

Ethical Consideration:

It is in the context of our stewardship that we must set the special problem of hazardous wastes that surfaced so dramatically in this decade. Toxic chemicals, spent nuclear fuels, hazardous substances, air pollutants—a variety of by-products of modern technologies now pose serious health risks to both present and future generations.

To date, we are not fully cognizant of the potential health hazards of toxic wastes. Unless immediate and stringent measures are taken, irreversible damage may be done. State and federal laws have not sufficiently developed to cope with this present and future threat. Enforcement of existing law has become a national crisis.

If the by-products of industry continue to produce hazardous waste at the present increasing rate, we can expect dangerous amounts of toxic substances polluting land, water, and air. Land resources, including aquifers, are threatened. Presently, “at least 50% of the U.S. ground water, the sole source of drinking water for half of all Americans is either contaminated or threatened with contamination.”

Facing up to these environmental issues will be costly. When jobs are so desperately needed environmental concern causes tensions within communities. We must be sensitive to this. However, we are accountable to future generations as well as to present needs.

The Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopts the following action plan:

1. Calls upon its members and all elements of its corporate life to pursue courses of action which promote environmental protection and social justice.
2. Urges the Office for Social Responsibility in Investments of the United Church Boards to encourage policies and develop guidelines for church agencies and churches that will consider the by-products of the corporations in which they invest, and will help them monitor their existing investments as to corporate responsibility.
3. Calls upon the Office for Church in Society to include in its agenda concerns, which it monitors for church attention and legislative action, national environmental policy including the handling of hazardous wastes.
4. Urges appropriate Instrumentalities to engage in educational programs that will raise the consciousness of our churches and members to the seriousness of environmental issues. This should include educational materials directed toward both children and adults.
5. Calls on its member conferences and churches to investigate the adequacy of environmental policy and protection at state and local levels of government.

25. RESOLUTION ON SUPPORT OF VOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR DISABLED PERSONS

Mr. Curry continued the report of Section II, referred the delegates to the New Business document, Part II, page 32, to the Section report and moved the adoption of the Resolution on Support of Voting Accessibility for Disabled Persons. There was no discussion, and it was

83 GS 81 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Support of Voting Accessibility for Disabled Persons.

RESOLUTION ON SUPPORT OF VOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR DISABLED PERSONS

WHEREAS, 1983 has been established as the Religious Year of the Disabled; and

WHEREAS, 1983 through 1992 has been declared as the Decade of the Disabled, and

WHEREAS, the National Committee on Persons with Disabilities of the United Church of Christ strongly advocates for the right of the Disabled; and

WHEREAS, equal access to voting polls is a necessary step toward independent living;

THEREFORE, The Fourteenth General Synod supports and urges support on all levels, legislation that guarantees voting accessibility for disabled persons;

Urges the delegates of the Fourteenth General Synod to take back to their Conferences, Associations and local churches, the need to support such legislation.

26. RESOLUTION ON SUPPORT OF NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Curry continued the report of Section II, referred the delegates to Advance Materials V, pages 144-145, to the Section report and moved the adoption of the Resolution on Support of New Church Development. There was no discussion, and it was

83 GS 82 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Support of New Church Development.

RESOLUTION ON SUPPORT OF NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, The United States has been and shall continue to experience a major migration of its population from the northern and mid-western states to the southern and western regions; and

WHEREAS, Ninety percent of the United States population growth has occurred in the southern and western regions between 1960 and 1980; and

WHEREAS, The United Church of Christ now has only 18% of its congregations in the western and southern regions; and

WHEREAS, During its twenty-five year history the United Church of Christ has experienced a net loss of approximately fifteen hundred churches and over one-half million members; and

WHEREAS, Between 1960 and 1980 the population of the United States has increased by 24% while the membership of the United Church of Christ has declined by 16%; and

WHEREAS, The strength of the United Church of Christ's ministry in all areas is directly related to the strength and viability of its institutional base as a truly national church;

The Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ strongly urges that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, through its Division of Evangelism and Church Extension, re-affirm and strengthen its commitment of the mission of new church development throughout the United States with special emphasis in the southern and western regions.

The Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopts as a mission goal the care and strengthening of the institutional church through the development of new churches in the southern and western regions of the United States.

27. REPORT OF SECTION III CONTINUED

The Moderator called on Mr. Donald H. Kludy (SOC) Chairperson, to continue the report of Section III.

