Hutchinson, TE Jeff Hutchinson, TE Jonathan Inman, TE Benjamin Inman, TE E. Kennedy, TE Iron Kim, TE W. Christopher Labs, TE Richard Lambert, TE John Larson, RE Richard Larson, TE Jason Little, RE Stephen Lutz, TE Ron Lutz, TE Steve Marusich, RE William McClay, TE John McCracken, TE James Meek, RE W. J. Montgomery, TE Tom Nicholos, RE Leland Nichols, TE Glenn Parkinson, TE Tom Penning, RE James Pettit, RE David Rice, TE Lewis Ruff Jr. TE Don Sampson, TE David Sherwood, TE Fred Showers, TE David Sinclair, TE Brian Sleeth, TE William H. Smith, TE James Spurgeon, TE George Stulac, TE William Sutherland, TE Ron Swafford, TE Kevin Thompson, TE Jim Thorpe, TE Marcus Toole, TE Andrew Webb, TE Jeff Wilkins, RE Mark Williams, TE Scott Wright, RE Al Yance, RE J. Robert Almond, TE J. Scott Lindsay, TE Charles Morrison.

The Assembly dismissed the committee with thanks.

**FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO 30<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY  
AD INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE  
ON WOMEN IN THE MILITARY**

(For the Pastoral Counsel of Members of the Presbyterian Church in America)

This committee presented its biblical and theological findings to the Twenty-Ninth General Assembly: namely, that it is the teaching of Scripture that men are duty-bound to defend women and children, both born and unborn. Our Lord gave Himself up for His Bride, the Church, and we are to follow Him by loving our brides as He loved His Bride, proving our love by giving up our lives for them. While it is true that women, also, are to care for the weak and defenseless, Scripture lays the man under a special obligation to follow Christ in this duty.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*If the Church Adopts the Language of Duty, Will Not Women Come Under Discipline?*

It has been argued that the adoption of any statement by this assembly declaring it the biblical duty of man to defend woman will have the unintended result of placing women of the PCA serving in direct combat military positions under session censure. This charge is groundless, flying in the face of the practice of the church and the teaching of Scripture concerning church discipline. Rather than protecting the women of the PCA, it serves only to cloud the issue, leading gentlemen to fear that, by voting in favor of the man's duty to defend woman, they may inadvertently place women at the center of battles in the session meetings of their home church.

The Great Commission calls us to make disciples, and it is preaching, teaching, and pastoral counsel that are discipleship's normal tasks—not censure or excommunication. In fact, preaching is the first line of church discipline and this committee, by its report, calls the church to restore the public proclamation of the Word of God to the pulpits of our congregations.

Through this committee's study, it has become apparent that the sin of our present circumstances is not that of women who have taken on the role of warrior-defender, but that of brothers, fathers, and husbands who have abandoned their daughters, wives, and mothers to the androgyny and sexual anarchy which has been the seed-bed of this violation of God's creation order. It is this sin which must come under the discipline of the church.

Were the assembly to adopt this committee's recommendations, the fear of the courts of the church being filled with cases of men being excommunicated for their refusal to defend their daughters, mothers, and wives is rather comical. By the assembly's action, this sin would not somehow be raised above the sins of greed, lust, or envy. Discipline moves to censure, temporary suspension, or excommunication only rarely, and even then, only after preaching, teaching, and pastoral counsel have failed to produce the fruit of repentance, and the offense is so egregious that both the souls of the flock and the honor of Christ are placed in jeopardy.

*But Scripture Does Not Address This Issue Explicitly So the Church Must Not Speak:*

Quoting from this committee's minority report, text after text demonstrating the nature and meaning of sexuality "can hardly be raised to the level of a binding command (having) to do with...women in the military." Flying in the face of the history of interpretation on this issue, this committee's minority boldly claims that Scripture gives specific teaching that applies the male headship of the creation order to the home and church, but they deny the

extension of that order to society: "Once we remove the biblical boundaries that authoritatively apply Genesis 1-3 to the relationship between the husband and the wife, we will be in danger of being left with an Islamic hermeneutic of the role of women in society." Church fathers such as Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Hodge would not have taken kindly to being placed in such company!

Such statements effectively deny the good and necessary consequence doctrine of reformed hermeneutics (please see *Man's Duty To Protect Woman, M29GA*, 29-57, p. 278, *passim*) Our committee's report establishes from the text of Scripture the general principles of male headship and the duty of man to protect woman. At the same time, our report also cites those instances in Scripture in which reference is made to these principles (e.g. Isaiah 3:12), thereby indicating that these principles are abiding laws for human life. Nevertheless, the minority report seeks to dismiss the implications of these principles for life and conduct.

