

ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

resources and timely news during this biennium to the churches and Conferences regarding human rights through existing publications and to take other such appropriate actions to advance the cause of basic human rights in South Korea through social and political initiatives; and

3. Calls upon the government of the United States to make the termination of human violation a clear condition for any continuation of our military and economic aid.

3. RESOLUTION ON FREEDOM TO TRAVEL TO AND FROM CUBA

VOTED 83 6 EC 11a: The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod, receives and adopts the resolution "Freedom to Travel To and From Cuba" with the changes proposed by Section 1:

Background

In 1979 the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted a resolution which called for increased relations between the United Church of Christ and the Cuban churches through two-way visits, exchange programs, and the sharing of resources, and for full diplomatic and trade relations between the governments of Cuba and the United States.

Since then, United Church of Christ study seminars have been held annually in Cuba, U.C.C. youth have participated in a Cuban Workcamp, a Cuban missionary has served in one of our Conferences, Cuban youth have spent time visiting U.C.C. churches, and several Conferences have developed close ties with the churches and Christians of Cuba.

Today, however, because of tightening restrictions placed by the U.S. upon travel to Cuba, it is increasingly difficult for Christians to travel to that country. On April 20, 1982, the Treasury Department issued a new regulation, under the authority of the Trading with the Enemy Act, which was intended to prevent travel to Cuba by prohibiting travel-related "transactions."

The Helsinki Accords of 1975 affirmed the universal right to travel freely. As Christians, we also affirm a basic right: for Christians to travel anywhere in God's world, and to maintain contact and fellowship in the faith with fellow Christians despite any human and temporal political or economic barriers.

Biblical Perspective: Christ prayed that we might be one in him (John 17:20). Paul traveled through his world strengthening all believers (Acts 18:23). Christians need to bear witness to this unity by encouraging one another in the faith.

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ over the past four years in response to the resolution of the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, has developed deepening ties with churches and Christians in Cuba; and

WHEREAS, the present Administration has sought to restrict travel by U.S. citizens to Cuba, thereby disrupting the opportunity for U.S. Christians to travel and maintain fellowship with Christians in Cuba;

THEREFORE, the Executive Council, acting ad interim for

the Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

1. Expresses its opposition to the restriction on travel to and from Cuba imposed by the present Administration;
2. Calls upon the members, congregations, Conferences, Instrumentalities, and agencies of the United Church of Christ to protest these restrictions to the President, the Department of State, the Treasury Department, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the House Foreign Affairs Committee;
3. Urges the Cuban government to permit reciprocal travel for all Cuban citizens who wish to visit the United States for the same purposes;
4. Calls for an increase in two-way visits and exchange between the churches of the U.S., the United Church of Christ, and the Cuban churches;
5. Calls upon the United Church of Christ to use its ecumenical influence to encourage involvement of other communions in this effort.
6. Encourages the United Church Board for World Ministries to enter into intentional dialogue with the Cuban churches through the Ecumenical Council of Cuba and the Ecumenical Seminary of Matanzas concerning the theology of mission and the mission of the church.

4. RESOLUTION ON THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS RACE

VOTED 83 6 EC 12a: The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod, receives and adopts the resolution "The Middle East Arms Race" with the changes proposed by Section 1 and amended:

WHEREAS the Middle East Arms race constitutes a major threat to regional and world peace; and

WHEREAS this arms race has made the Middle East, arguably the most volatile region of the world, now the most heavily militarized region of the world, with the highest per capita expenditure for arms; and

WHEREAS the United States and the Soviet Union are the major suppliers of destructive and sophisticated arms to Middle Eastern nations; and

WHEREAS we are called to be in solidarity with Christians of the Middle East who seek to carry out the ministry of reconciliation;

The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod:

1. Calls upon the President of the United Church of Christ to communicate to the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church our concern about the threat the Middle East arms race poses to world peace and to propose that our churches join in a joint witness to our governments on this issue; and
2. Urges the U.S. Government to work toward a multi-lateral agreement among all arms supplying nations to limit or freeze arms transfers and/or military aid to Middle Eastern countries; and
3. Encourages those nations in conflict to seek diplomatic solutions to Mid-East problems and that other inter-

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ested nations seek to mediate diplomatic solutions to the problems which divide the contending countries; and

4. Recommends that the President of the United Church of Christ convey this message to our State Department and the Administration of the U.S. and to the U.S.S.R.; and
5. Requests the President of the United Church of Christ to convey to the Presidents of the Middle East Council of Churches deep sadness over the grievous loss of life caused by armed conflicts in the area and our resolve to move our government toward a more positive role in the region.

