

Religion in America

# Methodists Taking Closer Look At Total Abstinence Demands

By ROBERT M. ANDREWS  
United Press International  
The Methodist Church, for years firmly opposed to alcoholic beverages in any form, has taken a closer look at its followers and discovered a shocker: Many Methodists drink.

Four surveys, including two nationwide, indicate that adult Methodists who drink range as high as 85 per cent. As few as 39 per cent agree with the church's demand for total abstinence.

In view of this, the church has drafted a new policy state-

ment on alcohol for Methodists' study and comment. Final action will come at the church's worldwide general conference next May.

So sharp is the statement's break with the past that church officials freely predict that a major denominational controversy will explode soon, sparked mainly by Midwestern and Southern congregations.

Old Principle Reasserted  
The proposed new stand reasserts the old principle that Methodists should abstain from drinking completely. But it takes a milder view of those

who don't, and disregards a number of long-cherished reasons for abstinence cited by traditionalists.

The statement was explained this week by Roger Burgess, associate general secretary of the Methodist Board of Christian Social Concerns, which approved it.

Burgess questioned, among other things, the idea that Methodist founder John Wesley preached abstinence. Wesley actually drank beer and wine, he said, while Biblical scholars agree that Jesus Christ drank fermented wine.

Burgess also noted that abstinence has been "traditional" only for about 100 years. Before that, he said, Methodist leaders in temperance societies were not dedicated to a complete ban on drinking but only to "temperance," meaning moderation.

'Wrong Arguments'  
All these historical reasons are "wrong arguments" today, Burgess said. The Methodist case for abstinence must be based on other considerations besides morals, especially the emotional and mental effects of alcoholism, he said.

The statement itself urges non-drinkers on the problems of alcoholism and a bigger effort to help those with a drinking problem.

"We recognize that there are Methodists who use alcoholic beverages," the statement says. "We also recognize that sincere Christians may differ on this question. The Methodist Church has always upheld the right of individual conscience."

Burgess said many Methodists prefer the Presbyterian stand, which he said encourages abstinence but gives "tacit approval to the practice of social drinking."

But Burgess favors re-stating the Methodist stand "more clearly for the benefit of drinkers and abstainers alike."

As another official put it: "Good Methodists don't drink—but we don't necessarily condemn a fellow Methodist just because he does."

1,000 laymen, to Latin America before 1970.

In addition, he said in a Washington, D.C., speech, U.S. church sources are spending more than \$10 million, chiefly for personnel there.

Father Considine said the emphasis is on fair wages, higher living standards for peasants and improved social legislation, similar to the goals of the Alliance for Progress.

The weekly Baptist Standard told its readers that American missionaries may be forced to leave newly independent African nations if church members in the United States do not clean their own houses of racial prejudice.

The Dallas, Tex., magazine said many Christian leaders in Africa are talking about taking over mission churches and sending white missionaries home.

"If we expect our missionaries to be welcome there, then we must change our attitude toward their kinsmen over here," it said.

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# WESTGATE VARIETY

## OSU Granted Money To Study Exhaust In Control Device

CORVALLIS — Efforts to control smog in the United States may be aided by Oregon State university with a \$38,000, two-year grant from the U. S. Public Health Service.

The grant will be used to study the presence of oxides of nitrogen—one of the ingredients of polluted air—as they pass through an automobile exhaust control device.

Heading the OSU study are William H. Paul, professor of automotive engineering, and John G. Mingle, assistant professor of mechanical engineering.

With more than 80 million motor vehicles on America's roads and about 3 million cars added each year, air pollution from automobile exhaust is a major hurdle in the battle to halt the increase in smog in most of the country's large centers of population, Paul noted.

OSU meteorologists say that conditions exist for serious air pollution in the Willamette valley. The only aspect of smog missing, especially during the summer and fall, is the high emission of pollutants. As Oregon's population increases and more cars are prevalent, smog could be formed, they warn.

Smog begins to form when a temperature inversion occurs and a layer of warm air blankets existing cool air and circulation is stopped. In addition, smog occurs when there is large amounts of unburned hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen such as are produced by auto engine exhaust.

Within the last few years, many public and private organizations have studied air pollution. Devices to fit on cars are now being tested with the hope of reducing smog-producing impurities from engine exhaust. California is especially interested in air pollution research because of that state's large number of automobiles and ideal smog-forming temperature inversions and sunlight.

The OSU study is concerned

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Carla Jo Chandler, no operator's license in possession, \$5, suspended.  
James Benjamin Moore, violation of basic rule, \$10.  
Clarence Elwood Jenkins, no operator's license in possession, \$5, suspended, violation of basic rule, \$15.  
Aloysius Edwin Hansen, disobeyed stop sign, \$10.  
Bridane Lawrence Sanderson, disobeyed traffic signal, \$10.  
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