

Chairperson, for the continuation of the Section's report. Mr. Fortt moved the adoption of the Resolution on Support for Conscientious Objector to War and called on Marshall E. Linden (CONN), Chairperson of the small group that considered the resolution to speak to the report. Mr. Linden indicated the changes in the resolution and urged its adoption.

It was

81-GS-81 VOTED: The Thirteenth General Synod adopts as revised the Resolution on Support for the Conscientious Objector to War.

#### RESOLUTION ON SUPPORT FOR THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR TO WAR

WHEREAS, the Bible, in such passages as Isaiah 2:4, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares" and Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers" exhort us to be peacemakers and peacekeepers, and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ, third General Synod in 1961 adopted a resolution, affirmed and amended in 1971, which said in part:

"... the United Church of Christ desires to hold within its fellowship in love all those whose consciences are bound to Christ — those who accept the call to military service as well as those who refuse to participate in it,"

THEREFORE, The Thirteenth General Synod reaffirms the ministry of the United Church of Christ pertaining to conscientious objections;

The Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all members and churches to support with prayers, love, and counsel, members and non-members who are conscientious objectors to war.

#### 15. RESOLUTION ON OPPOSITION TO THE RESUMPTION OF THE PRODUCTION OF WEAPONS OF CHEMICAL WARFARE BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Mr. Fortt moved the adoption of the Resolution on Opposition to the Resumption of the Production of Weapons of Chemical Warfare by the United States Government as revised and called on Michael Simmons (CAC) to speak to the resolution. Mr. Simmons indicated the changes in the resolution and urged its adoption. It was

81-GS-82 VOTED: The Thirteenth General Synod adopts as revised the Resolution on Opposition to the Resumption of the Production of Weapons of Chemical Warfare by the United States Government.

#### RESOLUTION ON OPPOSITION TO THE RESUMPTION OF THE PRODUCTION OF WEAPONS OF CHEMICAL WARFARE BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

##### *Background*

Over 1,300,000 casualties were caused by chemical agents during World War I, including 100,000 deaths — over half Russian — and 100,000 incapacitations. The 1925 Geneva Protocol — not ratified by the United States until 1975 — bans first use of chemicals but does not prohibit the manufacture of stock. After World War II, in which chemical weapons were not used, the Un-

ited States stockpiled a large arsenal of nerve gas and mustard gas, artillery projectiles, mines and bombs, much of which is still fully serviceable. Production stopped in 1969 when the Nixon Administration decided not to add to this supply.

The production and possession of biological weapons was renounced unconditionally by the United States in 1969 and is banned by the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972. Biological weapons, based on germs or toxins, are distinguished from chemical weapons and are a separate matter.

After an eleven year halt, the United States moved toward resuming the production of lethal chemical weapons in 1980 when Congress appropriated \$3.15 million for a factory in Arkansas. Although an additional \$19 million for equipment was denied, the issue is being considered again this year. On May 21, 1981, the United States Senate, by vote of 50 to 48, approved the appropriation of \$20 million to equip the new binary weapons facility. Research further indicates that the Administration intends to lift the 1975 ban on production of chemical weapons, declaring them essential to the national defense, and to request supplementary funding later this year, for inclusion of production of binary nerve gas in the budget for the 1982 fiscal year. Over a period of several years, the cost of chemical weapons procurement could reach \$4 billion.

The nerve gas weapons to be produced at the Pine Bluff, Arkansas plant are called binary because each weapon contains two sealed containers of relatively non-toxic chemicals which react to make lethal nerve gas when mixed in flight in an artillery shell or bomb. The nerve gas weapons now stockpiled contain the same lethal chemical in a single unit. While in principle binary weapons are safer than existing weapons, there has, in fact, been no serious accident in the manufacturing, transporting, or storage of the existing stockpile since procurement began about 30 years ago.

There is also a question about how safe the binaries really are. Although the production of binary chemical weapons is supposedly safer than past methods of production, the two components used in the proposed binary are, in fact, individually quite toxic. One component, DE, is as toxic as strychnine; the other, QL, causes gastric distress breathing difficulty, and skin rash.

The Central Pacific Conference, at its 1980 Spring Assembly, passed a resolution opposed to the production, research and development, stockpiling and use of all forms of lethal or permanently debilitating war gas, including the "binary weapon."

##### *Biblical and Theological Rationale*

The Christian faith proclaims God's caring and forgiving love for each human being, and declares that humankind has a responsibility for careful, sensitive stewardship of God's creation. Jesus' admonition is to love our enemies, and Paul advises the Romans to overcome evil with good. Chemical weapons constitute a misuse of the elements of creation. They can only be used in a generalized, indiscriminating man-