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from and about other nations, particularly developing nations, such programming to encompass artistic and entertainment programming as well as news and information;

3. Support freedom of movement for journalists of every nation, so that they may report freely and from first-hand observation;
4. Urge Conferences and Instrumentalities to work with U.S. companies through such groups as the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility on share holder actions to persuade U.S. Companies to respect nations' attempts to protect their cultural sovereignty;
5. Integrate sustained work for global communications justice into current peace and justice advocacy agendas, particularly those of the Board for World Ministries and the Office for Church and Society;
6. Enable the Board for World Ministries working with partner churches and ecumenical agencies to study the impact of global communications on developing nations and to develop joint strategies to counter negative effects of such impacts;
7. Request the Office of Communication, the Office for Church and Society, and the Board for World Ministries to provide research and information to citizen advocate groups on the process for participating in governmental proceedings, public policy development and rule-making in the communications arena; and
8. Request the Board for World Ministries to urge partner church bodies, as well as UNESCO, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other similar groups to place more emphasis on funding, on training and on technical assistance for communication in developing nations.

Subject to the availability of funds.

9. RESOLUTION OF WITNESS ON "UNITED STATES OBLIGATION TO CLEAN UP HAZARDOUS WASTES AND TOXIC CONTAMINATION AT FORMER MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES"

Moderator Taylor called on the Rev. Bob Sandman to present the work of Committee Eleven. Mr. Sandman thanked a number of committee members and called the attention of the delegates to the appropriate packet of information. Mr. Sandman spoke of the work of Committee Eleven and moved the adoption of the Resolution of Witness "United States Obligation to Clean

Up Hazardous Wastes and Toxic Contamination at Former Military Bases in the Philippines." Mr. Sandman spoke in support of the resolution and discussion followed.

Ms. Laura Draffen (MO) moved the previous question and the Twentieth General Synod voted to close debate.

95-GS-45 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod adopts the Resolution of Witness "United States Obligation to Clean Up Hazardous Wastes and Toxic Contamination at Former Military Bases in the Philippines."

RESOLUTION ON "UNITED STATES OBLIGATION TO CLEAN UP HAZARDOUS WASTE AND TOXIC CONTAMINATION AT FORMER MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES"

Background

Fact Sheet

Hazardous Waste and Toxic Contamination At Former U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines'

1. The U.S. maintained a military presence in the Philippines from 1898 until 1992. The presences of U.S. military bases in the Philippines was authorized by and subject to the military bases agreement of 1947. The Philippines' unique geography made the bases key to U.S. military's forward deployment of its military operations in Asia. The two major U.S. military bases in the Philippines, Subic Bay naval and Clark air bases, together accounted for more than 250 square miles of land. Clark air base was the biggest U.S. military facility outside the United States.
2. Originally for 99 years, the bases agreement was amended in 1966 and the term reduced to 25 years to end in September 1991.
3. In 1991, when the basing agreement was to terminate, the U.S. renegotiated with the Philippine government to continue its military and naval bases operations for 10 more years with a new basing agreement. However, the Philippine Senate rejected the U.S. proposed new bases treaty on the ground that it violated constitutional anti-nuclear provisions and the conduct of an independent foreign policy.
4. The major eruption of Mt. Pinatubo hastened the withdrawal of the U.S., leaving a badly damaged Clark air base and stripping Subic of infrastructure that could have facilitated its conversion to a civilian ship repair facility.
5. However, before the final U.S. withdrawal in November 1992, the U.S. and Philippine militaries signed an access agreement which allowed the U.S. port visits by its nuclear-capable warships and for joint training exercises, despite the anti-nuclear provisions of the Philippine Constitution and the rejection of the bases

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treaty. The access agreement was not subject to legislative scrutiny and was not approved by the Filipino people.

6. As the U.S. left the bases, bilateral aid was immediately cut by 50%, and military aid fell from \$100 million to \$25 million.

7. The military presence had contributed to the increase of prostitution, the spread of AIDS, and drug use. It created a social problem in the presence of thousands of Filipino-American children fathered by American servicemen and abandoned by their American fathers who have denied any responsibility for their children's continued support.

8. Moreover, the U.S. military left behind a deadly legacy of environmental damage and toxic contamination: toxic and hazardous wastes, unexploded munitions, untreated sewage, airborne asbestos, and contaminants in the water tables. What follows are a few examples of how deadly that legacy can be:

- Children play in fields where unexploded munitions are buried. Children have already been killed;
- the people living and working on that land grow rice in former water treatment ponds. In many areas, the water is oily;
- in the garbage dump sites, toxic chemicals and medical wastes are mixed with paper and plastic, which are a source of livelihood for scavengers;
- toxic and hazardous waste in this area could spread to wider areas through the food chain and water tables, through factories and housing sites on contaminated soil, and through materials sold by scavengers for food;
- because so little is known about what was left behind, the risks of pursuing economic conversion of the base-lands are simply too great to be taken lightly; the effect of toxic contamination on the people may not show until 20 to 30 years later.

9. In January 1992, a U.S. Government Accounting Office report, *Military Base Closures: U.S. Financial Obligations in the Philippines*, admitted that contaminated sites had been identified at both Subic and Clark; management of hazardous waste in both bases did not comply with U.S. standards, as required by the U.S. Government even for operations in foreign countries; since no soil and water testing had been conducted in said contaminated areas, the extent of the damage was not known.

