

**13. ANTOINETTE BROWN AWARD RECIPIENTS**

The Moderator called on Ms. Marilyn Breitling, Coordinator of the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, who introduced the recipients of the Antoinette Brown Award: Rev. Beatrice Weaver McConnell, pastor of Trinity Reformed UCC, Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Rev. Gretchen L. DeVries, missionary in Japan. Ms. Breitling told of the celebration on Sunday evening for the gifts of laywomen and called to the stage the women who were honored at that celebration.

**14. RESOLUTION, "ON THE PACIFIC BASIN INITIATIVE"**

The Moderator called on Ms. Celsa Ayala-Coloma, Chairperson of Committee #18, who moved that the Fifteenth General Synod affirms the action of the Hawaii Conference in lifting these issues before General Synod Fifteen and recommends that the Hawaii Conference, in conjunction with the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Pacific and Asian Ministries (PAAM), develop specific proposals for action to be brought before the Sixteenth General Synod.

Rev. Donald Asman made a friendly amendment to add the words: "establish a study commission to" in the next to the last line, between "(PAAM)" and "develop." The friendly amendment was accepted.

There was a discussion and the resolution was

85-GS-61 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Pacific Basin Initiative."

**PACIFIC BASIN INITIATIVE**

WHEREAS, The Pacific Basin is fraught with controversies which have grown to crisis proportions largely because of the benign neglect of American agencies, both public and private, operating in the area; and

WHEREAS, The following three issues are moving to a more critical point each day and therefore call for immediate attention from all parties concerned, including the United Church of Christ and its homeland and global instrumentalities:

ISSUE 1: The tuna fishing industry. Tuna has been the primary source of subsistence for the people of the Pacific since the beginning of time. But recently American policy unilaterally defined tuna as a migratory species, thus allowing larger U.S. fishing fleets to fish within the 200-mile economic zones of island nations. Consequently, this practice is depriving these islands of the basic source of livelihood. The Nathan parable in the Old Testament is recreated daily by the U.S. fishing fleets before the helpless people of the Pacific.

ISSUE 2: Nuclear testing and dumping of nuclear wastes. The people of the island nations are victims of the harmful effects of nuclear testing and dumping of nuclear wastes by big powers such as the United States, France and Japan. The plight and suffering of the residents of Bikini are testimonies to this dreadful practice. Even the coconut trees of Eniwetok were declared radioactive for the next 30 years and the floating coconuts awashed in the neighboring shores have been declared health hazards. The potential breaking of nuclear waste containers at deep-sea levels could transform the Pacific Basin into a caldron of dead undersea creatures.

ISSUE 3: The developing business community in the Pacific. There is growing interest in the developing of a Pacific Basin Community to enhance economic development in the Pacific, an organization similar to the European Common Market. Current economic indicators support the forecast that the next century will be the "Century of the Pacific". Already, in 1982, United States trade with the Pacific Basin countries reached a total of \$165 billion compared to \$115 billion with the U.S.-European community.

WHEREAS, the 163rd Aha Pae'aina of the Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ voted to take the initiative in addressing the above-mentioned issues and to take appropriate actions to involve the whole United Church of Christ;

THEREFORE, the Fifteenth General Synod affirms the action of the Hawaii Conference in lifting these issues before General Synod Fifteen and recommends that the Hawaii Conference, in conjunction with the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Pacific and Asian Ministries (PAAM), establish a study commission to develop specific proposals for action to be brought before the Sixteenth General Synod.

At the conclusion of the vote, the meeting was turned over to the Assistant Moderator, Ms. Janeece L. Dent.

**15. RESOLUTION "RACIALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE AGAINST PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND ASIANS IN AMERICA"**

The Moderator called on Rev. Peggy McClanahan, Chairperson of the Committee, who referred to Advance Materials II, page 162-164.

The Committee amended the resolution to insert the words:

"Pacific Islanders and" in front of "Asians" in the title and in paragraphs 2 and 3, and to add, "Fifteenth" before the words "General Synod" in the "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED" paragraph.

85-GS-62 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Racially Motivated Violence Against Pacific Islanders and Asians in America."

**RACIALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE AGAINST PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND ASIANS IN AMERICA**

In recent years there has been a resurgence of racially motivated violence directed against Asians in the United States, with the most publicized incident being the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin, a Detroit Chinese American. Chin was celebrating his upcoming wedding in a night club when an unemployed auto worker and his stepson abused him with racial epithets, at the same time apparently thinking that Chin was Japanese accusing him of causing unemployment in the auto industry. Later they chased Chin down and beat him to death with a baseball bat. The judicial deposition of this case, in which the two men received a sentence of three years probation and a \$3,000 fine, caused an uproar among Asian-Americans and many others throughout the country. Consequently, a federal jury convicted one of the men on civil rights counts.

The Vincent Chin case has received national attention. However, it is only one of a growing number of violent anti-Pacific Islanders and Asian incidents. An alarming number of cases of racially motivated muggings, beatings, armed assaults, shootings, verbal abuse, and vandalism have been

reported in local media, community agency reports and public hearings in places like Boston, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Dallas and several California cities.

