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tion in referring the report back to the Committee. The Committee had met and consulted with the Rev. Donald L. Benedict (IL) regarding his motion. Mr. Benedict has agreed to withdraw the motion to enable the Committee to present the issue as a recommendation to the General Synod which will be proposed following action on the report of the Committee. In response to questions regarding the status of present priorities, Mr. Paul stated that the current Priorities Process will end December 31, 1979. There will not be another set of new priorities until established by the Thirteenth General Synod. He indicated that two things need to be noted: 1) The process for generating the priorities for consideration at the Thirteenth General Synod will begin in 1980, and 2) The various segments of the Church are encouraged to continue their programming in relation to current priorities wherever it is appropriate for them to do so.

Mr. Paul moved the adoption of the report of the Committee on the Priorities Process.

Mrs. Sally Riis (CT) was recognized and moved to amend the report by adding a new paragraph in Section F to read: "Priorities may also be received from Regional Councils on Mission Priorities. It was pointed out that since there is no longer a national organization or regional councils of mission priorities, the intent of the motion could be achieved by adding the words "regional meetings" to the first paragraph under F so it would read, "The Executive Council will develop a procedure by which local churches, conferences, national agencies, church related groups, regional meetings, and the officers of the United Church of Christ may suggest concerns for consideration as priorities." This was agreed and will be added to the report.

The Rev. James Smucker (NY) was recognized and moved to amend the report by deleting from Section D the second paragraph which reads: "When the timeline for a priority has lapsed, that issue is not eligible for priority status again until at least one biennium has passed." There was discussion and upon being put to a vote the Moderator declared the motion lost.

There was discussion, and it was

79-GS-38 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the report of the Committee on the Priorities Process as amended:

A PRIORITIES PROCESS FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Purpose:

To address in a major, all-church effort a demonstrated crucial concern of our time.

—by giving priority to an ongoing ministry of the Church or by beginning a new ministry.

—by cooperation and involvement of churches and church related groups, conferences, national agencies and General Synod.

Aims:

A. To engage local churches, conferences, national agencies, General Synod, and church related groups in an internationally collaborative effort to address the priority.

B. To provide through special and regular funding systems

adequate monies for staff, development and implementation of the priority.

C. To identify through a participatory process a concern which merits primary attention of the United Church of Christ.

D. To provide a sense of common mission and a focus on the covenantal relations of all parts of the church.

Priority Criteria:

A. A priority is a concern which has been adopted by the General Synod.

B. A priority is a concern which involves and is recognized by all parts of the church—local, conference, national and church related groups.

C. A priority is a concern of high significance for the whole mission of the church, at home and overseas.

D. A priority is a concern which has been studied and is demonstrated to be biblically and theologically appropriate for the attention of the United Church of Christ.

E. A priority involves all parts of the church in planning.

F. A priority may be a new concern which requires the church's primary attention because of a crisis, a change, or a growing relevance of the issue; or a priority may be a concern which the church has addressed in the past but which needs to be lifted up for primary attention because of changing needs and direction.

G. A priority may be a concern which affects the internal life of the church and/or a priority may be a concern which focuses upon the church's involvement with society.

The Priorities Process:

A. The Office of the President will manage and coordinate the priorities process.

B. There will be no more than four priorities of the United Church of Christ at any given time. The Thirteenth General Synod may select no more than two priorities.

C. A balance should be maintained between priorities which affect the internal life of the church (particularly local churches) and priorities which focus upon the church's involvement in society.

D. Timeline

A priority has a timeline that spans two biennia.

When the timeline for a priority has lapsed, that issue is not eligible for priority status again until at least one biennium has passed.

E. Funding

Funding for planning and management of the process in the President's Office will be provided through the regular payment schedule.

Local churches, conferences, national agencies and church related groups will provide monies from their budgets for their work on the priorities.

Special Appeals offering (e.g., Neighbors in Need and Family Thank Offering) may be used to fund special projects related to priority areas.

