

visit South Korea at the earliest possible date to show support for the struggles of the South Korean people.

9. RESOLUTION "PEACE AND THE REUNIFICATION OF KOREA"

Mr. Walther moved the recommendation of Committee 13 that the Sixteenth General Synod adopt the Resolution "Peace and the Reunification of Korea."

Mr. Richard Guhl made the following motion to amend - Delete the heading "United States Responsibility"; and add a paragraph before THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, "Of course, the division of the Korean peninsula is not solely due to the action or fault of our nation. The Soviet Union, for instance, blocked United Nations - supervised free elections in the North in the years immediately following the Second World War. In addition, the D.P.R.K. launched an unprovoked, unjustified attack on the essentially defenseless, newly-formed nation of the Republic of Korea in 1950. These wounds to the peace of the world have also created fear and mistrust. Nevertheless, we believe that when mustard seeds of new life blossom, we should nurture these opportunities;" and substitute in paragraph THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED "and forgiveness" for "turning around"; and "all parties" for "we."

Following discussion the amendment was defeated.

87-GS-75 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Peace and the Reunification of Korea."

Peace and the Reunification of Korea

Background

The desire of the Korean people, whether they live in South Korea (Republic of Korea/R.O.K.) or North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea/D.P.R.K.), is to restore the unity that was theirs for more than a thousand years before the end of World War II. In 1945 the nation was divided, its people separated into two increasingly hostile and heavily armed states, their enmity sparked and sustained by the global confrontation of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The churches and the government of the United States must hear the plea of the Korean people for reunification, and help to revise attitudes and policies which may free them to pursue their national unity without external impediment.

We believe that by the grace of God this division need not be permanent, that this people can have its unity restored. This will require the sustained love, concern, and dedicated work of people in many parts of the world in support of the efforts of the Korean people themselves in both North and South.

Since early 1984, there have been some encouraging new openings. There have been renewed official contacts between North and South Korea, the provision and acceptance of emergency assistance by the North to flood victims in the South, followed by official conversations regarding economic and humanitarian issues, culminating in the first exchange of visits between separated family members in North and South since the Korean War.

We see signs of hope for Korea which we, as Christians, believe are the work of the Holy Spirit. This is a moment, we believe, of kairos, a welcome, propitious, critical time to support our sisters and brothers in the whole of Korea as they seek to take their destiny in hand. This is a time for decisive commitment by the churches to help build a climate in North East Asia which would be conducive to pursuing those new opportunities.

New initiatives have also been taken among the churches.

South Korean churches identified reunification as a priority concern in early 1984, asserting their right and responsibility, as well as that of the people at large, to participate in the national discussion on reunification. A Unification Study Committee has been created by the National Council of Churches in Korea to this end. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches convened a consultation in the Fall of 1984 at Tozanso, Japan, on "Peace and Justice in North East Asia: Prospects for Peaceful Resolution of Conflict," which focused on Korean reunification with full knowledge of the two Korean governments. While recognizing that reunification is to be achieved by Koreans themselves, a major international ecumenical endeavour is seeking to mobilize support and establish favorable conditions for the Korean effort.

The Korean people, subjects of their own history, are responsible for and capable of reunifying their nation. There is a deep will among Christians in both North and South Korea to contribute jointly to finding ways to achieve national reconciliation, justice, independence, and peace in reunification. History shows that for unification to be achieved peacefully and with justice for all Koreans, and for it to be lasting, a climate must be created in the region and in the world which will allow Koreans to approach their responsibility without external pressures or constraints.

Christians in the various countries involved directly with Korea—Japan, China, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S.A. chief among them—must each play a supportive and nurturing role if Koreans are to succeed in achieving their common aspirations.

United States Responsibility

The situation of Korea is a sharp reminder to Christians in the U.S.A. of our own brokenness and division. We are deeply conscious of the role our nation has played in creating the division of Korea and in maintaining and deepening it. Our government, military, and economic interests each bear a share of the responsibility. But the churches too have much to confess.

We confess that as churches of this nation, we have often allowed ourselves to be motivated more by fear of societies different from our own than by our vocation to be reconcilers. We confess our unwillingness or incapacity to understand the role of the Christian faith in a society like North Korea, or to comprehend sufficiently the witness to the Gospel of the South Korean churches in their society.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sixteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, in a spirit of repentance, turning around, seeking to avoid the repetition of the sins of the past, and to heal the brokenness to which we have contributed, in support of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, our partner church, joins with the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America to offer the following recommendations:

- (1) We pledge to work for healing and reconciliation in Korea by
 - A. Recognizing that to contribute to the reunification of Korea, we must work to eliminate from our own nation the fear which is fed by the misuses and misunderstandings of national security, and the enmity which blurs our vision of the humanity of the other; all of which make it difficult for us to learn from the mistakes of the past and to play a positive international role.
 - B. Studying and seeking to understand the tragedy of a divided Korea and how U.S. Christians might better

support efforts to heal those wounds.

