

9. PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

The Moderator, called on Mr. Andrew White of the Maine Conference who clarified changes in Committee #29's report. Mr. White moved on behalf of the Committee that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution, "Action for Peace in Central America". After discussion,

85-GS-73 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Action for Peace in Central America."

ACTION FOR PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

The Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

Calls upon the President of the United States to:

- 1) Reinstate bi-lateral negotiations with Nicaragua;
- 2) Withdraw vetoes of multi-lateral loans;
- 3) Abide by World Court rulings;
- 4) Stop covert and overt aid to Contras;
- 5) Use his office to support the Contadora countries' peace making efforts which include the call for—
 - withdrawal of all outside military advisors from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua;
 - free elections in all the above countries;
 - barring all arms imports to the above countries;
 - a verification commission;
 - barring all foreign military exercises;
 - stopping arms smuggling;
 - closing all foreign military bases;
 - ending support for guerilla movements;
- 6) Cease pressure on Costa Rica to reinstate an army and to abandon its almost forty years of neutrality.

Calls upon the Congress of the United States to:

- 1) Oppose all overt or covert aid to Contras;
- 2) End all military maneuvers in Honduras;
- 3) Investigate all U.S. military construction expenditures in Honduras;
- 4) Impede the involvement of United States mercenaries in Central America;
- 5) Investigate the use by the Defense Department of humanitarian aid which the Comptroller General of the United States questioned in June, 1984 as possibly in violation of United States law;
- 6) Investigate the use of private funds for the Contras to determine if such usage is in violation of United States law;
- 7) Implement a plan for phased withdrawal of United States Military assistance to Central America;
- 8) Promote economic justice and agrarian reform;
- 9) Condition all aid to Central America on demonstrated protection of human rights;
- 10) Encourage dialogue between the El Salvadoran government and the opposition (FMLN-FDR), and between the Sandinistas and the Contras in Nicaragua;
- 11) Urge the Salvadoran government to prosecute those military and parliamentary members involved in political assassinations;
- 12) Maintain the prohibition on funding of police equipment and training for democracies such as Costa Rica;
- 13) Prohibit visits to Central American ports of nuclear-armed battleships and thus uphold the Treaty of Tlatelco which restricts nuclear material transport and storage in the Caribbean basin.

Calls on world leaders to support the Contadora peace process.

Directs established instrumentalities and requests recognized instrumentalities and other national bodies to utilize publications and networks of the United Church of Christ to engage in education and advocacy on Central America through the promotion of:

- biblical reflection and study resources on Central America;
- study tours of Central America with church-related organizations;
- speaking tours in the United States by Central Americans sponsored by the United Church Board for World Ministries and/or ecumenical bodies.

Calls upon the Coordinating Center for Women to lift up the need to unite women across the Americas in the struggle for justice and peace, since the civilian population (primarily women and children) are severely affected by armed conflicts such as indiscriminate aerial bombardments in El Salvador.

Calls upon United Church of Christ members to:

- 1) Engage in biblical reflection and study on Central America;
- 2) Take a study tour of Central America and support others who do so;
- 3) Pray for peace and justice in Central America;
- 4) Give prayerful consideration to signing the Pledge of Resistance (a commitment to protest legally or engage in non-violent civil disobedience in the event of a major escalation of United States military involvement in the region) and/or support those who do sign the pledge;
- 5) Study the Contadora peace proposal;
- 6) Pray in weekly worship services for the success of the Contadora peace proposal;
- 7) Promote legislation consistent with this resolution;
- 8) Write to the four Contadora governments encouraging and supporting their work.

Financial Implications: None

10. IN SUPPORT OF SANCTUARY FOR CENTRAL AMERICANS

The Moderator called on Ms. Cara Beth Zortman, (PC) who moved on behalf of Committee #29 that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution, "In Support of Sanctuary for Central Americans." Ms. Zortman spoke to the motion and there was further discussion,

A friendly amendment was made to change the paragraph that begins "Deplores" to read:

"Deplores the June 26, 1985 United States District Court for the State of Arizona ruling that, in effect, confirmed that the government has the power to infiltrate churches and gather information about church people through paid government informants and surreptitious taping of conversations, meetings, and worship. (This is the first court ruling which allows information so gathered to be used to indict church people)."

Replaces the period at the end of the next paragraph with a comma and adds: "and calls on the United States Congress and the United States Attorney General to prohibit government agencies from infiltrating churches."