F. Generation of Concerns for Priority Status

The Executive Council will develop a procedure by

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which local churches, conferences, national agencies, church related groups, regional meetings, and the officers of the United Church of Christ may suggest concerns for consideration as priorities.

(For example: A letter sent from the President's Office to local churches, conferences and national agencies explains the priorities process and asks for concerns for priorities.

Local Churches forward suggestions to conferences, who collate and forward to the Planning and Correlation Committee of the Executive Council the one or two concerns that appear most important.

Conferences and national agencies forward one or two concerns for priorities to the Planning and Correlation Committee of the Executive Council.)

G. Selection of Concerns for Priority Status

The Executive Council through its Planning and Correlation Committee will receive and screen concerns generated by the above process.

Planning and Correlation will select up to two times the number of concerns to be forwarded to General Synod, test their validity within the church, and recommend priorities to the Executive Council.

The Executive Council will prepare proposals for priorities in consultation with national agencies and conferences.

Proposals for priorities will include:

- I. Problem definition and analysis
- II. Goal statement
- III. Designation of implementors and a national agency as a coordinator

The Executive Council will test the proposed priorities with local churches, conferences and national agencies for their judgment about these proposals as priorities for the United Church of Christ (much as proposed General Synod pronouncement is currently tested).

The Executive Council receives the responses.

The Executive Council submits the proposal with the analysis of responses to the General Synod, submitting twice the number of priorities to be selected by that Synod.

The General Synod acts on the proposal (approves, amends, defeats) and may select up to half of the proposals submitted.

H. Developmental Phase of a Priority

The national agency named as coordinator of each priority will convene a working group to explore and recommend to the whole church ways by which local churches, conferences, national agencies, and church related groups may communicate and cooperate with one another in the development and implementation of programs to address the priority.

Each national agency designated as an implementor of a priority will develop its plans of action for addressing the priority.

The working group will include representatives from local churches; a staff member from each national agency named in the priority; representatives from the

President's Office, the Executive Council, and the Council of Conference Executives.

Each conference and local church will be asked to accept the priority within twelve months following General Synod action.

I. Implementation

Local churches, conferences, national agencies and church related groups implement the priorities programs.

J. Evaluation and Reporting

The Executive Council will evaluate the priorities process and overall effectiveness of priority programming and make recommendations for further action.

Each local church, conference, national agency and church related group will be asked to evaluate its own work on General Synod priority programs.

The Executive Council asks for progress and final reports on implementation of the priorities from coordinating agencies.

K. Transition

Present priorities are to be concluded December 31, 1979 as originally determined.

Any or all of the present priorities are eligible for consideration as Priorities of the Church to be selected in 1981.

Agencies, conferences, and local churches are encouraged to continue working in the areas of the present priorities beyond 1979 as they consider appropriate.

Reports of "final" work on General Synod Eleven Priorities will be prepared by the Executive Council in 1980 and in summary form for General Synod Thirteen.

Generation of new priorities will be initiated following General Synod Twelve.

7. REFERRAL TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Moderator recognized the Rev. Jerry Paul (WI) who referred to the issue of a need for sustained, basic, theological and cultural analysis to give direction to planning and programming within the United Church of Christ that had been brought to the attention of the Committee on Priorities, and moved on behalf of the Committee that this matter be referred to the Executive Council, and it was

79-GS-39 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod refers to the Executive Council the request that provision be made for sustained, basic, theological and cultural analysis to give direction to planning and programming within the United Church of Christ.

8. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

The Moderator recognized Mrs. Olga Sierra-Sandman (IL) Chairperson of the Committee on Human Sexuality for the report. Mrs. Sandman referred the delegates to the several documents on Human Sexuality, in Advance Materials, Section II, pages 113-115, 125-128, and 142-144. She moved the adoption of the report and introduced the Rev. Stephen A. Gifford (PC), a member of