

majority. Since it now appears that the black Zimbabwean nationalities representing the majority were not consulted, and that Ian Smith's interpretation of "majority government" is not that of black rule in a nation 95% black, we therefore urge that the black nationalities of Zimbabwe be supported in their insistence that the control of the police and the army be in the hands of the African majority during the transition period; that the body framing the new constitution reflect the racial make-up of the population; and that the transition to majority government be accomplished by March 1, 1978. We urge support for all their efforts to secure majority government.

We commend the recent action of the President and Congress in the repeal of the Byrd amendment so that now Rhodesian chrome can no longer be imported into the United States.

11. OVERTURE ON THE DOMESTIC IMPACT OF ENERGY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Kear was recognized by the Moderator and moved the adoption of the Overture: "The Domestic Impact of Energy Resource Development" as amended by Division D. The delegates were referred to the Advance Materials, Section II, pages 114-116 and the changes before them in the printed materials from the Division. Ms. Kear announced one further change to be made: the insertion of item #E. in Section V of the Overtures:

"E. Challenging the churches of the United Church of Christ and the Public to a deeper sensitivity to the human, environmental and agricultural costs of our present lifestyle."

The motion was seconded. Hearing no discussion, the Moderator called for a vote on the Overture as amended. It was

77-GS-46 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts "The Domestic Impact of Energy Resource Development" as amended.

Overture: The Domestic Impact of Energy Resource Development

I. SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The Report of the Task Force on Christian Life Style and Ecology submitted to the Tenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, states: "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)." The 11th General Synod affirms a continuing concern for Christian lifestyle and ecology and a ministry to the people affected by energy development.

II. BACKGROUND

A. *The Human Impact of Energy Development in Rural Areas.* All impacts of coal development ultimately focus down to their impact upon people, and become minus or plus factors according to one's viewpoint. An impacted community is confronted with the necessity of expanding its services: water, sewerage, housing, schooling, roads, fire and police protection, recreation "and more importantly for religious expression." Often, the initial impact of construction is several times larger than the long-term

impact of those who remain. Where strip-mined coal is fed to mine-mouth generators or energy converters, there is the inevitability, not only of scarred land, but of polluted and more carcinogenic air from the secondary processes. At Colstrip, Montana's newly constructed mine-mouth generators, scrubbers and electrostatic precipitators remove 99½% of all particulates from the smokestacks of these two 350 megawatt units. Nevertheless, it is estimated that 82 tons of sulphur dioxide and 52 tons of nitrous oxides escape into the air daily. Add to this the daily use of 11½ million gallons of water, and it is understandable that farmers who depend upon the same river for irrigation feel threatened by power projects. (Northern Plains Council)

The impact of energy development has a potential for human conflict and provides an occasion for human growth. It compels us to face polarities of conservation and development. It calls us to seek to understand the value of lifestyles other than our own and to seek energy policies and sources that are consistent with good stewardship.

B. *Ethical Issues Related to Coal Mining in the High Plains.* The rush to extract huge amounts of coal from the "northern high plains" for production of energy raises several ethical issues which need to be addressed as Christians attempt to live out the good news.

First is the issue of our relationship to the (coal-rich) land itself. There is still considerable difference of expert opinion as to the possibility of reclamation of land which has been strip-mined. Is it responsible stewardship to risk the productivity of long-established ecosystems for immediate energy demand? Is the certainty of long-term food production more or less important than equally certain short-term energy production?

Second is the issue of our relationship to the land's people. This is complicated by the fact that in many places surface ownership is held by one party, while subsurface rights are held by others. Moreover, the pattern of all ownership is complex, involving the federal government, private individuals, corporations and Native Americans. How can justice be done to energy-producing corporations and their dependents, who seek profit from minerals they own, and to agricultural interests, whose livelihood is utterly dependent upon the continued presence of mining's "overburden"? How does a Christian assess the relative importance of energy demands of a dominant culture and the need for stability of a minority culture?

Third is the issue of our relationship to the affected communities. Past and present experience show that—planned or unplanned—great increases in community populations have pronounced effects on the physical, mental, economic and spiritual health of communities and residents. With finite community resources, should priority be given to maintaining a stable community character or providing for the needs of short-term residents? What responsibility, if any, should be assigned to those who extract profit while depending on local resources, and what responsibility to local interests which profit incidentally?

