

The Assistant Moderator recognized Kenneth P. Stewart, chairperson of the Center for Social Action, for a point of personal privilege. Mr. Stewart acknowledged with appreciation the action of the General Synod in creating the Office for Church in Society and recognized the leadership of Larold K. Schulz.

4. REPORT ON CHRISTIAN LIFE STYLE AND ECOLOGY

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized Dr. Washburn. On behalf of the business committee Dr. Washburn referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, pp. 152-161, and moved the adoption of the report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology. Mr. Vander Ploeg was recognized and moved to amend the report. The amendment would include the following statement and changes:

"a. The Tenth General Synod receives with appreciation the report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology. It affirms the revised structural recommendations in Section III of the report and urges the to-be-established committee and all other United Church of Christ units to give serious attention to the revised perspectives and program recommendations in Sections I and II of the report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology."

"b. The Tenth General Synod affirms the following:

1. The to-be-established committee is urged to develop an expanded biblical, theological and ethical base for the involvement of the United Church of Christ in ecological and Christian life style issues.

2. The committee is expected to be established by the Fall of 1975 and to make its first report to the March, 1976, meeting of the Executive Council. The committee shall make a full report to the Eleventh General Synod in 1977.

3. The to-be-established committee should give high priority to the ways local churches can address Christian life style and ecological issues."

"c. The Tenth General Synod has concern in the area of Christian life style and ecology for the violation of the Christian stewardship of resources by the agencies of the United Church of Christ. The General Synod urges these agencies to use fewer and less expensive materials and more modest accommodations and meals at meetings of the General Synod and other meetings of the United Church of Christ."

"d. In Section I, the paragraph on Food on p. 154 of the report is to be deleted and the following paragraph substituted: 'The eating and drinking habits in the United States and other industrialized nations have led to the consumption of enormous amounts of grain. Roughly 15% of all the grain utilized in the United States is consumed directly; the rest is fed to animals, used in alcoholic beverages, and in other ways. If massive global famines are to be averted, it is imperative that people eat lower on the food chain and rediscover the virtues of fasting. Fasting or eating less meat has symbolic value, but there is no guarantee that the grain made available will find its way to hungry stomachs. In order to feed the hungry, sacrificial giving and political changes are needed.'

"e. In section I in the paragraph on Energy on p. 155, the phrase at the end of the sentence is to be deleted: 'alternatives to nuclear power should be developed' and the following phrase substituted: 'And because the flaws in the nuclear energy technology are compounded by the moral issues (the right of our generation to risk compromising the

earth as a home for present and future generations), alternatives such as solar and other natural energy sources should be developed.'

"f. In section I in the paragraph on LAND USE on p. 155, delete the phrase in the first sentence, 'Given the impending food shortages' and substitute the phrase 'It is imperative that arable lands be preserved and urban space be used to enhance the well being of people.' In the same paragraph delete the first two words of the second sentence 'that is.'

"g. In section II, part 9, p. 156, add the words 'and laity' to the sentence so that it will read: 'United Church of Christ clergy and laity should be trained to help facilitate the dissemination of educational resources and the involvement of local churches.'

"h. In section III, part 6, page 156, after the 'Executive Council at the end of the sentence, add the phrase 'and report at each General Synod.'

"i. In section III, part 1, p. 156, the first sentence shall read 'the General Synod recommends the establishment of a Committee on Christian Life Style and Ecology by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries' and change all other occurrences of the phrase 'Task Force' to the word 'Committee' throughout the report.' The motion was seconded and there was discussion.

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized Carol Barnes (IA) who moved to amend the motion by deleting the paragraph 'The Tenth General Synod has concern in the area of Christian life style and ecology for the violation of the Christian stewardship of resources by the agencies of the United Church of Christ. The General Synod urges these agencies to use fewer and less expensive materials and more modest accommodations and meals at meetings of the General Synod and other meetings of the United Church of Christ,' and substituting the following: 'The Tenth General Synod affirms the need for churches to be life style examples for the world in the area of ecology, and recommends that the United Church of Christ at all levels strive to set that example in the life of our church as a clear witness to the world.' The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was lost.

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized Dean Barth (IL) who moved to amend the motion by striking the proposed amendment to the paragraph on FOOD, p. 154 of the report of the Task Force on Life Style and Ecology except the sentence: 'In order to feed the hungry, sacrificial giving and political change are needed.' The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was lost.

