

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the United Church of Christ communicate this action to appropriate public officials in all states.

17. RESOLUTION ON CUBA

Mr. Fogal referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section III, page 38, and moved the adoption of the substitute resolution on Cuba. Mr. Fogal called on the Rev. Leslie G. Strathern (CAL.S) to speak to the resolution. Mr. Strathern indicated that the substitute resolution has an order different from the original material because the Section is convinced that we must speak to ourselves before we can speak to the nation to take certain steps. The resolution affirms our responsibility to be in touch with Christians wherever they are.

Mr. Fred Abben (IL) was recognized and moved to amend the resolution by the addition of a sixth paragraph to read "seek to develop whatever degree of reciprocity is possible from Cuban authorities that educational work and contact concerning our Church and society be allowed within the Cuban nation." It was agreed to include this new paragraph in the resolution. There was discussion, and it was

79-GS-75 VOTED: the Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Cuba as amended:

RESOLUTION: CUBA

BACKGROUND: For ten days in January nine UCC people represented the United Church of Christ at the annual meeting of the Cuban Ecumenical Council in Havana, Cuba. Since the UCC has had no mission contacts with Cuba and since this delegation was the first official contact between UCC and Cuban Protestant churches, the delegation decided on its return to request the Directorate of OCIS to bring before the Synod a resolution which would hold up past policy statements of the United Church of Christ and be a vehicle for educational work in our church about Cuba. Members of the delegation were the Rev. Theodore Braun (Church of the Good Shepherd, Carbondale, IL), the Rev. Charles Burns (Florida Conference Minister), the Rev. V. F. Deditus (Zion UCC, Fresno, CA), Ms. Gretchen Eick (Policy Advocate, OCIS), the Rev. Lawrence Henderson (United Church of Leisure City, FL), the Rev. Elice Higginbotham (Cuba Resource Center), the Rev. Daniel Romero (Associate Conference Minister, Southern California Conference), the Rev. Howard Spragg (Executive Vice-President, Board for Homeland Ministries), and the Rev. Jeffrey Utter (Latin American Secretary, Board for World Ministries).

WHEREAS, the Ninth General Synod of the United Church of Christ in 1973 urged "the governments of the United States and Cuba to resume diplomatic relations and to work for friendship, trade and mutual assistance" and the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ in 1977 commended the administration of the United States Government for actions already taken toward full diplomatic relations with Cuba and called upon it to continue these negotiations with emphasis on lifting the trade embargo;"

WHEREAS, by invitation nine members of the United

Church of Christ represented the United Church of Christ at the 1979 annual meeting of the Cuban Ecumenical Council in Havana, Cuba, opening contact between the United Church of Christ and Cuban Protestants; the churches of Cuba welcome ties of friendship with North America, both church-to-church and government-to-government; contacts by the United Church of Christ delegation with the Cuban Ecumenical community indicate that relations between the Cuban government and the Cuban churches have improved measurably during the 1970's;

WHEREAS, the Cuban government has indicated that it will release 3,600 political prisoners during 1979 and began with the release of 400 in January, 1979, permitting them and former political prisoners along with their families to emigrate freely if they so desire; in granting this amnesty the Cuban government has significantly improved the human rights situation in Cuba;

WHEREAS, the Cuban government in 1979 initiated a new policy of permitting visits to Cuba by Cubans living abroad for the purpose of family reunification and is assisting as many as 3,000 people a month to restore family ties assisted by an agency of the Cuban government;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ has historically found it valuable to maintain relations with churches in communist countries, such as the German Democratic Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ

1. requests the Boards for World and Homeland Ministries and the Office for Church In Society to increase United Church of Christ institutional relations with the Cuban churches through two-way clergy and lay visits, youth exchange programs, and sharing of resources;
2. requests UCC-related seminars to include materials about contemporary Cuba, Cuban theological writing and information on Cuban religious life in their libraries;
3. reaffirms its position that full diplomatic and trade relations between the governments of Cuba and the United States should be promptly restored;
4. calls upon the President of the United States to authorize restoration of commercial airline and ship transportation between Cuba and the United States, to facilitate contacts between the two countries;
5. encourages United Church members, churches, and conferences to support these steps and to seek knowledge, understanding and friendship with the Cuban people;
6. seek to develop whatever degree of reciprocity is possible from Cuban authorities that educational work and contact concerning our Church and society be allowed within the Cuban nation.

18. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE URBAN AGENDA

The Moderator recognized the Rev. Marilyn Stavenger (OH), Chairperson of Section D, for a continuation of the Section report. Ms. Stavenger referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, pages 153-162, and moved the adoption of the Report and Recommendations on the Ur-

ban Agenda with the addition of the following words in section VI 5 after the word "America": "with appropriate proposals for action." Ms. Stavenger called on the Rev. J. Richard Coyle (PW) to speak to the report and recommendations. Mr. Coyle reminded the delegates that the United Church of Christ has always had an urban agenda. For the past 16 years we have had specific urban agendas intentionally by General Synods. The report and recommendations are the response of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries to the request of the Eleventh General Synod. There was discussion, and it was

79-GS-76 VOTED: the Twelfth General Synod adopts the Report and Recommendations on the Urban Agenda as revised.

Report and Recommendations on the Urban Agenda

I Summary

The Eleventh General Synod requested the Board for Homeland Ministries to prepare a report for the Twelfth General Synod on "The Urban Agenda." During the intervening two years, considerable national attention has been focussed on America's cities. The federal government has proposed a "National Urban Policy," in the face of an increasing number of city governments on the edge of bankruptcy. On the other hand, private developers have hailed an "urban renaissance" and international interests continue to invest huge sums in American urban centers. The urban landscape has changed in the past two years, and yet old problems continue. This report seeks to interpret the nature of those events and to propose how the churches may appropriately respond.

II Content

The report is based on a two-year development process which has included:

- a review and analysis of recent programs being conducted by the instrumentalities pertinent to urban mission;
- an analysis of the prospects and strategies for the survival and vigor of the churches presence and ministry in the cities;
- a review of social policy positions now on record pertinent to these concerns which have been adopted by the General Synods of the UCC;
- theological reflection on the responsibilities of the church in and with the cities.

From the substance of this report, general directions are suggested whereby the diverse ministries of the United Church of Christ can be coordinated to address the complex problems facing urban areas in America.

III Historical Summary and Theological Base

A. In order to appreciate fully the present situation of our cities, it is important to consider briefly historical circumstances which have influenced both urban structure and ethos.

Throughout the life of this nation, its cities have been centers for national growth. People from foreign and domestic soil have been drawn to cities in search of opportunities in the expanding enterprises of commerce, manufacturing, finance and communication. The growth of cities has been accompanied by technological

innovation and economic expansion. But, as cities increased in size, wealth and power, they became also centers for poverty, despair, conflict and corruption.

From the beginning, the interests of commerce and industry have dominated the quality of this nation's urban life. Preindustrial, prerevolutionary cities grew as centers of commerce, linking Europe with America's inland settlements. A spirit of individualism and personal economic gain predominated, and cities in this era were referred to as "communities of private money-makers," Thus fostering an anti-urban bias within the agricultural population.

Between 1820 and 1860 the urban population soared from 693,000 to 6,216,000. Commercial expansion was one of the chief factors behind this rapid growth. American farm products were in high demand in Europe during the Napoleonic wars; meanwhile, America was becoming less dependent on European manufacturing products as this nation rapidly increased its industrial capacity. Canals, steamboats and railroads cut the time and cost of transportation, thereby stimulating commercial expansion. By 1860, manufacturing had become the mainstay of urban economy, heavily influencing the pattern of urban growth and the dynamics of urban society. Both labor and land were considered primarily as commodities to be used with increasing intensification for private gain. Housing construction reflected this attitude, and as a result the poor became amassed in the centers of the cities, near industry, while the more affluent sought clean air and more space in outlying areas.

Between 1870 and 1920, America's urban population grew from 10 million to 54 million; from 20 percent of the national population to over 50 percent. The growth of manufacturing was most instrumental in this development. Electricity, the telephone and apartment houses marked the nation's centennial. By the end of the 19th century, a spirit of municipal reform was being manifest in several ways. City governments, of necessity, often because of the failure of private enterprise to provide adequate service, established public services for providing water, fire protection, police protection, public health facilities and education. Meanwhile, a movement of municipal progressivism began which represented the largest scale movement for urban reform in the history of the United States. Housing standards, voting procedures and urban planning all emerged from the reform movement. The reform movement was accompanied by the formation numerous private charity organizations for children, the poor and the homeless.

