

The first seminars for pastors at the Labor Temple were for four weeks; these soon were cut down to three. Field trips to industry, corporate offices, and social agencies in the metropolitan New York region became grist for the evening discussions. Here again, Scott's instinct was central to the program's success:

I hammered away at them. "Don't go and get into a discussion. Don't tell these guys what you think. Don't tell them what you know. We're going there to find out what goes on in that place. You ask them what they think, why they do what they do. You pump them. There's no question you can't ask. Ask any questions you want to ask, so long as it's an honest question....As long as it's something you honestly want to know, you pump them for an answer."¹⁹

Scott soon recognized the need to begin earlier in helping pastors open up to the practical dimensions of ministry. On his arrival in New York, one of his first visits was to Jim Myers, who was at the time the Industrial Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches. In the 1920s, Myers, an ordained Presbyterian minister, had come to work as head of the Board of Operatives at Duchess Bleachery at Wappinger's Falls in upstate New York. In his work in industry, Myers had become interested in industrial democracy and the participation of workers in the decisions of management. In 1925, the federal council hired Jim Myers to head their Industrial Relations Department. By the 1930s, Myers had become a major figure in the Protestant churches' relationship to the growing industrial union movement.²⁰ When Myers learned of the Presbyterian Church's initiation of the Presbyterian Institute of Industrial Relations at the Labor Temple, he asked to see Marshal Scott upon his arrival in New York. Myers—who had had a heart attack—was allowed few visitors, but eagerly anticipated Scott's visit. Myers was enthusiastic about the Presbyterian Church's new venture and immediately advised Scott to look into the College Summer Service Program held each year at the Labor Temple. He suggested that Scott might explore a similar program with theological students in industry.

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Scott took hold of the idea and expanded the Institute program for pastors into a four-week seminar, including field trips, for seminary students in the summer of 1945. Scott soon realized that the four-week program was not effective for seminarians. It was

not until 1950 that he was able to turn the seminar program into a full-scale "Ministers-in-Industry" program, with its first location in Pittsburgh.²¹ Eighteen seminarians worked fulltime in the steel industry and related businesses in Pittsburgh for three months, with seminar discussions in the evenings. Field trips were held on Saturdays—with visits to steel corporate headquarters, the United Steelworkers' office, and the labor priest Father Charles Owen Rice. On Sundays, the seminarians attended local congregations in the Pittsburgh steel community.

By 1952, the impact of the Ministers-in-Industry program held in Pittsburgh had convinced Marshal Scott that the New York setting was limiting for the PIIR program. New York City was a business center, the headquarters of major corporations, with a largely managerial, white-collar constituency. He sought to understand the role that on-the-line industrial work was playing in the lives of working people. Chicago was a proper place for such an experience—and McCormick Theological Seminary was the most logical seminary community for the program's location. Hermann Morse, the general secretary of the Board of National Missions, agreed, and through a phone call to Worth Frank, President at McCormick Seminary, PIIR moved to McCormick in 1952.

With the PIIR based at McCormick Seminary and Scott on the faculty, the Ministers-in-Industry program expanded exponentially. By summer 1955, the program had fifty-three participants employed in twenty-three different Chicago businesses and industries. Fourteen of the participants were women. The group represented twelve seminaries and eleven denominations. Fifteen of the participants were from McCormick Seminary.

The PIIR summer Ministers-in-Industry program became a crucible for change. Working in U.S. industry was a transformative experience for most seminarians. Again Scott's advice was crucial to their experience. Seminarians were cautioned never to identify themselves as ministerial students unless asked. Understanding the stereotypical view that working people had of clergy, Scott saw the need for seminarians, both male and female, to enter the workforce as hourly workers, subject to all the prejudices and problems that entailed. They would engage their coworkers in discussion of their own lives, their struggles, and the hopes they had for the future. They would look at the world of industrial work—the time clock, the shift work, the repetitiveness, the quota system, and the shop's social system—as the beginning and the end of life for a vast majority of wage earners.



Burnette Dowler (left) of Princeton Theological Seminary and Alvin Evans of Emmanuel College wear shields to protect their faces from the heat of a furnace that hardens knife blades at Lindberg Steel Treating Company in Chicago (*Presbyterian Life*, November 1, 1952).

