

recommends the more effective use of the materials produced by the Council for Christian Social Action, urging that every local church enter at least one subscription for *Social Action* magazine and use it as a resource for local study and action.

2. The General Synod urges the Council for Christian Social Action to continue to explore all aspects of communicating the implications of the crises of our times to the Christian. The General Synod supports the recommended Council for Christian Social Action budget, with the intention that more educational opportunities be provided for Conferences, Associations and local parishes. We encourage these bodies to feed back to the Council for Christian Social Action news of their activities, interpretations of the issues with which they are dealing, and any requests for the resources which they need.

3. The Sixth General Synod called upon the Council for Christian Social Action and the Council for Church and Ministry to provide counseling resources for pastors and youth with reference to the problems of Selective Service. The Council has co-operated in conducting workshops, has prepared informational materials, and has continued its ministry in counseling conscientious objectors.

The Seventh General Synod urges pastors and other local church leaders to make full use of these resources in order that they may render more effective their pastoral ministry to the young men who face serious decisions in regard to the draft.

69-GS-141 VOTED: The General Synod adopts the foregoing recommended action on Publication and Interpretation.

3. Joint Statement on Vietnam by the Report Committees on CCSA and BHM

The General Synod had requested that separate statements on Vietnam presented by the Report Committees on the Council for Christian Social Action and the Board for Homeland Ministries be combined into a single, unified statement. The joint statement had been distributed to the delegates. It was now moved and seconded, as follows:

The Sixth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted a resolution on Vietnam. In keeping with the intent of this resolution, we herewith express appreciation for President Nixon's desire to negotiate an end to the Vietnam war. We approve his declaration that the conflict must be terminated through political rather than military means. We applaud his decision to bring 25,000 troops home by the end of the summer. The Administration is moving in the right direction.

We of the Seventh General Synod believe, however, that the speed with which these steps are being taken is insufficient. The present regime in Saigon is continuing to keep political opponents in jail, closing unco-operative newspapers, and threatening anyone speaking for peace with severe punishment. Yet, in the end, South Vietnam must determine its own destiny. The only question is when. This end will not be effected by any more fighting and dying. Additional casualties will be in vain.

Since Mr. Nixon's inauguration, over 25,000 troops have died in Vietnam. Since March, 1968, when Mr. Johnson limited the bombing of North Vietnam,

over 170,000 troops have died in Vietnam. The number of U.S. troops killed in that period was over 12,000 (over 40,000 American troops killed during the war to date).

Since we have been involved in the war, over 572,000 troops have died. Who knows how many civilians? Since 1965 we have dropped over 3,200,000 tons of bombs on Vietnam. The official figures for refugees stand at nearly 2,000,000 (more than 10 percent of the population), but the true number is unknown. We have destroyed over 2,000,000 acres of land in Vietnam by use of chemicals.

An overpowering anguish now unites millions of Americans. We know that many of our fellow churchmen have not expressed publicly their anguish and protest. We urge them to speak out and act now with passion and sincerity. If others have spoken up but have heard no echo of public response, we plead with them now to reaffirm their position. Together our voices can swell into a volume of protest that will compel the whole American public to listen with attention and concern.

We protest this burning issue to the conscience of the General Synod and to every level of the United Church's constituency. Through pulpit and forum, ballot and media, we shall strive to bring increasing pressure to bear upon all who have a key role, whether direct or indirect, in the making of official decisions relating to the war.

Because of our continuing concern, be it resolved that the Seventh General Synod of the United Church of Christ urge the President of the United States of America to declare an early cease-fire in Vietnam and to accelerate withdrawal of United States troops from Vietnam.

The Rev. Frederick R. Trost of Illinois moved to amend by inserting the word "immediate" between the words "accelerate" and "withdrawal" in the last line. Being seconded and put to a vote, the amendment was lost. It was then

69-GS-142 VOTED: The General Synod adopts the foregoing statement on Vietnam.

4. Further Action on the Report on the Committee for Racial Justice: Resolution to Abolish Capital Punishment

The Rev. Samuel W. Fogal, Chairman of the Report Subcommittee on the Committee for Racial Justice, introduced a resolution for the abolition of capital punishment, and it was seconded. The resolution reads:

WHEREAS the Committee for Racial Justice, the Council for Christian Social Action, and the UCC Ministers for Racial and Social Justice are unalterably opposed to capital punishment and cannot remain silent regarding its continuance in our society, and

WHEREAS the human agencies of legal justice are fallible and

WHEREAS we are concerned about the disproportionate number of black and poor who occupy death row and, white or black, are victims of an evil which decent people of our society have too long endured and which violates categorically our Judeo-Christian ethic, and

WHEREAS this outdated and barbaric practice has been found to discriminate on the basis of skin color and economic condition, and