By 1920 the United States had become a nation of cities. At the same time, the automobile began to transform the metropolitan landscape. Between 1920 and 1945 the growth of suburbs dominated the urban development process. This process was interrupted somewhat by the depression in the early 1930's. The federal government took on a new role with regard to the cities under the New Deal initiatives of Franklin Roosevelt. Between 1933-1935 unemployment relief was flowing primarily to the cities. Housing became a

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major activity. The Housing Division of the Public Works Administration built over 21,000 units for over 87,000 people between 1933-1937. Following the passage of the National Housing Act of 1937, the federal role was augmented by the ability of the United States Housing Authority, a public corporation, to clear slums and build housing projects. The subsequent Housing Act of 1949 contained a chapter on "Slum Clearance and Community Development and Redevelopment," commonly referred to as "urban renewal." The act advocated a "decent home and suitable living environment for every American family."

Since that time, the federal role has overshadowed that of the state. Federal policies under various administrations have vacillated between vigorous activity and advocacy for local self-reliance. Major legislative programs which have impacted our cities in recent decades include the Federal Highway Act of 1956, The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the establishment of the Department of Housing and Urban development in 1965, and the Model Cities Act of 1966.

The words of Josiah Strong, Congregational minister from Ohio, were prophetic. In 1885, he observed that the city "stamps the country, instead of the country stamping the city. It is the cities and towns which will form the state constitutions, make laws, create public opinion, establish social usages, and fix standards." Today, America is more than a nation of cities; it is an urban nation. The nation's agenda is an urban agenda.

B. The groups that came eventually to form the United Church of Christ historically have reflected an interplay between "the city" and "the frontier." It is difficult to separate the development of Congregationalism during the colonial period from the growth of cities in New England. Such early seats of Puritan power and influence as Salem, Boston, Cambridge, Hartford, and New Haven spawned great cities whose present character has been shaped by the influx of subsequent European settlers. From such cities pioneers went west to settle the continent, bringing with them a vision of a "city upon a hill." By the time of the Civil War Congregationalism had gone beyond the original colonies and was represented in nearly all the major cities of the nation, as it followed (and led) the flow of the population across the continent. Churches were established prior to 1860 in such diverse cities as Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Des Moines, and Minneapolis in the Middle-West and San Francisco, Oakland and Portland on the Pacific Coast—many of which survive to the present day.

The growth of the Reformed Church in the United States and especially that of the German Evangelical Synod was concentrated in the cities of the East and Middle-West during the 19th Century. In 1916 more than a quarter of the members of the German Evangelical Synod were members of churches in cities of 300,000 or more, making this denomination one of the most urbanized in American Protestantism.

The United States Census of Religious Bodies for 1916 reports on the four denominations that would

later form the United Church of Christ; at that time the UCC would have constituted the leading Protestant denomination in six of the nation's largest cities.

This same Census provides a profile of the ethnic composition of the denominations that led to the United Church. Of the 10,229 churches associated with the four denominations, 2,760 were identified as German speaking, the largest number being associated with the German Evangelical Synod, 365 were identified as black, 125 as Scandinavian or Finnish, 60 Welsh, 22 Indian, 10 Armenian, 6 Japanese and 38 other language groups. While these statistics are not broken down into urban/rural categories they do reflect the diversity of our predecessor groups and their ethnic mix, a diversity which has been most evident in the nation's cities.

During the past 20 years, the number of UCC churches in the 10 largest cities has dropped from a total of 405 in 1957, to a total of 305 in 1977; a 25 percent decline. Today, a number of strategies are being pursued to reverse that decline. Church development in transitional communities, especially as pursued in the Chicago area, new church development among minorities and ethnic groups in the cities and work with existing city congregations are ways by which our commitment to the presence of the UCC in the cities is being pursued.

C. Theological thought within the American churches has emphasized two themes, one major and the other minor. The dominant theme has been characterized as the "Protestant Ethic" supporting individual initiative and the legitimacy of worldly gain. The minor theme has emphasized the corporate nature of the church, and the corporateness of human society. The former advocates personal responsibility; the latter social responsibility. The tension between these themes is evident historically. The history of the churches' relationship to the city can be divided into four periods.

—*Pre 1860*: The churches grew with the cities advocating private virtue.

—*Social Gospel*: The churches began to recognize a responsibility for the cities, advocating social order.

—*1920-1960*: The churches grew with suburban expansion, advocating family harmony.

—*Urban Crisis*: The churches supported social protest, civil rights, self-determination.

Today, we seek a new theological and social synthesis. While the precise nature of that synthesis is not yet apparent, it will be shaped by the realities of our own time.