28. RESOLUTION ON REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE JUSTICE DEMANDS OF JAPANESE AMERICANS

Mr. Kludy referred the delegates to Advance Materials VI, pages 20-21, to the Section report, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Reaffirmation of Support for the Justice Demands of Japanese Americans, and called on Margaret Ulery (IL) Chairperson on the small group that considered this resolution, to speak to the motion. There was discussion.

The Moderator recognized David C. Smith (PNE) who moved to amend the motion by the deletion of the first of the first paragraph in the resolved section. There was discussion. A motion to terminate debate on the motion to amend and the main motion was adopted. Upon being put to a vote, the motion to amend the motion was lost. It was

83 GS 83 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Reaffirmation of Support for the Justice Demands of Japanese Americans

RESOLUTION ON REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE JUSTICE DEMANDS OF JAPANESE AMERICANS

WHEREAS, the Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ in 1981 passed a resolution endorsing the redress and reparations of the gross injustices committed against the Japanese Americans who were held prisoners by their own country under Executive Order 9066; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians after 1 1/2 years of study and hearings, has issued its findings entitled, "Personal Justice Denied." The study concludes there was no military or security justification for the mass relocation and internment of 120,000 Japanese American citizens during World War II. Rather it identifies the causes of detention as racism, war hysteria, and the failure of political leadership; and

WHEREAS, the damage done by our country to its own citizens was deep and scarring, taking its toll in heavy economic losses, interruption of families' lives and careers, the curtailment of personal liberties, and the shame and stigma of a people who know their own innocence; and

WHEREAS, our country was also scarred by this chapter of darkness in its history;

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ commends the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians for the completion and reporting of its findings; and

The Fourteenth General Synod, while recognizing that our Japanese American brothers and sisters can never be fully compensated for their suffering, urges that Congress act

immediately on the recommendations of the Commission, including:

1. That living victims of the incarceration be awarded a compensation of \$20,000 each, and
2. That the United States Government offer a formal apology for the indignity imposed on Japanese Americans who were involuntarily imprisoned, and
3. That a presidential pardon be granted for an estimated of 15 to 25 individuals who were convicted of violating a curfew imposed on people of Japanese descent for refusing to report for relocation.

29. RESOLUTION ON ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION FOR NON-DANGEROUS CRIMES

Mr. Kludy referred the delegates to Advance Materials VI, pages 6-7, to the Section report, moved the adoption of the Resolution on Alternatives to Incarceration for Non-Dangerous Crimes, and called on Edith O'Donnell (CT) Chairperson of the small group that considered this resolution, to speak to the motion. Ms. O'Donnell indicated the change in the title and in the content of the resolution. The Moderator indicated that time had expired for the Section report and called for a vote on the Resolution. It was

83 GS 84 VOTED: The Fourteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution on Alternatives to Incarceration for Non-Dangerous Crimes.

RESOLUTION ON ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION FOR NON-DANGEROUS CRIMES

WHEREAS Jesus presents us with a message of love and concern, exemplified by his caring not only for beggars and the sick, but also for tax collectors, who were assumed to be stealing from their people; and

WHEREAS our faith teaches us that healing of a community must involve restitution for the evil done, to restore shalom, peace in the community (Exodus 22:5-6); and

WHEREAS our criminal justice system generally does not permit the offender and victim in a non-dangerous crime the alternative to settle differences between themselves, but leaves the victim without recompense, and sentences the offender to a prison term so that neither victim nor offender receive justice, and wholeness is not restored, and injustice piles upon injustice, and

WHEREAS, some alternative to incarceration for non-dangerous crimes that includes restitution will offer some portion of justice to the victim, help reduce the overload of prison facilities and give the offender a way to be re-established as a part of the community;

THEREFORE, the Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ supports increased use of restitution and mediation practices in order to allow victim and offender to face each other, and thereby, with the help of appropriate personnel, work out a reconciliation that will foster healing in the community; and

The Fourteenth General Synod supports greater use of community service, work release, educational release, furloughs, and other alternatives to prison; and calls upon the Commission for Racial Justice to develop strategies for Conferences and local churches to assist with implementation; and that this resolution be distributed by the Fourteenth General Synod to the governors of every state, to President Ronald Reagan, and to state legislatures.