### ROOT CAUSES

Current incidents of racially motivated violence against Asians in America can best be understood when set in historical and sociological perspective. The truth is, such violence is not new in the history of Pacific Islanders and Asians in America. We are merely witnessing the resurfacing of a problem that has been present since the mid-nineteenth century. And this resurfacing is related to the present-day economic, cultural and political turmoils of the country.

Much of the agitation against Asians is a result of the current crisis in the restructuring of the American economy. The country is changing from a manufacturing to a service and information society, with important developments in high-tech fields. But service jobs are generally ill-paid, the information sector is not labor intensive and high-tech jobs require high skill levels. Thus tens of thousands of highly skilled steel workers are now unemployed or competing with unskilled minority and women workers for jobs in places like McDonald's. A great part of this restructuring of the economy is a result of the shift of manufacturing enterprises to lesser developed countries in order to take advantage of cheap labor sources. But rather than addressing these issues, many white Americans are accusing Asia (particularly Japan) and Asian and Hispanic immigrants for disrupting the economy and general well-being and taking jobs away from "real Americans." Vincent Chin was beat to death by a former auto worker who said, "It's because of you [expletive deleted] that we're out of work." Many of the calls for restriction of immigration reflect the sentiment, if not the fierceness, behind this charge.

Finally, racism itself is a cause of anti-Asian discrimination and violence. Contemporary white American attitudes towards Asians have been shaped by two centuries of misperceptions, stereotypes, and assumptions of Anglo American cultural, social and political superiority. Jingoism and nativism have gone hand in hand with racist sentiments towards Asians and other minorities in America. While there may have been some gains in race relations and civil rights over the years, in recent days the ability of America to be racially just and pluralistic is being put to the test again. With shifts in immigration patterns, more and more non-white, non-European groups are entering the country and changing its racial/ethnic face. There is more noticeable diversity than ever, and it appears that many white Americans are troubled by this. They find the changes in their once racially homogeneous, familiar and controlled communities threatening. They are overwhelmed by new sounds, foods, cultures and lifestyles. For many, the only response is hostility and violence. In times of economic well-being, perhaps tolerance (and even acceptance) of racial diversity might prevail. In times of economic turmoil, it is clear that racial intolerance increases. Racial/ethnic groups know that such intolerance has always been present in American society. Tough times in the nation merely exacerbates the problem. The violence directed against Asians is not an aberration in an otherwise pluralistic and just society, but is rather the symptomatic eruption of deeper problems.

### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1) Education. There is a need to educate the American public about Asians in America—e.g. their culture and history.

There also needs to be education about racism and race relations in America. The schools are particularly important here, with faculty, administration and students needing this education. In some places, Asian Americans are working with the schools to develop cross-cultural programs. The media must also be educated, since many of the stereotypes and misunderstandings about Asian Americans is communicated by newspaper articles, cartoons, television shows and radio broadcasts. With both the schools and the media, the employment of Asians can be part of the solution.

2) Law Enforcement. There must be vigorous enforcement of the law in all cases of violence. There might also be consideration of stricter laws and penalties for racially motivated violence. In addition, there needs to be a reporting system in order to collect data and monitor the nature and scope of racially motivated violence. Such law enforcement responses have been proposed, but not enacted yet, in California.

WHEREAS, the resurgence of racially motivated violence against Asians in the United States is a growing concern that demands immediate attention,

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

1. Declares its opposition to racially motivated violence in any form and calls upon all UCC persons/churches to speak out against this sin;
2. Requests the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and Commission for Racial Justice, working in cooperation, to bring the issue of racially motivated violence against Asians in America to the attention of conferences and local churches, utilizing the background paper as one resource.
3. Urges conferences and associations to take initiatives in finding ways to address racial violence against Asians in their respective regions. This should include both addressing the root causes and supporting the victims of such violence.
4. Urges all agencies and instrumentalities to work cooperatively with, and support the efforts of various local, regional and national community, governmental and ecumenical groups to monitor, analyze and resolve the issue of racially motivated violence.

No financial implications.

### 16. REPORT OF THE CLERGY IN CRISIS WORKING GROUP

The Moderator called on Rev. Jeffrey Nichols, Chairperson of the Committee, who referred to Advanced Materials II, page 21 and page 54-57, and Appendix 3. Mr. Nichols said the committee recommends that the Fifteenth General Synod receive the Report of the Clergy in Crisis Working Group with a number of amendments.

Mr. Nichols moved that the Fifteenth General Synod receives the Report of the Clergy in Crisis Working Group and adopts its recommendations with the consideration of further items. There was no discussion.

85-GS-63 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod receives the Report of the Clergy in Crisis Working Group and adopts its recommendations:

#### REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE CLERGY IN CRISIS WORKING GROUP

At the Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, the Proposed Pronouncement on Clergy in Crisis pre-