As our national agenda is an urban agenda, so the urban agenda is the agenda of the United Church of Christ. The theological perspective we bring to the urban agenda combines elements of prophetic fervor normed by humble confession, liberal idealism normed by the awareness of our present realities, and radical hope normed by practical response. We stand in the tension between Babylon and Jerusalem, the biblical images that highlight our potential for good or evil. It is the tension between good and evil that defines our reali-

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ty as we go about our theological task of addressing the pressing dilemmas facing our contemporary cities.

In keeping with our tradition, we look to the biblical witness to inform our present reality. As we reflect on our present, five biblical themes help to define our reality: 1) Community, 2) Compassion, 3) Justice, 4) Liberation, 5) Hope.

Community

One of the dominant themes in the Bible is the vision of community: the vision of a human community that is inclusive, caring and safe. The prophet Jeremiah addresses the exiles in a strange land: "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." (Jer. 29:7). The biblical message is consistent in its proclamation that all people of the world are interrelated—bound by the Lordship of Christ to each other, bound in our situation because of God's caring and enduring love. The prophet is absolutely correct: every person's welfare will be found in the welfare of the city because we are brothers and sisters of this earth. The ideal set before us in the biblical witness is that community is all people living together in mutual respect, caring for each other, and being morally responsible to each other. Our reality, however, in this time lies in one tension between the vision of community and our cultural and social value of individualism.

Compassion

The gospel accounts of the life of Jesus tell us very clearly what the norm for compassion is all about. Jesus spoke and acted compassionately; feeling the pain of the sick, he healed; knowing the pangs of hunger, he provided food; knowing the despair of loneliness, he became a friend. When he approached and saw the city Jerusalem, he wept, for he saw and felt the corruption, violence and despair of the people. We see the corruption, violence, poverty and despair in our modern cities; the reality glares at us, yet we stand in the tension between compassion, the willingness to feel the pain of our brothers and sisters, and apathy and detachment, that urge to avoid pain, the fear of feeling pain, the inability to weep for the afflicted.

Justice

In the biblical story, God demonstrates again and again a special bias toward the poor. God intervenes time and time again in history on behalf of the poor, the oppressed and the exploited. In the Bible, justice is the bottom line, for there is the clear recognition that the poor are poor because they don't have money. Poverty continues to exist because permission is given for those who have to get more, and to those who have not, to stay that way. We stand in tension today between our desire to do justice and our desires to make no sacrifices that would insure justice. Our desires for money and things give permission to those who have to get more, and to those who don't to stay that way. This tension is our reality.

Liberation

The biblical theme of liberation is always addressed to those who are held captive—those who are poor, exploited and oppressed. To be liberated is to have power to influence one's own life and destiny. Liberation affirms God's redeeming activity among the poor and the oppressed; liberation is

not the benevolent gift from captors who give only to use people in another way that bind them. The reality of our time, and the tension we feel, is on the one hand our desire to be liberated from the forces that bind us, and on the other hand, our fear of the liberation of others, especially when there are of a different color, of a different culture, of a different sex, or if they are mentally or physically handicapped, or all of the above, and poor. Our tensions can be defined by the problem of "differentness."

Hope

Within the biblical story, the city of Babylon is always condemned. The sins of poverty, hunger, corruption, and violence that mark the city, bring forth the wrath of God. Yet an equally dominant theme is the image of a New Jerusalem—a city in which human beings find goodness in life, a person-oriented city that shows acceptance, friendship, enough money to live freely, and a prevailing justice. Herein lies our hope, and while we do not know (and the Bible does not tell us) what God intends for our modern cities, we know that God calls us to more abundant forms of community. "Hope that is seen is not hope," says Paul. Our reality and one of our most severe tensions is created by our desire to retain what we know, what is or what has been. We want things better than they are, but not if it means changing our values and life styles. Hope in that which is unseen is eminently more difficult.

IV Policies and Programs

A. Urban strategy needs to address a set of interlocking issues that confront American society, and which intersect in the cities, where they are focused and compounded. "It is not a job or an education problem," says Richard Nathan of the Brookings Institution, speaking about minority youth unemployment. "It is all these conditions coming together in cities with huge concentrations of distressed population." Urban strategy, then, needs to speak to employment, housing, health care, Education, Environment, Transportation and Neighborhood development as well as fiscal problems of cities. In fact, the United Church has already spoken clearly on these issues through General Synod pronouncements.

1. *Employment*—The Second General Synod, in the "Call to Christian Action," calls upon Churches and their members to pray and work "For economic institutions and practices which provide meaningful work, serve human needs, eliminate blighting poverty, prevent unemployment and harmful inflation, and bring about more equitable sharing in the goods and services which our productivity makes possible."

