

MONDAY EVENING, JUNE 25

cedure will be that each Section will be given an opportunity to report for forty-five minutes or report three issues, which ever takes the least amount of time. Sections F and A will report this evening.

11. REPORT OF SECTION F—THIRD WORLD ACCESS TO ADVANCED COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The Moderator recognized Mr. Dale Bennett (SOC), Chairperson, for the report of Section F. Mr. Bennett moved the adoption of the resolution on "Third World Access to Advanced Communication Technologies" as printed in Advance Materials, Section II, pages 147-149 and called on Mrs. Carol Spangenberg (PNE), a member of the Section, to speak to the resolution. Mrs. Spangenberg underscored the source and importance of the resolution, noting editorial changes, and it was

79-GS-42 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the resolution on Third World Access to Advanced Communication Technologies.

THIRD WORLD ACCESS TO ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES

SUMMARY

This resolution is an outgrowth of the Pronouncement: Exploitative Broadcasting Practices, passed by GS11, and of cooperative work being carried out by the Office of Communication and the United Church Board for World Ministries as a result of the Pronouncement.

The resolution calls upon the Office of Communication and the Board for World Ministries to conduct a long-term program to assist Third World nations, through their churches, to gain access to the world's communications systems, to improve their communications capabilities and to use new communications opportunities as they emerge.

BACKGROUND

The ability of all peoples of the world to send and receive messages through modern communications technology is of vital concerns to the United Church of Christ in its overseas work. This is a basic right to be enjoyed by all peoples. At present this right is mainly restricted to the industrialized countries of North America, Central Europe and the Soviet Union. Developing nations are being kept dependent upon communications systems controlled in industrialized nations.

During the fall of 1979 the World Administrative Radio Conference will address the problems of how new communications technology, such as satellites, will be used, whether or not developing nations will have access to these systems on their own terms or if the industrialized nations and transnational corporations will continue their domination of communications technologies and systems.

The Office of Communication was the first church agency to call attention to the needs of Third World nations (1) for reservation of satellite orbital slots and frequencies in that part of the electronic spectrum that is used for communication with space vehicles and to and from space-orbiting satellites—frequencies that they can utilize as their needs develop; (2) for communication systems that are keyed to their needs and that will not leave them open to exploitation

by the high technology monopoly of the industrialized nations, and (3) for disinterested counselling on technological developments, message exchange by satellite and spectrum management.

The UCBWM was the first missionary agency to take an interest in the problems of Third World nations related to new electronic technology, and to contribute money to make it possible for the churches affiliated with the National Council of Churches to get started on a program to help cope with those problems.

There are three basic issues that face Third World countries as they prepare to participate in the WARC negotiations. The first issue is access to and control of national systems of communication and of the unfettered right to transmit and receive information internationally. A second issue is the protection of existing communications systems from technological displacement before participation in newer systems can be achieved. Finally, there is the issue of reserving facilities for use by developing nations when they achieve the capacity to acquire and operate satellites.

It is unlikely that the WARC conference will resolve all of these problems. Ongoing international negotiations will be necessary to develop an adequate plan of distribution for the world's communications resources. Additional work will be necessary to assist developing nations to take advantage of whatever gains they make in the acquisition of spectrum space and other natural resources.

The issues and problems involved are not purely technical in nature. Many of these questions raise profound moral and ethical considerations that politicians, scientists and businesses cannot alone solve. The United Church of Christ has already raised important questions about the United States negotiating position at the 1979 WARC Conference. It is helping Third World nations to prepare their own positions.

The 1979 WARC Conference is a beginning, not an end in itself. Equality in world communication will be won through sustained and substantial activity by the UCC for years to come.

THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

The economic and political power potential for domination that is present in the new information technologies should force us to reflect on the injustice we will condone, if those technologies and the human, social benefits they also promise are not made available to the less fortunate people of our world. Scripture tells us that for all our sakes Christ came among us "as one who serves" and that it was his desire "that all have life and have it to fullness." The witness of our Christian belief should make us draw near to Christ and His ways. Work to share the social benefits of the new information technologies with our neighbors is more than a service of injustice, it is love for one another, the sign by which we are to be known as His disciples.