The seminarian's experience as a worker, and often as a union member, provided a close-up glance at an hourly wage earner's view of life. The evening seminars, in which all manner of work issues were thrown into the discussion, became grist for a deeper probing of how the Church related its ministry to those whose lives, individually and socially, were shaped by the demands of the machine. Many seminarians, through their associations on the job, became involved in the life of the city and grew interested in the changes to its racial composition and neighborhood conditions. At a PIIR Reunion in April 1999, many testimonies emerged. Howard Rice, former moderator of the PCUSA, wrote:

I worked in a book warehouse on the South Side and took the El to get there, lived in McCormick Hall, and loved Marshal's insights. The experience landed me in inner-city ministry. I had previously thought I would pursue an advanced degree and become a seminary professor, but my experience with PIIR persuaded me that I had a calling to ministry in the city. Both my pastorates were in inner-city situations,²² first in Minneapolis and then in Chicago.

As Jacob Long, the originator of the PIIR concept, had predicted, postwar suburban expansion would leave inner-city urban neighborhoods in disarray. Long foresaw that the changing demography of urban areas would affect the ministries of inner-city congregations. Returning GIs would move their families from their city neighborhoods and head for the burgeoning new suburban developments. So it was that some PIIR participants, having been immersed in the issues of the working-class and their urban neighborhoods, would see the changing inner-city congregations as a call to ministry. At the same time, a group of urban strategists serving in Board of National Missions offices and on the staff of urban presbyteries stood ready to support those entering these ministries. The Board of National Missions provided grants to inner-city congregations through the offices of the urban presbyteries, and provided scholarships to urban pastors for training in specialized urban issues.

In the industrial arena, Marshal Scott's work at PIIR came at a propitious time. The worker-priest movement in Europe had gained the attention not only of the Vatican, but of those seeking to develop an approach to the industrial sector. In Europe, the working class had become disaffected from the Church and was often hostile toward organized religion.



Lunch break at a steel fabrication plant gives seminarians Thor Bogren (left) and William Morrow one of few chances to meet employees. They found it difficult to discuss Christianity at work; “we just tried to do a good job,” said Thor (*Presbyterian Life*, January 1, 1961).

During the war, many priests had gone to work in factories, in some cases among the slave-labor force. In the postwar period, some priests continued as workers in factories and saw this action as necessary to bridge the gap between the Church and the working class. Theologically, the worker-priests saw their presence in the factory—as a worker among workers—as an “incarnate” action.²³ They lived their lives completely as workers, but continued their priestly office by offering the Eucharist in their working-class apartments at their kitchen tables.

The worker-priest example was not lost on participants in PIIR’s Ministers-in-Industry summer project. Donald Mathews had participated in the first Ministers in Industry program in 1950, on the labor gang at an open-hearth furnace at U.S. Steel in Braddock, Pennsylvania. After the summer’s experience, he went to serve a working-class congregation in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The congregation had not had a regularly installed pastor for twenty-five years. Mathews’ agreement with the congregation was that he would become their pastor without pay: he would earn his living by working in one of the industries in which they were employed. Mathews stated his rationale in January 1951:

Statistics indicate that the church and the working man don’t know each other very well. Our experience suggests that the minister and his people don’t know each other very well. To the degree that this is true, then it becomes increasingly difficult for the minister to mediate between the questions of life and the answers of the Christian faith...particularly in a workingmen’s community. I am working in industry to bridge the gap.²⁴

Mathews continued in his industrial job for seven years, during which time he married and had two children. With greater family responsibility, Mathews quit his industrial work and continued in a more traditional role at the congregation for another six years. During his ministry at Kalamazoo, the congregation grew and took on more responsibilities within the presbytery. Mathews also saw the concept of industrial ministry expand into Detroit.