By the Fifth General Synod, ending poverty was established as a major goal. The Synod "acknowledges God's call to the church today to assist in abolishing poverty from our land and from our world," and called for the establishment of an inter-instrumentality Staff Task Force on Poverty.

The Seventh General Synod, meeting in 1969, extended this commitment "to continue until all inequities in economic life are erased and every man may stand erect with an adequate income to meet

the needs of his family." The General Synod endorsed the anti-poverty programs and called for improvements in the public welfare and social insurance programs. By 1971, the Eighth General Synod endorsed the guaranteed annual income at a level of \$6,500 a year for a family of four. The Eighth General Synod also called for "A Marshall Plan for central cities" and once again called for immediate action, by federal, state, and municipal governments and by private industry, to provide enough jobs to eliminate unemployment."

In 1973, the General Synod identified as "just and obtainable objectives: a) extension of publicly funded social services, b) improvement and extension of food programs, c) "a return to a full employment economy, with the federal, state and local governments as employers of the last resort," and d) a guaranteed annual income program.

The Tenth General Synod reaffirmed "a full employment economy" and "a guaranteed adequate income" as objectives.

The Eleventh General Synod reaffirmed "The God-given right of all persons to useful and remunerative work, together with the responsibility to provide for themselves and their dependents."

Insofar as full employment and adequate income are focal points of urban policy, the United Church of Christ has a consistent and long standing position on these issues.

2. *Race*—A second issue of great importance to the urban scene is that of race. Here again, there is a constant record of policy statements from the General Synods. The "Call to Christian Action" of 1959 called for "the elimination of pride and prejudice from our hearts;" for the end of racial segregation and discrimination in our communities; "for the alleviation of" . . . handicaps which are aggravated by unequal opportunity and by segregation imposed by law or custom."

The Fourth General Synod, in 1963, "radically committed" the United Church of Christ to the struggle for racial justice. The Committee for Racial Justice Now was established to give leadership to the struggle to "uproot intolerance, bigotry and prejudice" and to strike down immediately the barriers which divide men (sic) on account of race."

In 1965, the Fifth General Synod reaffirmed this commitment, to racial justice in the church community and in the world. In 1967, the Synod pronouncement on Racial Justice focused more on the need of the United Church of Christ itself to be free from segregation. The Seventh General Synod, responding to the ghetto explosions of the late 1960's, established the Commission for Racial Justice and launched a two-year priority on "The Crisis in the Nation," including "action in the areas of appropriate legislation on the national, state and local levels; programs giving self-determination and self-help for the powerless; programs to help us honestly face our attitudinal and institutional

racism, programs to bring reconciliation to the black-white polarization taking place in our common life."

Church action against racism was reaffirmed in 1971, with an emphasis on combating white racism. By 1975, the General Synod combined its concern for economic and racial justice into one statement, emphasizing the inter-relatedness of the two issues. The relevance of these issues to the urban scene was recognized by calling upon local churches, associations, conferences, national agencies and instrumentalities to "invest staff and program resources in new, as well as transitional, urban church development and in urban community ministries. . ."

3. *Housing*—The 1959 Call to Christian Action in Society mentions housing in the context of race relations, specifically racial segregation and discrimination in housing. The Sixth General Synod reaffirmed the United Church of Christ's commitment to fair housing programs, and expanded the area of concern to include zoning restrictions; displacement of people by urban renewal and other public construction projects; rent-supplement funds, Model Cities programs, and public housing programs; church sponsorship of federally financed low and moderate income housing; support for minority owned and managed housing; and local rent-receivership ordinances to correct code violating apartments.

The Seventh General Synod expanded the United Church of Christ's concern in the area of housing by calling upon the churches not only to gain "competence in housing and community development" and make "greater resources available for low-income housing," but also to affect decisions about zoning, public services and transportation. Once more the interrelatedness of the issues faced in urban policy are expressed in Synod pronouncements.

In 1973, the Executive Council, acting for the Ninth General Synod, affirmed "the right of all citizens to have reasonable access and opportunity to live in decent housing as a matter of moral responsibility implicit in the Christian faith."

4. *Health Care*—From the time that the Second General Synod called for "support and expansion of necessary public services such as . . . health programs," the United Church of Christ has shown a concern for health care.

The Eleventh General Synod adopted a broad policy statement on National Health Care, which called for universal, accessible, comprehensive health care, with continuity of care. The statement specifically noted the need for health care in urban areas, and among the poor and near poor, although it included the broadest possible range of concern. The issue of health care illustrates the inter-connectedness of urban problems with broad social issues. Better health care in distressed urban

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areas will come when the broader questions of a national health policy are addressed.