- C. Supporting efforts to assist divided families to be reunited with their loved ones while this generation is still alive; sporadic contacts with North Korea who have had extremely limited exposure to the Christian community there.
- (2) We call for renewed efforts to work for peace and justice in Korea by
- A. Recognizing that the barriers of decades of division and hostility can only be overcome through the full, open participation of the Korean people, North and South, in the process of reunification, not merely through negotiation at high levels of government.
 - B. Continuing to press for progress in direct negotiations between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. in order to reduce tensions between the two superpowers whose bilateral relations directly affect the political climate of the world and of this region. The agreement signed at the Geneva Summit meeting in November 1985, regarding air safety in North East Asia is a recognition of a degree of mutual responsibility and could provide some basis for further agreements regarding peace and security in the area.
 - C. Urging the United States Government to respect the Peace Constitution of Japan and to refrain from applying pressures on Japan to assume a regional military role.
 - D. Pressing for the negotiated withdrawal of all U.S. and U.S.S.R. nuclear weapons in or targeted on Korea; and press for the creation of a nuclear-free zone in North East Asia.
 - E. Calling for the suspension or substantial reduction in scale of military exercises in both sides of Korea and their eventual cessation as a way of eliminating gestures which may be interpreted as provocative.
 - F. Calling for a mutually balanced reduction of the military forces of both the D.P.R.K. and the R.O.K. and a commitment by all parties not to introduce new levels of weaponry into the peninsula in order to enhance peace and security and to allow for a phase withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea.
- (3) We call upon the United States Government to affirm formally that it is a policy goal of the United States to support the peaceful reunification of Korea.
- (4) We urge the United States Government to
- A. Refrain from hostile and inflammatory rhetoric about the D.P.R.K., with the hope that this would reduce the use of hostile and inflammatory rhetoric by both parties in Korea.
 - B. End restrictions on direct people-to-people contacts between the D.P.R.K. and the U.S.A., to enable increased contacts between church, cultural, and academic sectors of the two societies.
 - C. Help facilitate contact and reunion of Koreans resident in the U.S.A. with separated family members in the D.P.R.K.
 - D. Create a U.S. interests section in a friendly neutral nation's embassy in Pyongyang and to invite an equivalent to D.P.R.K. representation in Washington, with the hope that this would lead to similar steps between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K.
 - E. Extricate itself from its commanding role in R.O.K. military affairs and its dominance over the political and economic life of the nation in order to achieve a climate in which productive talks could take place on the basis of mutual respect for the independence of the other.
 - F. Withdraw from commanding the U.N. peace-keeping operation at the Demilitarized Zone in Korea in favor of

mutually acceptable neutral nations, in order to free that world body more adequately to fulfill its current mandate and explore appropriate alternative roles.

- (5) End the war and to negotiate a comprehensive peace settlement in Korea as a step toward the reunification of the peninsula.

10. RESOLUTION "OPPOSITION TO DECLARING ENGLISH AS THE EXCLUSIVE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE UNITED STATES"

The Moderator introduced Ms. Patricia Eggleston who moved The Sixteenth General Synod adopt the committee's Resolution "Opposition to Declaring English as the Exclusive Official Language of the United States." Following discussion it was

87-GS-76 VOTED: The Sixteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Opposition to Declaring English as the Exclusive Official Language of the United States."

Opposition to Declaring English as the Exclusive Official Language of the United States

WHEREAS, in Christ, the United Church of Christ is called to the ministry of reconciliation;

WHEREAS, our Christian faith compels us to practice inclusiveness/hospitality in the laws and practices of the American society;

WHEREAS, our prophetic faith mandates justice for all. Justice involves equal access to services necessary to a safe and healthy life, including adequate and speedy police and fire protection and emergency medical services;

WHEREAS, many communities are currently proposing propositions on English only as the "official language" even though English language is already the language of the United States of America. The status of English as the primary language is secure and will not change by these propositions. The danger is that they will change English from a primary to an only language;

WHEREAS, the American spirit historically has allowed for cultural transitions into the mainstream of our society. Historically, it has proven that, given time, immigrants and their children do learn the English language;

WHEREAS, the movement to introduce a proposition declaring English only as the "official language" is increasing throughout the country, and while such a declaration seems harmless and innocent its effect could be to eliminate the public use of any non-English language and lead to discriminatory legislation;

WHEREAS, the divisiveness of this movement has already been felt in the states of California, Florida, and Texas. Before its passing in California, a member of the California branch of "The U.S. English Only Movement" requested the Public Utilities Commission to prevent telephone companies from providing bilingual services, except in cases of emergencies at the expense of the general ratepayers;

WHEREAS, the movement fosters a spirit of xenophobic suspicion of those for whom English is a second language; and,

WHEREAS, on May 15, 1987, the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ passed a Resolution opposing "English Only as the Official U.S. Language" movement;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Sixteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

1. Goes on record strongly opposing any proposition that will