

Transcript of PCAGA47 (2019) Deliberation Over Twit Protest

Beginning Time Stamp from Friday Program Video – 1:16:02

TE Twit: Kevin Twit, Teaching Elder, Nashville Presbytery. I have a point of order. I wish to file a protest in accordance with BCO 45-3, BCO 45-5. I promise it will be brief.

Moderator: It's really not a point of order, but you have the floor. Microphone Number Two.

TE Twit: Thank you. I'll read my protest, and then I will deliver it to the Clerk. We protest that this Assembly allowed a speech which contained intemperate language during the session late Thursday night, June 27, 2019. Of course, not everything in the speech was intemperate, as much Scripture was quoted in the speech. But during the speech for the Minority Report on Overture 28, several times the speaker improperly judged the intent of the hearts of Revoice speakers, as – I think there's a point of order.

Moderator: Microphone Number Two

TE Appleton: Thank you Mr. Moderator. Rick Appleton, Teaching Elder, Pittsburgh Presbytery.

Moderator: I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.

TE Appleton: Rick Appleton, Teaching Elder, Pittsburgh Presbytery.

Moderator: I – I – You know, I've been flying airplanes too long. Slowly, what is your name?

TE Appleton: Rick Appleton, Teaching Elder, Pittsburgh Presbytery.

Moderator: Alright.

TE Appleton: Mr. Moderator, I ask that the present speaker be ruled out of order for his intemperate speech –

Moderator: Sir, I'll stop you there. After he finishes his speech, you may make a motion that the Assembly find the protest intemperate and not receive it. That's the way we'll handle this.

TE Appleton: Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

TE Twit: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. During the speech for the Minority Report on Overture 28, several times the speaker improperly judged the intent of the hearts of Revoice speakers as “intending to deceive” even though the speaker admitted in the same speech that neither he nor those who crafted the original Overture actually talked with any of these Revoice speakers, instead relying on recordings of the Revoice conference. While you may say that you disagree with the statements, you cannot impugn their motives and say that they're seeking to deceive. Of course, as I said, not everything said in the speech was intemperate, as much Scripture was quoted in the speech, but as Job's friends teach us, even truth may be declared in a way and at a

time that it can cause unnecessary harm to those who are grieving. Of course, there is a time to stand, but there is also a time to sit down and weep with those who weep.

Moderator: According to the Book of Church Order, protests are allowed unless they are intemperate, and the court is allowed to put an answer to it if it wishes. Microphone Number Two, for what purpose do you rise?

TE Appleton: Mr. Moderator, I rise that the previous speaker's remarks be ruled out of bounds.

Moderator: I understand that to mean that you're moving that the body find it to be intemperate and not to enter it onto the record.

TE Appleton: Yes, Mr. Moderator. That is correct.

Moderator: Is there a second to that motion? [*seconded*] Do you wish to speak to that?

TE Appleton: Mr. Moderator, I would only say that the speaker's [*TE Twit's*] judgment of the previous speaker's [*TE Warhurst*] intentions was most uncharitable, and at many points he interpreted motives and applied things that did not seem to be taken by the rest of the Assembly.

Moderator: OK. You've heard the motion to find the protest intemperate and not enter it onto the record. All in favor of find the protest intemperate and not allowing it on the record, raise your hands. [*hands go up and down*] Opposed, raise your hands. [*hands go up and down*] It has failed. [*pause*] Take your voting devices out, please. If you're in favor of – if you're in favor of finding the protest intemperate and not allowing it on the record, you will vote Yes. So if you vote Yes, it's not entered on the record. If you're in favor of allowing it to be entered in the record because you don't agree it's intemperate, you would vote No. So if you do not want the protest on the record because it is – because you regard it as intemp – Microphone Number Two.

Microphone Number Two: [*speaker unidentified*] Mr. Moderator, just a point of clarification please. If this motion fails, the protest that would be entered would be entered only in the name of those signing them, not the Assembly as a whole. Is that correct?

Moderator: No. I don't believe that's correct. It would only be entered as a protest of those signing, anyway.

Microphone Number Two: That – That's what I wanted to clarify.

Moderator: Regardless of how this vote – if the body votes not to allow it, it disappears. If they vote to allow it, it appears with whoever signs it.

Microphone Number Two: Thank you.

Moderator: OK. So again, if you vote Yes, it means it doesn't appear. If you vote No, it means you allow it. Any questions about that? Microphone Number Six.

TE Warhurst: Steve Warhurst. Since the protest is about me – from Westminster Presbytery – I’d like to address it if that’s in order.

Moderator: I don’t believe it is, sir.

TE Warhurst: Thank you.

Moderator: Alright, we’re gonna put this to a vote. If you do not want the protest – because you believe it is intemperate – entered into the record, you will vote Yes. If you believe it should be allowed into the record, you vote No. Voting is open. [*commissioners vote*] Voting is now closed. [*results: 408-450*] It has been allowed into the record. If you wish to sign it, it will be at the front. Poi – go to a mic – Number One, what’s your question? I’m sor – forgive me for my – go ahead, Microphone Number One.

RE Shoemaker: Yes. Mr. Moderator, Ruling Elder Chris Shoemaker, Southern New England Presbytery. I would ask that you rule the protest out of order on the basis that it is not a testimony against what the protestor deems to be an improper or erroneous action on an issue before the court because as the previous speaker mentioned, it was against the action of that person, not the action of this court.

Moderator: I won’t rule that way. I take the mind of the body on that last vote. Microphone Number Four, Point of Order?

TE Boxerman: Yes, I al – I also had – Teaching Elder David Boxerman, North Texas Presbytery. I was also looking at 45-1, “Any member of a court who had a right to vote on a question, and is not satisfied with the action taken by that court, is entitled to have a dissent or protest.” My question is, what is the action of the court which this protest is addressing?

Moderator: I’m assuming the action – I can’t necessarily answer that, but I’m not going to overrule the protest being allowed. I’d say the action of the court was not challenging me when I let the man proceed. So in a sense, it’s a protest against me, but I have thick skin and I can take that, so –

TE Boxerman: I think it should be ruled out of order, and I’ll challenge the Chair.

Moderator: Give me a minute. [*time elapses as Moderator consults with the parliamentarians*] OK. The Chair has been challenged. I’ve discussed with the parliamentarians. Um, I have ruled that the protest is not out of order in the rules. Those that are willing to – those that wish to sustain the ruling of the Chair, raise your hand. [*hands go up and down*] Those opposed. [*hands go up and down*] Chair’s ruling has been sustained.

End Time Stamp from Friday Program Video – 1:24:33

This transcription was prepared by TE Zachary Groff at the request of TE Sam DeSocio (New York State Presbytery), and it is not an official publication of the Administrative Committee of the Presbyterian Church in America. All errors are the fault of the transcriptionist.