5. *Public Education*—In the area of public education, the General Synod is on record with policy statements supporting integrated quality public education. The Second General Synod called for “the support and expansion of necessary public services such as schools . . .” The Fourth General Synod called for a commitment in the struggle “to get the best schooling possible, even if desegregation upsets educational tradition . . .” The Fifth General Synod declared “Integrated quality education is now essential to the achievement of racial justice and economic opportunity,” and stressed the harm done by de facto segregation to both majority and minority students. In 1967, the Sixth General Synod reaffirmed the Fifth General Synod mandate for integrated quality education as “even more urgent.” Concern was expressed for “policy and practice in general education, public and private,” and the Synod expressly called for “more federal public school aid for large congested cities and depressed areas . . .”

The Seventh General Synod focused even more urgently on urban education, speaking of “the plight of children of the poor, trapped in deprived areas, robbed of power and opportunity for a full life,” and stating flatly, “Our educational system has failed major segments of the population.” There is no doubt about the importance of education in urban life, nor about the Synod’s basic concern.

Other Positions Impacting Urban Policy

When we turn to other aspects of urban policy, we find General Synod Statements “endorsing the principle of community organization as an instrument of community action for the purpose of giving the powerless a voice in society . . .” (General Synod VI). The same General Synod also adopted a resolution calling for programs “that will lead to resolution of their problems by the poor—such programs include home ownership, education, business, health and welfare services, law enforcement, and community organization.”

General Synod has also shown a particular concern for the development and strengthening of minority churches, specifically black churches. Although this program is not limited to urban churches, the concern for “transitional churches,” expressed by General Synod VIII in 1971 certainly impacts the urban policy of the denomination. General Synod IX declared “the need for priority to a variety of Black Ministries supported by the whole church; . . . and called upon the instrumentalities “to continue, develop, facilitate and implement this priority. . .”

The implementation of this program has had an impact on the urban policy of the United Church of Christ, because of the concentration of minority people in the cities. In fact, there is hardly an aspect of modern social life that is not interwoven with the process of urbanization.

The 1964-66 Emphasis on “The Church and Urbanization”

Recognizing the complex interweaving of issues vital to the Christian Faith, which intersect and are focused in the

urbanization process, the United Church of Christ adopted a two year emphasis on urbanization at the Fourth General Synod in 1963. The emphasis recognized the fact of growth in metropolitan areas, but it emphasized even more the spread of a new world view which has permeated even the family living on a farm isolated from neighbors. Industrialization, complexity or organization, fragmentation of human life, changing tastes and values, mass communications, mechanization and rapid transportation are all mentioned as part of the urbanization process in the “Proposal for an Emphasis on the Church and Urbanization.”

The Urbanization Emphasis Proposal names “racial conflicts, economic struggles, unequal opportunities for employment and housing” as part of the urbanizing process. The proposal stated:

“the emphasis is not meant to give answers where none are available. It is rather to witness to the conviction that throughout the United Church of Christ, *we must begin* to respond positively to a world radically changed by urbanization.”

The record of General Synod demonstrates a beginning of involvement with the issues of urbanization, before, and after the special emphasis. It is a record that calls for continued commitment, understanding through involvement, and new action.

- B. During the 16 year period since the urban emphasis was launched, the churches, conferences and instrumentalities have become increasingly involved with urban issues. In the intervening years, for example, the Commission for Racial Justice has been created, and through its efforts new programs have been initiated in the areas of criminal justice, racism, youth and employment. The Office for Church In Society regularly monitors a wide-range of issues which bear on urban life. The work of the BWM has taken account of urbanization throughout the world. The proportion of BWM funding for urban work in various countries now ranges between 6 percent and 40 percent.

Within the BHM, a number of programs are conducted in urban areas:

- Ministers of Metropolitan Mission, in cooperation with conferences, are supported in 10 cities.
- The BHM Urban Project, a long-range planning effort with churches, mission agencies and conferences has been initiated in eight cities.
- The BHM helps support settlement house work and city missionary societies in several areas.
- Ecumenical outreach programs are funded in five cities.
- Community organizing efforts are supported in 10 cities.
- New churches are now being established in seven cities.
- Church in transition projects are being supported in cities.
- A wide variety of activities are conducted in response to urban-related issues.