5. RESOLUTION ON PLANT CLOSURES

VOTED 83 6 EC 13a: The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod, receives and adopts the resolution "Plant Closure" with the changes proposed by Section 3:

WHEREAS, by the Fall of 1982, the nation-wide unemployment rate was the highest in 40 years and unemployment was being considered the number one problem, numerous plants have closed, and there have been massive layoffs;

WHEREAS, many of the closings by large corporations are not made because of operating losses, but because investment elsewhere will give a slightly higher return;

WHEREAS, people long accustomed to job stability find themselves on the streets, their medical insurance and other benefits ended, but their house mortgage and car payments continuing and studies show that medical problems, such as heart attacks and mental health problems increased dramatically among such persons;

WHEREAS, large numbers of local community people—supermarket clerks, insurance agents, and lawyers—find themselves without work and perhaps with less compensation than the laid-off plant workers who may receive some severance pay;

WHEREAS, the tax base to finance the schools, public services, public health and relief systems is eroded by the loss of tax monies from the departed industry and the lower income base of community;

WHEREAS, Church shareholders have introduced resolutions this year at the Annual Meetings of U.S. Steel, Caterpillar, and Allis Chalmers requesting policy statements or studies concerning plants that they have closed; many states are considering legislation; and in 1982, California Assemblywoman Maxine Waters introduced AB 2839, requiring prior notice, adequate termination pay, community compensation, and a good faith offer by the corporation to see the plant about to be closed;

The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod, affirms the right of everyone to employment, and supports efforts to avert or ameliorate the effects of plant closings through adequate prior notice, adequate compensation to laid-off employees and the community, and the development of options to enable employees and communities to purchase the closed plants.

6. RESOLUTION ON ANTI-SEMITISM

VOTED 83 6 EC 14a: The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod, receives and adopts the resolution "Anti-Semitism" with changes proposed by Section 3 and amended:

WHEREAS, the problem of anti-Semitism continues to burden all of our lives; and

WHEREAS, Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Jew, calls us to "a ministry of reconciliation" (II Corinthians 5:18); and

WHEREAS, Jesus quoted from Leviticus (19:18): "You shall love your neighbor as yourself"; and

WHEREAS, the holocaust is one example of the way in which we are capable of perpetrating violence against our Jewish and other neighbors;

THEREFORE, The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod:

1. Condemns anti-Semitism in all its forms;
2. Encourages local churches to set aside a time for public remembrance and repentance for the ways we as Christians have contributed to Anti-Semitism and other forms of violence against other groups;
3. Urges local pastors and congregations to plan joint services, study opportunities and community programs with Jewish congregations, when and where possible; and
4. Calls upon clergy, laity and seminarians to educate themselves and others about our Hebrew heritage.

7. RESOLUTION ON CIVIL DEFENSE

VOTED 83 6 EC 11a: The Executive Council, acting ad interim for the Fourteenth General Synod, receives and adopts the resolution on "Civil Defense" with the changes proposed by the Committee on Peace and amended:

WHEREAS, God has entrusted human beings with the care and stewardship of the earth and its resources; and

WHEREAS, God calls us to be peace makers, breaking down dividing walls of hostility and replacing fear with hope and justice; and

WHEREAS, the Reagan Administration has proposed a \$4.2 billion, seven-year nuclear civil defense program which misleads American citizens into thinking that the United States could survive and win a nuclear war; and

WHEREAS, the program ignores the probability of mutually assured destruction; and

WHEREAS, the civil defense program unrealistically assumes that 150 million Americans could be moved safely from 400 "high risk" urban areas; that there would be three to seven days to evacuate the population; that tens of millions of people who could not be accommodated in government shelters would have the time and resources to construct and supply their own shelters; and that the secondary effects of a nuclear explosion (windstorms, fires, etc.), ecological damage, long-term radiation, and ozone layer depletion would be minimal; and

WHEREAS, the total cost of the program may reach \$10 billion at a time when the domestic needs of the American people for jobs, food, shelter, education, energy and