We remind the assembly that the arguments made by past assemblies against abortion come to us through the application of general principles and their confirmation in the Bible's *obiter dicta* (passing comments). Neither of the two texts most commonly cited in connection with the biblical condemnation of abortion—Exodus 21:22 and Psalm 51:5—directly address the ethical issue of abortion. Nevertheless, these texts confirm the Bible's fundamental presupposition of the sanctity of human life from conception. In the same way, texts such as Isaiah 3:12 are powerful doctrinal truths leading us directly to the timeless presuppositions of biblical sexual ethics.

It will be a Pyrrhic victory if, seeking to prevent this assembly from acknowledging man's duty to defend woman, we embrace a hermeneutic that bars us from mounting a biblical case against abortion. Truth be told, there is significantly more data in Scripture leading us to proclaim the duty of man to defend woman than the data calling for the protection of the unborn.

The Church is the pillar and foundation of God's truth. Our nation's leaders and the members of the PCA are looking to the Church for godly direction in this matter. This committee calls the Thirtieth General Assembly to respond by adopting the following recommendations.

#### **Final Recommendations Of AISOWIM To 30<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

1. Acknowledging that the child in the womb is "a person covered by Divine protection" (*Statement on Abortion*, Sixth General Assembly); and that women of childbearing age often carry unborn children while remaining unaware of their child's existence; and that principles of just war require the minimization of the loss of life—particularly innocent civilians; the PCA declares that any policy which

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intentionally places in harms way as military combatants women who are, or might be, carrying a child in their womb, is a violation of God's Moral Law.

*Adopted*

2. This Assembly declares it to be the biblical duty of man to defend woman and therefore condemns the use of women as military combatants, as well as any conscription of women into the Armed Services of the United States.

*Adopted*

3. Therefore be it resolved that the Thirtieth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America adopts the above as pastoral counsel for the good of the members, the officers, and especially the military chaplains of the Presbyterian Church in America.

*Adopted*

4. Be it further resolved that the Presbyterian Church in America supports the decision of any of its members to object to, as a matter of conscience, the conscription of women or the use of women as military combatants.

*Adopted*

TE Steve Leonard

RE Bentley Rayburn

TE Tim Bayly

RE Keith Stoeber

TE Peter Lillback

RE Don Weyburn

[Note: Recommendations of the Ad Interim Study Committee on Women in Military adopted by the 29<sup>th</sup> General Assembly are:

1. That the Philadelphia Presbytery Overture, the PRJC letter, and the Report of the Bills and Overtures Committee be answered by this report.
2. That the PCA continue to recognize that the individual conscience, guided by the Word of God and responsive to the counsel of the Church, must decide concerning the propriety of voluntary service in the military.
3. That the PCA believes that military service is a just and godly calling; however, that it presents special and difficult moral challenges in light of the integration of women into the armed services.
4. That the women of the PCA be warned of the many difficulties and moral and physical dangers involved in serving in the military in secular America, due to their inherent greater vulnerability.
5. That individual believers as citizens be urged to exercise their godly influence to bring about authentic spiritual and moral reformation in the military services.
6. That the PCA chaplains be encouraged in their continued ministry to all male and female personnel in their spheres of ministry.
7. That pastors and sessions be informed of this report and be encouraged to instruct their people in the matters it presents.
8. That the NAPARC and NAE churches be informed of the PCA's position on this matter.

The complete 2001 report of the Ad Interim Study Committee on Women in Military can be found in the *Minutes of the 29<sup>th</sup> General Assembly* at M29GA, 29-57,p. 258 ff. Also see Index, p. 760 for a reference to all relevant text in 2001 and 2002 GA Minutes.]

**MINORITY REPORT  
AD INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON  
WOMEN IN THE MILITARY**

This Assembly acknowledges that there are plausible grounds in Scripture, as interpreted by the Constitution of this denomination for members of this denomination, to conclude, with respect to their duty as citizens, that women may not serve in the military in various circumstances, and that women may not be conscripted for military service, though these grounds are not sufficient to require that same conviction of all of the members of this denomination.

Therefore be it resolved that the 30th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America adopts the above as pastoral counsel for the good of the members, the officers, and especially the military chaplains, of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Be it further resolved that the Presbyterian Church in America supports the decision of any of its members to object to, as a matter of conscience, the conscription of women or the use of women as military combatants.

