

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-

ner, which causes maximum damage to the young, the elderly, the infirmed, the innocent, and the unprotected. Christians are called to be agents of reconciliation in a divided, broken world. The resumption of chemical weapons manufacturing will reverse the progress made over the last twelve years in negotiating a permanent termination of the use of chemical weapons. It will be a setback to the work of reconciliation.

Other Ethical Reasons to Oppose the Resumption of the Manufacture of Chemical Weapons

1. Such production would complicate or undermine negotiations to ban the use of chemical weapons which have been underway with the Soviet Union since 1976.
2. America's allies have consistently opposed the use of chemical weapons, having first destroyed their own stocks and objected to our use of chemical weapons on their soil.
3. The program will be expensive, with the ultimate cost estimated to approach \$4 billion.
4. Weapons of chemical warfare are contrary to the spirit of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which the United States finally ratified in 1975.
5. Chemical weapons would be more effective against unarmed civilians than against adequately protected military personnel and, if used in war, could easily kill tens of millions of persons.
6. Their production could easily lead to a new chemical arms race, in which more and more nations would produce chemical weapons, terrorists would have them at hand, and escalation of both numbers and sophistication would lead to ever greater risks.
7. Production and testing carry with them risks of damage to the environment and danger to human and animal life.
8. There is an absence of either definitive or conclusive evidence that the Soviet Union has either manufactured or used lethal chemical weapons since the 1969 moratorium.

The Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ

Calls upon the United States Congress to defeat any attempts to appropriate funds for equipping the binary chemical weapons production facility at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, or any other facility, and expresses its opposition to the resumption of lethal chemical weapons production;

Directs the Office for Church In Society to continue to advocate this resolution to the President of the United States and to members of Congress and

Calls upon conferences and local church members of the United Church of Christ to express their support for this resolution to the President of the United States and to their representatives in the Congress.

16. RESOLUTION ON THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO BECOME A PEACE CHURCH

Mr. Fortt moved the adoption of the Resolution on the United Church of Christ to Become a Peace Church as revised and called on Mary Jo Romberger (PSE) to speak to the resolution. Ms. Romberger indicated the changes in the resolution and urged its adoption. It was

81-GS-83 VOTED: The Thirteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on the United Church of Christ to Become a Peace Church.

RESOLUTION ON THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO BECOME A PEACE CHURCH

Summary

We affirm the biblical identity and historical rootage within the United Church of Christ which stands for justice and peace. We call for the Thirteenth General Synod to deepen its conviction of this rich heritage of involvement in the mission of justice and peace by boldly declaring our commitment to peace as a basis for our life together and our proclamation in deed and word to the whole world.

Background

The United Church of Christ has declared its commitment to peace in previous denominational settings through encouraging the reduction of military programs and preventing the building and use of nuclear weapons.

The traditional stand of the UCC has called for its members to be peacemakers and to work diligently for justice, human rights, and peace within the family of nations.

The church has been warned in the Bible: "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:15-16 R.S.V.)

We are also instructed to love one another even as Christ loved us. Jesus allowed himself to be killed rather than have us die instead.

WHEREAS, the Bible strongly directs us as Christians to work diligently to settle disputes peaceably, justly, and fairly; and

WHEREAS, the UCC responds positively as a body to scriptural direction from God; and

WHEREAS, the UCC has a history and tradition of love, acceptance, and inclusion that directs it toward working for peace;

THEREFORE, the Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

1. Calls upon all segments of the UCC to become a peace church;

2. Encourages all nations to convert resources used for military purposes to peaceful uses for the benefit of humanity;

3. Calls upon the Office of Church In Society to make this known to the world and to work in concert with other peace organizations toward these ends;