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# Rebels force unprecedented election campaign for United Church position

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. (CP)

— A group of rebel Albertans exploded Tuesday and with some support from the East forced the 24th general council of the United Church of Canada into an unprecedented election campaign out of which came a moderator.

In the end, Rev. Arthur B. Moore of Toronto, 64, president of the Canadian Council of Churches, was chosen on the second ballot to succeed Dr. Robert B. McClure.

On Monday night "a dozen or so" of the 16 clerical and 171 commissioners from Alberta met privately to plot a campaign to shake up long-established election procedures.

Candidates for the office normally are named well in advance of the council's biennial

meeting, there are no campaign speeches and, an Albertan informant said, "Everything is all cut and dried—we wanted to change this." They did.

Dr. Bruce Hatfield from Calgary, a lay delegate, said: "Look, we don't know these guys. Put them where we can see and talk to them and find out who they are."

"These guys" were Dr. Moore; Rev. Ernest E. Long, secretary of the general council; Rev. Richard H. N. Davidson, Toronto; Rev. J. Robert Watt, Toronto, and Rev. J.A. (Jock) Davidson, Kingston, Ont.

It was agreed that the candidates for office submit to 30 minutes of questions and answers from a professional television broadcaster, then answer questions from the floor.

This had never been done before in the 45-year history of the United Church.

Then the Albertans threw in a sixth candidate—Rev. Clifford Elliott of Toronto.

In the voting, Dr. Moore, Dr. Long and Dr. Elliott survived the first ballot, the rules being that those who received fewer than 40 of the 390 votes dropped out.

On the second ballot, Dr. Moore was elected by what was announced as a "clear majority." No figures were made public.

## OPPOSE 'CIVIL SERVICE'

Behind the 'Albertan move, which postponed election of a moderator for more than five hours, was pastoral opposition to the "civil service" in the United Church headquarters in

Toronto, one commissioner told the meeting.

Today, ruffled feathers back in place, the general council got down to the business of running the church. Dr. Long delivered the speech he was to have made Monday, saying:

"The cynical among us could easily argue that this meeting of the general council ought to be planning, not for a dynamic future, but for a kind of ecclesiastical rummage sale or even bankruptcy proceedings. Don't believe it. We have a lot going for us.

"It is true that statistically, with respect to attendance and membership, churches all over the world have lost ground within the past five years. This is a very short space of time in the long, long history of the church..."