The conferences of the UCC are generally involved in urban work. A survey of the conferences reveals that,

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within the 14 conferences responding, over 100 urban programs were being supported. These programs range from a few large institutional-types to a greater number of urban coalitions to a still greater number of smaller, local projects. The most frequent activities mentioned by the conferences include ethnic and racial ministries, community organizing, metropolitan strategy, provision of direct services to the aging and youth-related programs.

On the basis of reviewing all this work, it is estimated that UCC-related organizations spend directly over \$1,000,000 annually on the urban agenda.

V *An Assessment of Cities Today*

It is widely recognized that American cities are undergoing extensive transition. At the April, 1978, UCC Consultation on American Cities, participants from across the country met to discuss the future of the church's urban mission. The variety of major issues identified included: (1) employment, (2) housing, (3) poverty, (4) racial and ethnic justice, (5) health care, (6) education, (7) neighborhood integrity, (8) environmental concerns, (9) crime, (10) corporate responsibility, (11) transportation, (12) city and metropolitan area boundaries, (13) economics and inflation and (14) continuing provision of city services. But behind the addressing of specific issues lay a prevailing sense that a new era had come. Gone was the aura of intense optimism for progressive change that has characterized such meetings in the past. Instead, the mood reflected an awareness that the cumulative results of recent changes in urban life demand a qualitatively different approach to urban mission and ministry. Some of these changes are:

- Between 1970 and 1977, the population growth rate in metropolitan areas declined to 4 percent as compared to a 15 percent national average.
- Economic growth, the basis for urban budget building, has slowed; and economic vitality has shifted from the Northeast to the Sunbelt.
- Service enterprises have replaced industries as predominant employers in central cities. The Northeast region lost almost 14 percent of its manufacturing jobs between 1960 and 1975, while the Southern region gained 41 percent.
- Major manufacturing, commercial and financial concerns are locating outside of the central cities, resulting in a loss of steady employment for low-skill urban workers.
- Municipal governments, facing escalating costs and a diminished economic base, must impose higher taxes per capita costs resulting in tax delinquency and abandoned properties.
- An increasing percentage of urban fiscal support is being supplied from a variety of federal sources.
- Capital from multi-national interests is being invested in selected central city areas, attracting affluent residents to new or rehabilitated housing. Older, unemployed and minority populations are once again being pushed to the peripheries of the cities.

—Economic class lines are becoming more sharply defined and upward mobility is slowing. A new, floating population of underemployed urban residents has been created.

—The black population in cities did not grow significantly between 1974 and 1977, although the number of blacks in suburbs increased by 34 percent. The nation's Hispanic population is concentrated in metropolitan areas.

—The majority of the nation's poor, 62 percent, live in cities as compared with 42 percent of the general population.

—Housing deterioration and destruction in the cities is not being compensated for by new housing. Housing and maintenance costs are escalating at a rate that exceeds the high rate of inflation.

A high rate of urban unemployment, especially among minority youth, is a harbinger of future unrest.

Fundamental questions surrounding the concern for adequate energy sources in urban areas and protection of urban environments severely challenge the assumptions upon which past policies and activities were based.

While these generalizations do not apply in equal measure to all cities, they do reflect clearly identifiable trends in urban areas.

Meanwhile, alternatives to traditional forms of urban structure are being developed in cities across the nation. Portland, Oregon is experimenting with an area-wide metropolitan government. In Minneapolis, Minnesota, private and corporate funds have been invested in developing a new concept for public areas. Neighborhood Planning Boards in New York City have allowed citizen participation in urban planning policy-making.

From the depths of the current situation an ancient question emerges: What is the city in its essence? Put differently, what is the potential of cities for the life of a nation or a people? Have American cities, throughout their histories, failed to develop their potential because of a deficiency in our national polity? It remains for us to redefine the situation in ways that point to new directions for action.

VI *Rationale*

The following rationale are numbered to correspond with the recommended actions.

1. We have evidence of increased interest in and resources available to urban programs. These programs must be continued and, where possible, expanded. The Ohio Conference in particular has developed a coordinating model outlined in "The Presence and Mission of the United Church of Christ in Metropolitan Areas."
2. The church must fully establish itself in the cities to a degree commensurate with the size and intensity of urban life.
3. The church's real presence in the cities is often lost in a competing maze of governmental and

municipal programs. The UCC must renew its mission to the end that the afflicted are provided with both help and hope; to the end that the city's character and its capacity for civic benevolence are strengthened.