Jim Campbell and Jesse Christman—both Princeton Seminary and PIIR Ministers-in-Industry alumni—became part of an experimental industrial ministry team

in the Detroit area in 1956. That year, Detroit Presbytery voted to develop an industrial team ministry, naming it The Ecorse Project. Later renamed the Presbyterian Industrial Project, it assigned a team of three ministers to an industrial parish—one to serve within the church, and the other two to work in industry. All three were PIIR “Ministers-in-Industry” alumni. James Campbell and Jesse Christman went to work on the General Motors Cadillac assembly line. The purpose of the Presbyterian Industrial Project was

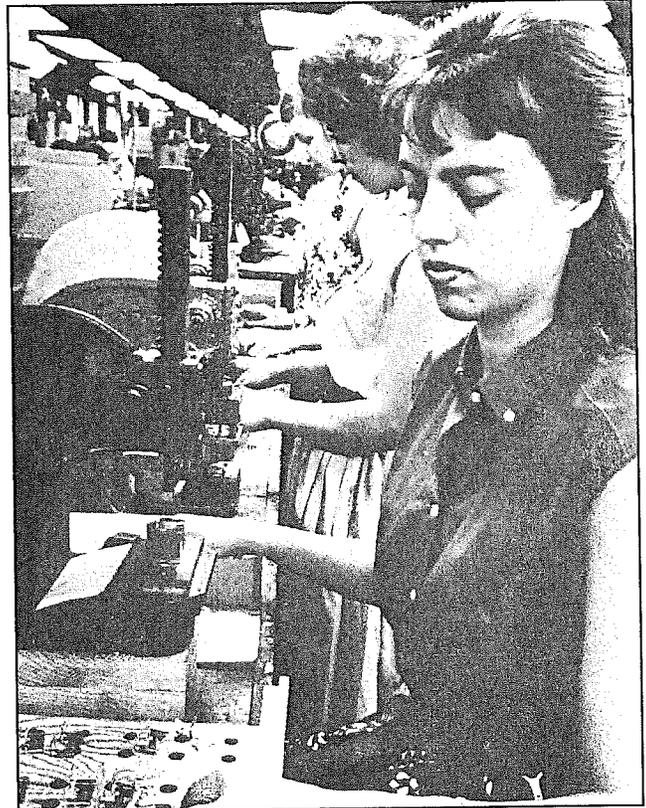
to analyze the present relationship of a local parish to its surrounding industrial community, to analyze the industrial environment and its impact on a local church, to recommend modifications in the church’s organizational and ideational structures and to project a program²⁵ that might be adaptable to other parishes.

While the Ecorse experiment’s team ministry ended after two years, Campbell and Christman remained at their Cadillac jobs for more than five years and became staff at the Detroit Industrial Mission in the early 1960s. The Detroit Industrial Mission, begun in 1956 by Episcopal priest Hugh C. White, laid the foundation for a number of industrial-mission projects across the country. At the height of their growth in the 1960s, there were some eighteen projects that drew their rationale and energy from the industrial-mission concept. By 1966, the various projects in the industrial-mission network were drawn together in National Industrial Mission (NIM), under the leadership of Hugh C. White. By the late 1960s, however, the industrial-mission movement had waned, and in 1970, the NIM was disbanded.

During the 1960s, Marshal Scott recognized a difference in his style from that of the emerging, new urban and industrial ministries. He sensed a growing resistance to PIIR’s educational style. The new programs, epitomized by the Urban Training Center in Chicago, centered upon action training. Scott described it later:

I thought the whole purpose of the program was to get action. There was a pressure in the Sixties that you should be doing something. It didn’t matter too much what it was you were doing. “Doing” was more important than evaluating what you were doing.

In contrast, the character of PIIR had changed:



Stamping-machine operator Carolyn Garlich found her fellow workers eager to discuss beliefs of Christianity when they learned that she was studying to become a minister (*Presbyterian Life*, January 1, 1961).

Our program had actually moved in some ways away from direct action. I became convinced that until you got the minds of pastors changed, it wasn’t helpful to give them “how to do stuff” when their minds were still in the old pattern.²⁶

There were those, however, who felt that a more direct-action approach was needed in the face of the deep economic problems within inner-city neighborhoods. It was recognized that Marshal Scott had provided PIIR participants with insights into the class divisions in society. But on the question of confrontation with those issues, the educational approach of Scott was more constrained. Scott’s promotion of arbitration and conciliation as the means of reconciling labor/management controversies made him wary of direct demonstrations against power. This did not mean that he did not recognize the right to strike as important in labor struggles, but he was cautious about the tactics and strategies of the neighborhood community-organization campaigns in mid-1960s Chicago.