Fourth is the issue of our relationship to the future. It is an inexorable fact that, while materials cycle, energy can

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 4

only flow. Coal is a non-renewable resource. Christians might well ask why it should be considered "ours" resource rather than that of our children, or their children, or theirs. Are there not alternatives which appear more expensive at present but which are in effect investments in the health and security of the unborn?

Fifth is the issue of our relationship as brothers and sisters within a large, resource-rich nation. The distribution of energy resources and consumption across the land is not at all uniform. Shall those few who have political control over great resources deny those many who make demands on those same resources? Shall those whose livelihoods are invested in less profitable energy resource extraction (Appalachian miners, for example) be ignored for those whose livelihoods are at odds with more profitable resources (eastern Montana ranchers, for example)?

Sixth is the issue of our relationship to "the energy crisis" in the first place. There is no disputing the fact that conventional energy sources are in increasingly short supply, and that more exotic sources (such as nuclear power) have very clear limitations with respect to production cost, safety and environmental protection. Does a Christian concern for the "quality of life" mean reckoning with energy efficiency? Is it important to look at other Western nations with comparable standards of living, few natural resources, and yet about *half* the energy consumption *per capita*? What should energy be used for?

These are some of the concerns and dilemmas inherent in a Christian exploration of the issue of coal extraction in the northern high plains. They need not be answered, but they should be addressed.

C. National and International Issues. One important aspect of the domestic impact of coal development, in the Great Plains as well as other areas, is the morass of unresolved legal and political issues created by the development of fossil fuels. These issues involve: conflicts over the ownership of land and mineral rights; compensation for those who suffer from the environmental degradation which occurs because of coal development; and the transboundary environmental impact of coal and other natural resource development.

In the Great Plains region and many other parts of the United States, surface ownership of land and mineral rights to that same land are often held by different entities. The surface owners of the land, who may be utilizing it for food production, often come into conflict with those who wish to strip-mine coal beneath the surface. On lands owned by American Indian tribes the potential for misunderstanding is further intensified, because of the different patterns of land ownership among the various tribes, and the widely differing conceptions of the meaning of land ownership involved. While it is true that mining companies must lease or purchase surface rights before mining can take place, this has not always been the case: historically, a great deal of mistrust has developed between ranchers and native Americans and coal companies.

A second issue which remains unresolved is that of compensation for those who suffer from the effects of environmental degradation resulting, directly or indirectly, from coal development. Air pollution from mine-

mouth generating plants may have an adverse effect on crop yields miles away from the source of pollution. Water, a precious resource in the Great Plains, is often seriously affected by the stripmining of coal. An enormous quantity of water is required in the generation of electricity from coal: some of it is returned at a higher temperature to the source from which it is obtained, some is lost in evaporation. A potentially more serious effect on water supplies concerns the underground water table, which is often drastically changed in the course of removing coal, an aquifer, through surface mining. This may affect land-owners at some distance from the actual mining site. Yet other adverse effects of coal development come from the high voltage transmission lines which carry the electric power from producer to consumer. These include pollution from the corona discharge, safety factors, soil erosion along the right of way, destruction of native wildlife habitats, and aesthetic deterioration.

The issues surrounding environmental degradation caused by coal development become even more complex when the damage to the environment takes place across an international boundary. A host of unresolved questions has emerged, for example, around the plains of the Province of Saskatchewan, Canada, to construct one of the largest coal-to-energy developments on the North American continent, less than five miles from the border between Canada and the United States, both upwind and upriver from eastern Montana and North Dakota. At the present time there is a substantial difference between the United States and Canada regarding air and water quality standards, making the question even more difficult to resolve.

Each of the legal and political issues described above has a very real effect on persons: it is persons who suffer from the environmental degradation described above; and it is specific human beings who are affected by the conflicts surrounding coal development. Coal development in the Great Plains is, in the end, a human problem—not merely a technological one.

III. RATIONALE

We believe that the following statements provide a rationale for the Eleventh General Synod of the United Church of Christ to adopt the proposals set forth in this overture:

A. We affirm, as Christians, that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof,"

B. We affirm that each generation is charged with continuing stewardship of all our resources to guarantee a legacy of productive land, pure air, clean water and a just society.