5. National policies with regard to cities will require, in the years ahead, extensive evaluation and fresh conceptualization. The UCC can make a contribution to this task. A pronouncement by the General Synod should focus on the future of cities in a changing economic, political and social context.

VII *Resources and Financial Implications*

All churches, conferences and instrumentalities should examine their budgets in light of the need for urban mission. It is expected that financial resources for fulfilling the recommendations will be provided through the regular budget procedures.

VIII *Recommendations*

The General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon:

1. UCC churches, conferences and instrumentalities to continue, expand and coordinate urban mission.
2. The UCBHM to continue and expand efforts on behalf of church developments in our cities.
3. The UCBHM to work with conferences in selected urban areas on new models of urban mission.
4. The instrumentalities of the UCC to work on relevant national issues that impact urban life, particularly employment, inflation and energy.
5. The UCBHM to convene a broadly representative urban task force which will study in depth a) the nature of the city and its potential for the nation, b) the various public and private attempts to renew the city, c) the feasibility of national urban planning and d) other pertinent urban issues; and which will prepare a pronouncement on the future of urban life in America, with appropriate proposals for actions, to the Thirteenth General Synod.

19. RESOLUTION ON REAFFIRMATION OF FREEDOM OF CHOICE REGARDING ABORTION

Ms. Stavenger referred the delegates to Advance Materials, Section II, page 125, and indicated that the Section recommendation involves a change in title to: Resolution on Reaffirmation of Freedom of Choice Regarding Abortion. Ms. Stavenger moved the adoption of the resolution and called on Ms. Martha Hodgkins (WI) to speak to the resolution. Ms. Hodgkins reminded the delegates of the actions of previous General Synods and particularly of the Eighth General Synod which said that responsible position concerning abortion should be based on a consideration of the rights of the individual woman, the potential child, her family and society, as well as the rights of the fetus. The issue is one of freedom. The resolution reaffirms the right of freedom of choice.

Mrs. Margaret Jodun (PC) was recognized and moved to amend the resolution by substituting the following words for paragraph 3: "The General Synod affirms the fact that since life is less than perfect and the choices that people have to make are difficult, abortion may sometimes be considered; in such considerations, abortion should not be regarded as a

means of birth control, but rather as a choice that entails serious psychological, emotional and ethical ramifications." There was discussion and upon being put to a vote the Moderator declared the motion lost on a standing vote of 306—Yes; 328—No.

The Rev. Gary R. Weber (IL) was recognized and moved to amend the resolution by adding a new paragraph 5 in the Resolved section to read: "allow to those persons counselled in family planning the full range of choices in relation to the pregnancy." There was discussion and upon being put to a vote the Moderator declared the motion was lost. It was:

79-GS-77 VOTED: the Twelfth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Reaffirmation of Freedom of Choice Regarding Abortion as amended:

Resolution: Reaffirmation of Freedom of Choice Regarding Abortion

The Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirms the theological statements of the Eighth, Ninth and Eleventh General Synods on the matter of freedom of choice on abortion, and recognizes the position statements calling attention to supportive services for people involved in making these choices and in responsible family planning, as enumerated in paragraphs two through six, page 78, of the minutes of the Ninth General Synod, and in points 2-8, pp 132-133 from the Eighth General Synod Statement on Freedom of Choice Concerning Abortion which are as follows:

2. The General Synod calls on pastors, members, local churches, Conferences, and instrumentalities to provide programs of counseling and education as to the meaning and nature of human life, sexuality, responsible parenthood, population control, and family life.
3. The General Synod calls on pastors, members, local churches, Conferences, and instrumentalities to support and expand programs of family life and sex education in schools, agencies for adult education, communications media, and other public institutions; and to encourage the extension of information and services related to contraception and instrumental to the prevention of undesirable pregnancies and the achievement of wholesome family life.
4. The General Synod calls on pastors, members, and local churches to offer counseling opportunities and supporting fellowship for persons facing problems of unwanted or ill-advised pregnancies; to assist such persons in making wise, ethical decisions regarding their problems; and to help them find professional assistance if necessary, as through existing non-commercial consultative services.
5. The General Synod urges the UCBHM Council for Health and Welfare and its member agencies to work for the expansion of family planning services in the communities they serve and to initiate new programs that can serve as models to other hospitals and institutions.
6. The General Synod requests the UCBHM Division of Health and Welfare and the Division of Christian Education to provide educational resources, consultative services, and training for constituents who wish to sponsor programs which are consistent with this General Synod position.
7. The General Synod calls on pastors, members, health and welfare committees, the Division of Health and