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized Doris Wilkinson (IA) who moved to amend the motion by adding to the last sentence in section II, paragraph 4, p. 155, the words 'Conservation and research departments of leading agricultural universities, etc.' and in section II, paragraph 7, p. 155 after the word 'industry' at the end of the first sentence the words 'and agriculture.' The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was adopted.

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized David McDonald (CAC) who moved to amend the motion to delete the proposed amendment to section I, the paragraph on ENERGY, p. 155, and retain the original language of the paragraph. The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was lost.

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized David Neild (MA) and accepted a friendly amendment to a section of the

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report: "and the General Synod urges the Secretary of the Church to provide for recycling of paper at this and future General Synods." The motion was seconded. Upon being put to a vote, it was adopted.

It was

75-GS-50 VOTED: The Tenth General Synod receives with appreciation the report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology. It affirms the revised structural recommendations in Section III of the report and urges the to-be-established committee and all other United Church of Christ units to give serious attention to the revised perspectives and program recommendations in Sections I and II of the report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology, affirms (1) the to-be-established committee is urged to develop an expanded biblical, theological and ethical base for the involvement of the United Church of Christ in ecological and Christian life style issues; (2) the committee is expected to

be established by the Fall of 1975 and to make its first report to the March, 1976, meeting of the Executive Council. The committee shall make a full report to the Eleventh General Synod in 1977; (3) the to-be-established committee should give high priority to the ways local churches can address Christian life style and ecological issues.

The Tenth General Synod has concern in the area of Christian life style and ecology for the violation of the Christian stewardship of resources by the agencies of the United Church of Christ. The General Synod urges these agencies to use fewer and less expensive materials and more modest accommodations and meals at meetings of the General Synod and other meetings of the United Church of Christ.

It was

75-GS-51 VOTED: The General Synod adopts as amended the report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology.

I. A PERSPECTIVE ON CHRISTIAN LIFE STYLE AND ECOLOGY

As Christians we are called to be responsible custodians of the natural order and prophetic witnesses for social justice. We profess our loyalty to a God of history who is also the Creator of the universe. The biblical image of shalom captures that unity between nature and history. Shalom means wholeness, integrity, social justice and reconciliation. These are the biblical motifs that inform our understanding of Christian life style and ecology.

The current world-wide economic crisis challenges old assumptions about the unity between nature and history and confronts many of us with new life style possibilities. The present economic climate in the United States, characterized by galloping inflation and high unemployment, has caused severe problems for the poor, the aged and the handicapped, and to a lesser but significant degree, the middle class. Furthermore, the economic climate has led to attempts to turn back the clock on environmental quality and occupational health and safety. Internationally, the poorer nations are being crushed by global economic forces. These are the realities that provide the setting for our discussion.

A Preamble to the Issues

Air, water, land and noise pollution, as well as the depletion of natural resources, present major problems to urban-industrial America. Strip mining and indiscriminate use of fertilizers and pesticides have caused environmental problems in the rural United States. Industrial progress has been marked by the conversion of green spaces and agricultural lands to highways, parking lots, housing developments and suburban sprawl. Such patterns of land use reflect and encourage increasing dependence upon the polluting and energy-consuming automobile.

The amounts of pollution produced and the rate at which resources are depleted is a function of population, prevailing life style and the kinds of technology employed. Population is a crucial factor in estimating environmental impact. More important, however, is the level of affluence at which a population lives. The average American child, for example, has an impact on pollution and resources at least 25 to 50 times that of a child born in Bombay. Furthermore, the kinds of technology used to attain that level of affluence are important. The U.S. with five per cent of the world's population consumes 35 per cent of all the energy and almost 40 per cent of the non-renewable resources utilized each year. That is a function of our level of affluence and our technology.

Present life styles in America and the Western nations are incompatible with ecological sanity and global justice.

Given our current methods of production, there are not enough resources to go around. Maldistribution of resources has enabled the rich nations to get away with their consuming and polluting patterns. Industrialized patterns of consumption and pollution cannot, however, be extended to all the earth's citizens because the biosphere simply could not absorb the pollutants. Therefore, if 3.9 billion people all consumed like Americans, the biosphere would be threatened by pollutants and natural resources would soon be depleted.

A Christian Response: As Individual and as Citizen

A Christian life style is based on an affirmation of the Creator, a commitment to the stewardship of creation and a prophetic concern for social and economic justice. That life style should promote:

- a) an ecological consciousness that helps us to behold the created order with a sense of wonder and an appreciation of our finitude;
- b) simplicity of life and more moderate consumption by the affluent;
- c) a just redistribution of global resources;
- d) an attitude that helps us live creatively with the consequences of redistribution.