WHEREAS the World Administrative Radio Conference convenes in Geneva, Switzerland on September 24, 1979 to determine how the electro-magnetic spectrum shall be utilized by the nations of the world for all forms of electronic communication over the next two decades;

WHEREAS access to the electronic spectrum and to

advanced systems of satellites and the terminal facilities for the sending and receiving of information is essential to the development of all nations, particularly those of the Third World;

WHEREAS allocation of frequencies within the electronic spectrum is a crucial element in world communications now and in the future;

WHEREAS the Third World nations do not have the trained personnel to deal with all the technical problems of advanced communication systems;

WHEREAS aid in bringing groups and individuals abreast of developments in communication conforms to the historic mandate of the Office of Communication and the missionary tradition of the United Church Board for World Ministries;

WHEREAS the Office of Communication and the Board for World Ministries are already assisting churches and governments to understand the problems and opportunities that are raised by the innovation of advanced communication technology;

THEREFORE the General Synod of the United Church of Christ endorses:

THAT the right of all peoples, especially those in Third World nations, to use and control modern communications technology is a major concern of churches through the world;

THAT churches should work individually and ecumenically to help the people and governments of Third World nations to take advantage of advanced communications technology, so those nations may develop communications systems that are appropriate to meet their needs;

THAT churches should monitor the proceedings of the World Administrative Radio Conference in the fall of 1979, and should study and react to treaty negotiations for implementation of the agreements reached in the Conference.

12. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR UCC BOARDS AND DIRECTORATES

Mr. Bennett indicated that Section A will be making a report and recommendation on Affirmative Action for UCC Boards and Directorates. Therefore Section F will not make a report on this matter but its materials will be supporting material for the report of Section A.

13. RESOLUTION ON RACIAL JUSTICE

Mr. Bennett referred to the Section's recommendation on Racial Justice, referred to Section V on Referral of Ordinances and Resolutions to Sections and Committees, pages 1 and 2, moved the adoption of the resolution and called on Ms. Joyce Harmon (ME), a member of the Section, to speak to the resolution. Ms. Harmon stated that the resolution affirms the historical position of the United Church of Christ in its support of Racial Justice and raises the fact that we have not yet become a covenanting community. She indicated that the resolution is revised in structure but not in content from the original and speaks to the lack of Hispanic representation on our decision making bodies. It was

79-GS-43 VOTED: The Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Racial Justice;

RESOLUTION ON RACIAL JUSTICE

SUMMARY

The Twelfth General Synod reaffirms its commitment to racial justice and seeks to augment the fiscal, moral, and religious support of its racial constituencies: Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Indians and Pacific Islanders.

BACKGROUND

The United Church of Christ historically has supported issues of racial justice through its Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, and Tenth General Synods. Yet, a weakening commitment in church and society seems to be occurring. Public demonstrations by the Nazi party and the Ku Klux Klan are growing and becoming bolder. The judicial system in the Bakke case and the Weber case apparently is weakening the gains made in affirmation action.

After decades of proclaiming pluralism the United Church of Christ, a predominately white, middle-class organization, still is limited in its inclusion of racial minorities, e.g. theology, religious life and participation in ministry. Thus far the U.C.C. has failed to be inclusive in its involvement, staffing, and funding of ministry in Hispanic communities. Presently, there are no professional national Hispanic staff persons and only limited involvement on boards and instrumentalities.

The mutual involvement and pluralistic nature of the U.C.C. racial justice ministry is affirmed and noted. In this work the 12th General Synod commends the Commission for Racial Justice, Pacific and Asian American Ministries, Ministers for Racial and Social Justice, The Council for Hispanic Ministries, United Black Christians and the Council for American Indian Ministries.

WHEREAS, the church is called to be the body of Christ, inclusive, pluralistic, interdisciplinary, and universal; and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ is called to implement its mandate to be the body of Christ; and,

WHEREAS, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." (I Corinthians 12:26)

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Twelfth General Synod calls upon national boards, agencies, instrumentalities, conferences, associations, local churches and individual members of the U.C.C. to acknowledge the urgency of racial justice issues and to develop strategies and programs in consultation with racial minority constituents to eradicate racism and racial injustice in church and society:

- a. by developing fair and realistic budgeting for the continuation and development of the ministries of the Commission for Racial Justice, Council for Hispanic Ministries, Pacific and Asian American Ministries, Council for American Indian Ministries, Ministers for Racial and Social Justice and United Black Christians;
- b. by implementing affirmative action policies in filling staff vacancies and board positions with special emphasis upon Hispanics;
- c. by affirming the viability, vitality and contribution of racial minority constituents;
- d. by educating its constituency and preparing channels for support of the affirmative action process in church and society.