TE Stephen Clark  
TE Beryl Hubbard

TE Charles Morrison  
TE Ronald Swafford

**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT TO THE 30<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
AD INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON  
WOMEN IN THE MILITARY**

Additional Recommendations:

5. That the AISCOWIM has received Overtures 2, 21, and 26 to the 30<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America referred to it by the Stated Clerk's Office. We answer them in the negative with the rationale that they are answered in the report of the committee as scheduled in the docket in both majority and minority reports. [See text and action at 30-53, III, 7, p. 245.]

*Addressed by previous action of the Assembly*

Reported to the Clerk by  
Stephen W. Leonard  
Chairman, AISCOWIM

[Communications 1, 2 and 6 were not explicitly dealt with by the Women in Military Committee, but were answered by Assembly action on the majority report. Text on next page.]

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**COMMUNICATION 1** from Mississippi Valley Presbytery (to Women In Military)  
“Expression of Affirmation of WIM”

Re: Women in the Military

Dear Dr. Taylor,

As a presbytery we would like to communicate to you the firm position of our presbytery in regard to the issue of women serving in combat in the military. After hearing reports and discussing the papers presented to the last General Assembly, we voted to affirm the ‘duty’ position and to urge our denomination to take a stand and communicate to our national leaders that women ought not to be allowed to serve in combat positions in our arms services.

It is our hope that the Presbyterian Church in America will adopt this position and communicate that to Congress and to President Bush.

Thank you for your faithful labors on behalf of our Lord’s churches. May the Lord continue to bless you.

Sincerely,  
/s/ Roger G. Collins  
Stated Clerk

**COMMUNICATION 2** from Northern California Presbytery (to Women In Military)  
“Expression of Disappointment Concerning WIM”

ATTN: Study Committee on “Women in the Military”

Dear Sirs:

The Presbytery of Northern California passed the following motion at its March 5 & 6, 2002 Stated Presbytery meeting on the Report of the Ad Interim Study Committee on “Women in the Military”:

“Northern California Presbytery expresses disappointment with the use of General Assembly time in the consideration of the issue of women in combat. We understand the arguments stated, but believe General Assembly’s time and resources are better focused elsewhere.”

In His Service,  
/s/ Arthur R. Schick, Stated Clerk  
for the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA PRESBY.

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## **COMMUNICATION 6** from Philadelphia Presbytery “Philadelphia Presbytery Statement on WIM Report” (to Women in Military)

NOTE: This was an overture to Philadelphia Presbytery. It is a communication not an overture to the General Assembly.

Whereas, the issue of the use of women in military combat has been a topic of discussion in the culture in general and in the PCA in particular. And,

Whereas, the 26th General Assembly erected an Ad Interim Committee to examine the issue and report to the 27th General Assembly. And,

Whereas, the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Women in Combat was not adopted by the 27th General Assembly, but only received as information. And,

Whereas, there appears to be a growing likelihood that women will be put in harms way by being assigned to increasingly dangerous combat assignments. And,

Whereas, it is the duty of the Church, as the pillar and foundation of the truth, to declare the will of God on all matters of faith and practice. And

Whereas, by not adopting the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Women in Combat, the General Assembly has, by default, declined to embrace a position one way or the other. And,

Whereas, this implicit silence on the issue places the women in Philadelphia Presbytery in jeopardy by not providing them with the Church's declaration on the issue, leaving them to plead only their personal beliefs should they be conscripted. And,

Whereas, the shortfalls in recruiting accompanied by the increasing demands caused by numerous deployments and escalating attrition of the ranks of the armed services is creating an environment in which conscription of men and women is becoming more likely.

Therefore, be it resolved that Philadelphia Presbytery hereby adopts the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Women in Combat as our position.

Be it further resolved that the adoption of this Ad Interim Report be communicated to the churches of Philadelphia Presbytery and that copies of the Report be sent to each Session to be kept on file and made available to members of churches that request it.

/s/ Frank D. Moser, Stated Clerk

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**30-58 Assembly Recessed**

The Assembly recessed at 10:20 p.m. with prayer by TE Mike Milton to reconvene tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m. for worship.

**Eighth Session – Friday Morning**

**June 21, 2002**

**30-59 Assembly Reconvened**

The Assembly reconvened at 9:05 a.m. with prayer by TE Clair Davis.

**30-60 Send Report of Study Committee on Women in Military to the President**

A **motion** was made and **failed** to direct the Stated Clerk to send the report of the Ad-Interim Study Committee on Women in the Military to the President of the United States. The Moderator was asked to rule the motion out of order as new business. He declared the motion to be in order, his ruling was challenged and on division the Chair was sustained.