Unfortunately, discussions of life style are often associated only with individual, familial or communal actions. Yet,

unless socio-economic and political factors are also considered, we may naively assume that personal actions alone can lead to the solutions of systemic problems.

But if it is naive to promote personal change without considering a corresponding social change, it is hypocritical to speak of global redistribution without anticipating that redistribution will have a profound effect on our personal lives. Thus the personal and the social dimensions, spiritual renewal and social change, go together hand in glove.

Several steps need to be taken in the personal realm:

Food: The eating and drinking habits in the United States and other industrialized nations have led to the consumption of enormous amounts of grain. Roughly 15% of all the grain utilized in the United States is consumed directly; the rest is fed to animals, used in alcoholic beverages, and in other ways. If massive global famines are to be averted, it is imperative that people eat lower on the food chain and rediscover the virtues of fasting. Fasting or eating less meat has symbolic value, but there is no guarantee that the grain made available will find its way to hungry stomachs. In order to feed the hungry, sacrificial giving and political changes are needed.

Recycling: Our life style should be redesigned so that waste is minimized and recycling is maximized. That means not only newspaper and container collections, but also the extended use of such items as appliances, toys and autos.

Energy: Residential energy consumption can be minimized by more efficient insulation and by our willingness to live in cooler houses in the winter and warmer houses in the summer. More modest buying habits should be practiced in the purchase of all appliances. Most important, the reliance on the large private car should be discouraged by promoting public transportation.

Population: Every U.S. couple should realize that the impact each American has on the environment is far greater than that of the Asian or African. Decisions on family size should be made with that in mind.

Land Use: Suburban sprawl characterized by the single family dwelling unit on an acre or so of land has established a land use pattern that can only be serviced by the automobile. Multiple dwelling units are one way to conserve energy, reduce dependency on the automobile, and save scarce green spaces.

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Personal solutions, although absolutely essential, are finally inadequate. There is much to do in the social, economic and political arena. Let us look at the five areas already considered in light of their social and institutional implications.

Food: The U.S. and Canada are to grain what the Mid-East is to oil. Americans are being called upon to share more fully their food resources. Today most U.S. food exports are sold at market prices to those nations with purchasing power. The present market system, however, is not able to meet human needs adequately. The rapid growth of agribusiness has further reduced the quality of food and the possibilities for its just distribution.

An internationally-controlled global food reserve is needed in order to avert future famines. In addition, less polluting and less energy-intensive types of agriculture should be developed in the U.S. and abroad, especially those that reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides.

Recycling: If we are serious about resource conservation we must work on political and economic changes that will make recycling a viable option for manufacturers. Today, despite higher raw material prices, there is little economic incentive to recycle. Recycling will become attractive to producers only when the material input and the disposal of product are taxed.

Energy: The conservation of energy is not simply a personal or family matter. Only 15 per cent of our total energy is used in the household. Radical energy conservation measures are needed in all sectors—transportation, residential, commercial, industrial and in the utilities. For instance, public transportation should be heavily funded by the government in order to reduce our dependency upon the auto; building design codes should be revamped; and because the flaws in the nuclear energy technology are compounded by the moral issues (the right of our generation to risk compromising the earth as a home for present and future generations), alternatives such as solar and other natural energy sources should be developed.

Population: Population stability is to be encouraged, but the obsession of the U.S. with Third World population growth is deeply resented by the majority of the world's people. The policy of diverting foreign aid from development to population control was recently repudiated by the Third World nations at the U.N. Population Conference in Bucharest.

Authentic economic and social development is one key to population stability. The attempt by the U.S. to control world population policy can be interpreted as an act of arrogance. Further, it is counter-productive. Poverty and malnutrition are themselves major causes of the population explosion. Reduction in the rate of population growth tends to occur in those nations which are taking steps to provide social services, adequate food, women's rights and other social reforms.

Land Use: It is imperative that arable lands be preserved and urban space be used to enhance the well being of people. Farm lands should not be strip mined, urbanized, or converted into parking lots or highways. In the western U.S. we should be deeply sensitive to precarious trade-offs between agricultural and cattle-grazing lands and cheap energy supply (strip mined coal). Land reform programs are needed to counteract the increasing concentrations of land ownership.

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In summary, world-wide economic and political action requires the need for individual and social changes. It is essential that our life styles be understood, not only in personal terms, but also as having long-range political, economic and social consequences. The wholeness of life is the responsibility of every person and the goal of every society.

II. PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The United Church of Christ should encourage and participate in national and regional deliberations on environmental issues, including such issues as the limits to growth discussion, equitable distribution and care of the world's finite natural resources, land use, food, population, energy, modified life styles. Theological and ethical considerations should be central to the deliberations.

2. Curricular materials developed by the UCC should include Christian life style and environmental issues to assist church members in addressing these concerns. Specific helps should be provided members who are seeking to adjust their life styles. Such helps should include suggestions of alternate diets, living arrangements including energy usage, etc.

3. Camp/conference programs on environmental issues should be made more visible throughout the UCC, further encouraged, and intensified. The UCC Task Force on alternative life styles, formed recently by persons representing UCC camp and conference concerns in twenty-eight conferences, is a positive development.

4. Appropriate national, regional, and local staff should provide the church with technical assistance to address environmental concerns and to help relate the UCC to agencies working in the environmental field, including the Environmental Action Center, Washington, D.C.; the Boston Industrial Mission, Boston, Massachusetts; the Center for Science and the Public Interest, Washington, D.C.; Environmental Action, Washington, D.C.; Friends of the Earth, Washington, D.C.; conservation and research departments of leading agricultural universities, etc.

5. The UCC through its appropriate instruments should seek to influence public policy consistent with the policy

perspective stated in Section I. Organizing people for specific action is an important dimension of this concern.

6. The UCC through its appropriate instruments should develop and/or support specific programs designed to address current social problems related to environmental issues on the local, regional, and national level. Examples of such programs include efforts to more adequately control the development of nuclear power; campaigns to restrain strip mining; environmental hazards related to the work place and community; etc.

7. The UCC should enlist those within its midst who are in responsible positions in government, business, industry and agriculture. These individuals can assist through providing their own experience and expertise and the church can assist them to take responsible action within their respective agencies.

8. The UCC should seek to make maximum efficient use of church property, human and financial resources, etc. This should include careful scrutiny of the use of all church facilities on the local, regional, and national level; the use of environmental impact studies and energy inventories; a more simple life style at church gatherings. In this latter regard, camp/conference sites often provide excellent settings and should be more fully utilized.

9. UCC clergy and laity should be trained to help facilitate the dissemination of educational resources and the involvement of local churches.

10. The UCC should work cooperatively with other religious and secular groups on environmental issues wherever policy positions coincide and where further program impact may be secured.

III. STRUCTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The General Synod recommends the establishment of a committee on Christian Life Style and Ecology by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries. This Committee should include some fifteen persons, of the present general mix of national, conference and regional staff members, and others who are active in issues of ecology.

2. The Committee will serve a resource center for issues related to life style and ecology. As such it will function as a forum, gathering together the work on these issues throughout the UCC. It will also provide background material and perspective to conferences and agencies which contemplate policy statements and programs around those issues.

The Committee will be instrumental in helping create a network of people and organizations who will be able to take actions at all levels of national and international life to further the goals and concerns identified by the Executive Council and the Committee.

3. A member of the staff of the UCBHM will function as facilitator for the Committee. It is anticipated that this could be accomplished by designation of approximately one-fourth of the portfolio of a staff member of UCBHM to perform

this function. The administrative accountability of this staff member would be lodged with the UCBHM. As facilitator of the work of the Committee, this person will function collegially and collaboratively.

4. The Committee will meet twice a year. Occasionally, at such meetings as General Synod, expanded meetings could be held, drawing in a variety of persons with Christian life style and ecological concerns.

5. Costs of travel to meetings will be borne out of the travel budgets of Committee members. Incidental meeting costs (such as rental of a suitable meeting place, notices, etc.) and the travel expense of Committee members who do not have travel budgets will, insofar as possible, be borne by the UCBHM.

6. The Committee will make periodic reports concerning its work to the Executive Council and report at each Synod.

Following the adoption of the statement on Christian Life Style and Ecology, the General Synod directed the Secretary of the Church to provide for recycling of paper at this and future General Synods.

5. OVERTURES FROM OHIO CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE AND RESOLUTION FROM THE ILLINOIS CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL HEALTH CARE POLICY

Assistant Moderator Elicker recognized Dr. Washburn. On behalf of the business committee Dr. Washburn moved

the adoption of the Ohio Conference Overture on National Health Insurance and the Illinois Conference Resolution on National Health Guidelines. Mr. Vander Ploeg was recognized and moved an amendment to the motion to adopt a substitute resolution on National Health Care Policy. The motion was seconded and there was discussion. It was