C. We rejoice in the fact that the United Church of Christ has a history of active involvement in the struggle for justice whenever human lives are affected by the ethical dilemmas of modern society.

D. We recognize that the long-term energy crisis, dramatized by recent shortages of petroleum products, has resulted in increasing pressure to strip-mine western coal reserves.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 4

IV. IMPLICATIONS

If the Eleventh General Synod adopts this overture and the constituency of the United Church of Christ acts on the recommendations as proposed;

A. The church, at all levels (local, conference, national) and in all of its operations (meetings, travel, building use) will become more aware of the need for energy conservation and act upon that awareness. The church will at all levels seek persons with expertise to discover alternatives to strip mining.

B. Each specific group (urban, rural, energy producers and consumers, agricultural and industrial) will develop a mutual sensitivity to the particular needs and problems facing each of those groups.

C. The conferences and instrumentalities will place a high priority on the development of specialized ministries for areas affected by energy development.

D. Legislation will be enacted which recognizes both the need to protect the continuing productivity of agricultural land and the continued health of persons; and, also, the need to provide adequate energy to meet the real need of energy consumers.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The deployment of time, ability and financial resources will be affected by the seriousness with which the United Church of Christ pursues the implications of this overture, especially as it affects ministry to persons.

As energy development continues to be a national concern, new energy related needs and problems will continue to surface. These will demand an investment of available church resources which reflects the priority of this concern alongside others.

The primary responsibility for implementing this proposal should be assigned to the Committee on Christian Life Style and Ecology. The Board for Homeland Ministries and the Office for Church and Society will necessarily be among those involved in the implementation of development of specialized ministries and of influencing legislative action.

VI. ACTION

The Eleventh General Synod calls upon the United Church of Christ to reaffirm the statement and action of the Tenth General Synod on Christian Life Style and Ecology, by:

A. Recognizing the human impact of energy development in rural areas, and the church's unique ministry in transient communities, and encouraging a variety of ministries to deal with the human cost of energy development;

B. Encouraging continued reflection upon the ethical issues raised by the production of energy from strip-mined coal;

C. Encouraging our state and national governments to enact legislation which will protect the productivity of agricultural lands from any negative impacts of energy development;

D. Urging the United States government to negotiate a comprehensive treaty with Canada, dealing with all trans-boundary impacts of mineral and energy development.

E. Challenging the churches of the United Church of Christ and the public to a deeper sensitivity to the human, environmental and agricultural costs of our present life-style.

12. RESOLUTION ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ms. Kear was recognized by the Moderator and referred the delegates to the Advance Material, Section II, page 137 and the "Report to the Eleventh General Synod of the United Church of Christ on 1975-1977 Corporate Social Responsibility Actions, with Special Emphasis on Southern Africa." Ms. Kear moved the adoption of the "Resolution on Corporate Social Responsibility" as amended by Division D.

The motion was seconded and there was some discussion. Ms. Kear called on Jo Means (ILL) to speak to the resolution in behalf of the Division. Ms. Means indicated that the changes in the resolution were essentially in language to make the resolution more inclusive and concise. Upon being put to a vote, it was

77-GS-47 VOTED: The Eleventh General Synod adopts the "Resolution on Corporate Social Responsibility " as amended.

Resolution on Corporate Social Responsibility

In order to bring about a higher sense of human and environmental responsibility in the corporate decision making process.

RESOLVED, That the 11th General Synod recommend that members and organizations of the United Church of Christ continue during the 1977-79 biennium Church actions to maximize developmental impact as set forth in General Synod 10's pronouncement on transnational business.

RESOLVED, That the "Report to the Eleventh General Synod of the United Church of Christ on 1975-77 Corporate Social Responsibility actions with Special Emphasis on Southern Africa," submitted jointly by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the United Church Board for World Ministries, the United Church Foundation, and the Pension Boards UCC, be received;

The Eleventh General Synod recommends increased attention by members and organizations of the United Church of Christ during the biennium 1978-79 to the critical ethical questions raised by the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility.

The General Synod encourages local churches, Associations, and Conferences to address business ethics and the social goals of economic activity in their communities, seeking to stimulate ecumenical action in behalf of higher standards of business morality and economic justice in the concrete circumstances of their local and regional economies.