

election. Here is where frequently the voter has the best opportunity to select the man or woman whom he most admires.

As I mentioned earlier, every candidate or incumbent tries to know the feelings and desires of his constituency. Here is another important area where church groups can be most effective. Invite the various candidates and elected officials of both parties to speak before your groups. Here is an opportunity for the members to see, to hear, and to ask questions of their representatives or prospective representatives. You may be surprised at the willing response which you will receive from the various political figures. This is the type of opportunity they seek because it enables them to discover what the people are thinking about and how the people feel about the various issues which arise.

You can organize groups who can study the various issues, local and statewide, national and international, and can analyze the various approaches to the problems by both the parties and the various candidates. You can urge your congregations to write to their representatives frequently and tell them how they feel about the various issues. You can also urge the members not only to register and vote, and to be aware of issues and policies, but to participate actively in the political party of their choice. This is easily accomplished as the parties are always seeking active new members to aid in the variety of activities which a political party undertakes.

There are occasions when an issue arises which is of its very nature a moral one. Here, I feel, you not only can, but should take an active role. For example, an issue such as the child labor laws was one on which the active and forceful influence of the churches had a great effect. An effective letter writing campaign on an issue such as this has great influence on candidates and officeholders of both parties.

In summation, I feel that you have a most important role in two basic areas—information and communication. Information in the sense of informing your congregations of the need for political responsibility. Such deceptively simple, but most important things, as where and when they can vote, who their representatives are and how they may be contacted, and what the important issues are with which they should familiarize themselves, are all within the purview of church activity. Communication in the sense of contacting the various candidates and officeholders of both parties and informing them of each members' views on the various timely issues. Communication also in the sense of allowing the various candidates and officeholders an opportunity to present themselves and their views to your congregations.