10. The basing agreement with the Philippine government did not impose any well-defined environmental

responsibilities upon the U.S. either while it operated the bases or for cleanup upon withdrawal. The agreement did not require the U.S. to repair or correct damages from any cause or to return the bases to their original condition.

11. To cap it all, according to the GAO report;

... The United States and the Philippines have concluded relinquishment agreements that include "hold-harmless" clauses. The clauses hold the United States harmless from any and all actions, claims or expenses that could arise after relinquishment of a base. This type of provision appears to cover claims for environmental damage as well as other claims.

Question: assuming the relinquishment agreements were relatively recent ("concluded" after the new treaty was rejected by the Philippine Senate in 1991) and were not part of the original base agreements, how could the Philippine government have ever agreed to the hold-harmless clauses?

12. Under pressure by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and a network of other church development, public health, scientific and solidarity organizations, the Clinton administration has begun to take a positive stance to resolve the issue. In June 1993, the U.S. Department of State announced that the U.S. sought to leave a "positive legacy" in the Philippines.

13. In August 1993, the U.S. agreed to release to the Philippines documentation on suspected toxic and environmental damage to the former bases. Initial documentation has been turned over.

14. On September 23, 1993 Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) called for the convening of a joint task force to investigate the extent of contamination at the former bases and to identify appropriate cleanup actions.

15. Currently under study by the Clinton administration is UUSC's suggestion of a joint task force to include relevant counterpart agencies of the U.S. and the Philippine government, and community organizations, environmental groups and other non-governmental organizations (NGO) to:

- understand the environmental data released;
- determine the extent of contamination;
- review options for addressing contamination;
- develop methods to deal with the public health problems associated with military toxic contamination.

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The Philippines has never tackled the scope of pollution caused by toxic waste and environmental damage left by the U.S. military. U.S. cooperation is needed in training, technical assistance and technology transfer to ensure that proper cleanup takes place.

Urgent Action Needed Now!

A letter writing campaign, networking with environmental groups, and community involvement strategies, supporting the initiatives of Senators Lugar and Inouye, and suggestions outlined by the UUSC to Congress and Senate members and to President Clinton are urgently needed.

¹ United States General Accounting Office, *Military Base Closures: U.S. Financial Obligations in the Philippines*, January 1992 (GAO/NSIAD-92-51); single copies may be obtained free of charge by calling (202) 275-6241. Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, *UUSC Backgrounder: "The Philippines: Toxic and Hazardous Waste at Former U.S. Military Bases,"* December 1993. This summary, together with the subsequent UPDATE, was compiled by Church Network On the Philippines (CNOP) of the San Francisco Bay Area, c/o Graduate Theological Union, 2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley, CA 94709. Tel. (510) 649-0652. Paragraph numbers are for quick reference only. The UPDATE is in a diary format, so that diary entries of an earlier date (such as initial conclusions, plans or expectations) are subject to change or correction in subsequent diary entries as events evolve and unfold. Sources of the UPDATE entries are cited in an attempt to be as accurate as possible and also for verification. LG/NAS, Editors.

Text of Resolution

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ (USA) has declared itself to be a church committed to "Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace;"

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ (USA) has played a pioneering role in the emergence of a multiracial movement for environmental justice in the United States;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ (USA) has supported the sovereignty of the Filipino people and withdrawal of U.S. bases in that country;

WHEREAS the withdrawal of the U.S. military has left a legacy of life-threatening and economically devastating toxic wastes that make the former bases, especially Clark Air Force and Subic Naval Bases, largely uninhabitable and unusable;

WHEREAS this is a blatant example of environmental racism;

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, a partner church of the United Church of Christ (USA) has resolved to demand the removal of toxic wastes and calls on the United Church of Christ (USA) to demonstrate its solidarity with them in this particular struggle;

WHEREAS our North American ecumenical partners, through the church coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines, has taken on this issue; and

WHEREAS the Filipino-American community, including Filipino-American United Church of Christ churches, have shown grave concern over this issue;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ stands in solidarity with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twentieth General Synod requests:

The Office for Church in Society, the United Church Board for World Ministries, and the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ to demonstrate this solidarity through education, advocacy, and direct action to demand that the U.S. Government remove military hazardous waste and toxic contamination in the Philippines;

The United Church of Christ, in all its settings, demonstrate this solidarity through prayer, education, advocacy and direct action to demand that the U.S. Government remove military hazardous waste and toxic contamination in the Philippines; and

The President of the United Church of Christ communicate this decision to the appropriate U.S. Government agencies, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and other ecumenical organizations.

Subject to the availability of funds.

10. RESOLUTION OF WITNESS ON "EXPRESSION OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN"

Assistant Moderator Taylor asked that the report of Committee Eleven continue. Mr. Sandman spoke of the work of the Committee on this issue and moved the adoption of the Resolution of Witness "Expression of Solidarity with the People of Taiwan." Mr. Sandman spoke to the resolution and yielded his remaining time to Clint Cannon (WASH). Mr. Cannon also spoke in support of the resolution. There was no further discussion.

95-GS-46 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod adopts the Resolution of Witness "Expression of Solidarity With the People of Taiwan."