

MONDAY MORNING

Ms. Jean Good Parker, retired receptionist of the Connecticut Conference; Mr. John Potts, retiring Secretary, Church Buildings, UCBHM; the Rev. Jack Batten, Stewardship Council; Ms. June Grimley, receptionist and secretary to the Division of Education and Lay Ministries, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, Ms. Miriam Gundry, retired executive secretary for Southwest Conference; Ms. Martha Jordan, secretary for the New Hampshire Conference; the Rev. Richard Hoblin, pastor in the Wisconsin Conference.

Mr. Sherry asked General Synod participants to remember with deep appreciation and affection those persons who have given long service with the United Church of Christ and chose not to relocate to Cleveland.

9. COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Moderator asked Ms. Pat deJong (IOWA) to lead a moment of community building.

The Moderator recognized Ms. Linda Turner, Agenda Committee, who thanked the Rev. Hollis Wilson for his assistance. General consent was given to limit each report to 25 minutes.

10. RESOLUTION "THE RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD"

Moderator Gosselink called on Ms. Joy Miller who presented the report of Committee 11. Ms. Miller moved the adoption, ratification, and implementation of the Resolution "The Ratification and Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

91-GS-23 VOTED: The Eighteenth General Synod adopts the Resolution "The Ratification and Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

THE RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Background

The United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, unanimously adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under this Convention children are assured of the right to life, to a name and a nationality, to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. They are protected from physical and mental abuse, unsafe labor practices, and forced participation in armed conflict. Signatory states are obligated to make every effort to improve primary and continuing health care and must provide at least basic education for all children. Special attention is focused on children who are refugees, disabled, or members of minority groups.

WHEREAS, the Second General Synod adopted a Call to Christian Action in Society, a comprehensive statement on social responsibility, including support for United Nations human rights actions; and the General Synod in a Pronouncement on Human Rights called the Church to press for an end to human rights violations and the implementation of a consistent and responsible human rights policy world-wide; and the Fourteenth General Synod in its Resolution on Renewed United States Support of the United Nations as Our Best Investment for a Just Peace urged ratification of all Human Rights Covenants, Conventions, and Protocols Adopted by the United Nations;

WHEREAS, The Convention on the Rights of the Child, unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, is the culmination of over sixty years of effort by the international community to secure the most positive climate for growth and prosperity for the world's children, with the United States having played a key role in the process of its drafting;

WHEREAS, fundamental structural change is needed to rectify the injustices and violations currently suffered by children through, for example:

- a. conditions of poverty, oppression, and underdevelopment which result in the deaths of fourteen million children every year, two-thirds from preventable causes with existing health care knowledge and technology and additionally result in stunted physical development and permanent handicaps;
- b. victimization through sexual and labor exploitation, homelessness, war, and the tragic consequences of family disintegration; and
- c. deprivations stemming from discrimination based on race, sex, or religion.

WHEREAS, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the first binding international human rights treaty developed especially for children, holds the potential to serve as a significant step toward making the dream of "a world fit for children" a reality.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod recognizes the survival, protection, and development of children as a priority responsibility of the whole world community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod urges the United States Administration to endorse and the United States Senate subsequently to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a matter of urgency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod calls on congregations and members of the United Church of Christ to contact their Senators, seeking their active support of the ratification process, and following ratification to advocate forcefully that their members of Congress work for the Convention's full implementation, including support of actions to:

- a. ease the crippling burden of international debt, which contributes greatly to the massive poverty of children in Third World countries;
- b. utilize peaceful means of conflict resolution in order to protect children from the ravages of war;
- c. undertake bold steps to protect and reclaim the environment as the heritage for our children and succeeding generations' development;
- d. allocate adequate funds to undergird programs in the US and abroad addressing health, education, and development;
- e. ensure the participation of women in the entire range of social governance and decision making.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Eighteenth General Synod, calls on the instrumentalities and agencies of the United Church of Christ to recognize the rights of children as an integral dimension of the Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace Priority, and requests the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, United Church Board for World Min-