

8. COMPASSION FOR ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER IMMIGRANTS

Mrs. Delores Foster moved that the Fifteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution, "Compassion for Asian and Pacific Islander Immigrants." Rev. Talitha Arnold, OCLL Chairperson moved a friendly amendment as follows:

Add: "Be it further resolved, cross out 'and' after 'of these ministries;' and insert—'by aiding the Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants and refugees already in this country and by helping provide resettlement of opportunities for refugees, especially close relatives still in holding camps. Mrs. Foster accepted the above as a friendly amendment.' "

85-GS-82 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Compassion for Asian and Pacific Islander Immigrants."

COMPASSION FOR ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER IMMIGRANTS

WHEREAS, the Biblical injunction in Leviticus (19:33-34) compels us that "when a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself and remember that you were once strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.";

WHEREAS, the United States Immigration and Nationality Act was amended in 1965 to allow reunification of families which were primarily from the Eastern Hemisphere, and since that liberation in the law, the Asian and Pacific Islander population in the United States reached more than 3.7 million in 1980, an increase of 1.5 million over the 1970 census figure; and

WHEREAS, seven states—California, Hawaii, New York, Illinois, Texas, Washington and New Jersey had—100,000 or more Asian and Pacific Islander persons in 1980; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court in the Graham vs. Richardson decision in 1971 enjoins all citizens that "aliens as a class are a discrete and insular minority for whom heightened judicial solicitude is appropriate"; and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ New Initiatives in Church Development projects have started to address some needs of these newcomers; and

WHEREAS, people from Asia and the Pacific Islands entering the United States encounter significantly more cultural, language, and racial barriers to full acceptance in our society than did European immigrants before them; and

WHEREAS, the losses of homeland, family, dignity, professional and trade status, and natural; and community leadership are deeply experienced, often engendering a sense of rejection and hopelessness;

THEREFORE, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ renews the commitment of the Thirteenth General Synod of greater involvement in aiding immigrant resettlement by strengthening and expanding the ministries with Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants; and

FURTHER, the Fifteenth General Synod calls upon congregations of the United Church of Christ to be encouraged to become supporting communities of these ministries; by aiding the Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants and refugees already in this country and by helping provide resettlement opportunities for refugees, especially close relatives, still in holding camps;

FURTHER, the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Office for Church in Society and Commission for Racial Justice, to develop strategies and program on mission, working in cooperation with other national bodies, conferences, associations and local churches to support and empower these immigrants to meet their self-defined needs.

Financial Implications: None.

9. CALL TO ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THE HOSTAGE CRISIS

The Moderator introduced Rev. Gordon Stearns, Chairperson of Committee #28 who then introduced new business, "The Call to Action in Response to the Hostage Crisis." Mr. Stearns moved adoption of this call to action.

Ms. Paula Crady moved a substitute motion in light of the release of the hostages. Following discussion, Ms. Susan Briggs (NH) moved an amendment: "That we urge our government to help negotiate release of other hostages, such as the Shiites and Palestinians in Israel." The amendment was defeated.

It was voted to replace the main motion with the substitute motion.

85-GS-83 VOTED: The Fifteenth General Synod adopts the substitute motion, "A Call to Action on the Hostage Crisis."

A CALL TO ACTION ON THE HOSTAGE CRISIS

The Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ expresses its joy over the release of the thirty-nine American hostages held captive in Lebanon. We request the Middle East Office of the United Church Board for World Ministries convey our gratitude to those in Lebanon and Syria whose patient negotiations made the release possible.

We are aware, however, that sixteen Americans and Europeans, including Terry Anderston, a graduate of Iowa State University, the Rev. Benjamin Weir of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Father Lawrence Jenco of Joliet, Illinois, remain captive in Lebanon, having been kidnapped in Beirut at different times over the last sixteen months. We pray that their captors will be moved by compassion to restore them to their families. We ask the President of the United Church of Christ to express our concern and sympathy to the families of those remaining in captivity in Lebanon.

We urge members of the United Church of Christ to write the congressional representatives and the Secretary of State, Mr. George Schultz, reminding them of this unresolved hostage crisis and asking that all diplomatic, non-violent means be pursued to attain the release of these persons.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS FOR THE HUNGARIAN MINORITIES IN ROMANIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND FOR THE GERMAN REFORMED PEOPLE IN THE U.S.S.R.

Mr. Stearns, Chairperson of Committee #28 referred to Advanced Materials Section II, pages 13 and 14. Mr. Stearns moved adoption of the Resolution "Human Rights for the Hungarian Minorities in Romania and Czechoslovakia and for the German Reformed People in the U.S.S.R." Two changes were made to the resolution as it came from the committee as follows:

paragraph 5, line 1, delete "similar patterns of" paragraph 8, line 3, change "Soviet" to "Socialist".