**30-61 Protest to Moderator's Ruling on Point of Order**

The following **protest** of TE David Coffin, RE Frederick Neikirk and TE Mark Bell was presented and **received**. The Moderator ruled the protest in order, his ruling was challenged and the Chair was sustained. The Assembly **directed** the Moderator to appoint a committee of three to prepare a **response** to the protest to be spread upon the *Minutes*; Moderator Ryan appointed TE Henry Lewis Smith, TE Clair Davis and RE Sam Duncan. [See Committee's response in Appendix O, p. 739.]

"We, the undersigned do solemnly protest the failure of the Thirtieth General Assembly to sustain the appeal of the Moderator's ruling in the point of order raised against the report of the Bills and Overtures Committee. [See 30-47, p. 210.] This failure has confirmed an egregious injustice and, in our judgment, has discredited the integrity of the Assembly's actions on critically important and controversial overtures. The Assembly's failure to correct this abuse of her rules, profoundly aggravated by the context within which it occurred, constitutes a tragic step backward for the Presbyterian Church in America, for recent Assemblies had provided some hope that the denomination had matured beyond the political maneuvering that had marred her past. In the midst of many otherwise laudable accomplishments, this failure legitimized the unwarranted and unnecessary limitation of straightforward, brotherly, debate and, at least for some of us, has fostered an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust. It adds insult to injury that such a course should be pursued

to advance the cause of "Pastoral Leadership", and in the midst of exhortations to, and prayers for, the unity and peace of the church. We register this protest in the hope that testimony to our conscience in this matter might awaken afresh due consideration of the real harm, to brothers in Christ, as well as to the Assembly as a whole, that a repetition of this practice will produce."

The following commissioners joined in the protest: TE Larry Ball, TE Roland Barnes, TE Matt Baugh, TE Terry Baxley, TE H. Leon Ben-Ezra, RE Tom Bingham, TE Carl Bogue, TE Jim Bowen, TE Jim Braden, RE David Bragdon, TE Arthur Broadwick, TE Michael J. Brown, RE Mark Buckner, TE Robert Burridge, TE George Busch, RE George Caler, TE Lee Capper, TE Mike Coleman, RE Henry Darden, RE James Ducker, TE T. Mark Duncan, TE J.D. Dusenbury, TE Robert Edwards, RE Paul English, TE George Felton, RE Bruce Ferg, TE Henry Fernandez, TE David Frierson, TE Scott Fuller, RE Peter Gagliardi, RE Vaughn Hamilton, TE Mark Herzer, TE Scott Hill, TE Carl Howell, Jr., TE Irfon Hughes, TE Daniel Jarstfer, TE Terry Johnson, RE Marshall Joiner, RE Daniel Joner, TE David Kniseley, RE Richard Larson, TE John Larson, RE Douglas Leepa, TE Bill Leuzinger, TE Jerry Maguire, TE H. Timothy Miessler, RE Steven Morley, TE Charles Morrison, TE Jay Nelken, RE David O'Steen, RE Walter Parrish, TE Ronald Parrish, RE Ken Peterson, TE Robert Peterson, TE Joseph Pipa, TE Gary Roop, TE John Sackett, TE Benjamin Shaw, TE Stu Sherard, RE Patrick Shields, TE John Shields, TE Brian Sleeth, TE Frank J. Smith, TE William H. Smith, TE Robert Spears, TE Decherd Stevens, TE Ron Swafford, TE J. Robert Thompson, Jr., TE Thomas Troxell, TE Carel Van Der Merwe, TE Bernie van Eyk, TE Andrew Webb, RE Donald Weyburn, RE Ben Williams, TE Charles Wilson, TE Richard Wiman, TE Scott Wright.

### 30-62 Report of the Committee of Commissioners on Administration (continued)

TE Alan Johnson, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented the report. [See Appendix C, p. 363. See also Partial Report at 30-25, p. 98.] He yielded to TE Roy Taylor, Stated Clerk, who addressed the Assembly. Dr. Frank Brock presented the report of the Strategic Planning Committee. **Recommendations 1-3, 6-15, 17-20, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28 were adopted.** **Recommendations 4, 16, 21, 22, 24 were answered** with reference to previous actions. **Recommendation 5 was amended** to substitute the recommendation of the permanent committee and **adopted**. The following commissioners registered their negative vote on recommendation 5: TE Jeff Hutchinson, TE Travis Hutchinson, and RE Mark Williams. **Recommendation 24 was amended** to delete all material after "G" at lines 9-12 and **adopted**. The Assembly expressed its appreciation for the ministry of the Stated Clerk with a standing ovation.