

TUESDAY MORNING

17. GENERAL SYNOD COMMITTEE REPORTS - BLOCK M

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on The Rev. Scott F. Curfman (ND) to present the recommended actions from Committee 10. Assigned to this committee were the Resolutions: "Securities and Exchange Commission Shareholder Resolution Policy," found in the New Business material and "Fair and Just Compensation: A Report to General Synod Twenty-One" found in the Program, Worship and Business Book, page 113.

Mr. Curfman briefly described the work of the committee and helped delegates locate the text of the recommended actions in the printed material. Mr. Curfman moved, on behalf of Committee 10, that the Twenty-first General Synod adopt the Resolution "Securities and Exchange Commission Shareholder Resolution Policy."

Mr. Curfman spoke to the motion.

The Rev. Harold C. Smith (CONN) and Mr. Richard Conser (ILL) spoke in support of the motion.

The Rev. James E. Fother, Jr., (FLA) suggested that delegates strike the second paragraph of the suggested attached letter.

Mr. Curfman explained that the letter was a recommended letter and was not a part of the action requested from the General Synod. Mr. Fother stated that, if this letter is used, he encouraged that the second paragraph be deleted.

Assistant Moderator Thomas called for the vote on the main motion.

97-GS-48 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Securities and Exchange Commission Shareholder Resolution Policy."

RESOLUTION "SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION SHAREHOLDER RESOLUTION POLICY"

WHEREAS, the agencies of the United Church of Christ and other religious bodies have traditionally used shareholder Resolutions as vehicles to call for changes in business practices and as witness to Christian conscience;

WHEREAS, recent actions by the Securities Exchange Commission have denied shareholders the right to bring such Resolutions to shareholder meetings,

WHEREAS, four national United Church of Christ Instrumentalities [viz., United Church Board for Homeland Ministries; Pension Boards, United Church of Christ; United Church Board for World Ministries and the United Church Foundation], which hold major investments in stock have reviewed this resolution and endorsed it either by votes by the board of directors (sic, trustees) or through formal consideration by executive administrative staff actions.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that all entities in the

United Church of Christ whose investments include stock (and are thus shareholders in corporations) recognize the critical nature of the SEC Ruling excluding shareholder resolutions on issues relating to employment. The national instrumentalities, therefore, join together to encourage all Conferences, Local Churches and members of congregations, who hold stock investments, to write to the members of the Securities and Exchange Commission (with copies to their Congressional representatives and to the President of the United States), urging them to reverse the "Cracker Barrel decision" and, once again, allow resolutions on employment policies and practices which address significant social issues to be included on Proxy Statements for annual shareholder meetings.

Subject to the availability of funds.

18. RESOLUTION "ACCESS TO THE AGE OF COMPUTER INFORMATION"

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on Mr. Curfman to present the recommended action from Committee 10 on the Resolution "Access to the Age of Computer Information."

Mr. Curfman shared changes made to the original document and moved, on behalf of Committee 10, that the Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Access to the Age of Computer Information."

Mr. Curfman spoke on the motion.

The Rev. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr. (Office of Communication) and the Rev. Bennie Whiten, Jr. (MASS) spoke in support of the motion. A person from the National Committee of Persons with Disabilities suggested that it be made explicit that access for all people included specific concern for all people with disabilities, including the visually impaired.

Assistant Moderator Thomas called for the vote.

97-GS-49 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Access to the Age of Computer Information."

RESOLUTION "ACCESS TO THE AGE OF COMPUTER INFORMATION"

WHEREAS, multimedia technologies involving a linkage of computers, telephone modems, fax machines, cable, mobile phones, television, teleconferencing and video conferencing will shape our future way of life;

WHEREAS, these tools will enable the creation of "virtual workplaces" not bound to location but requiring certain skills, and these workplaces will account for a large percentage of the new jobs in the U.S. by the year 2010;

WHEREAS, social analysts are already using the terms "the information rich" and "the information poor" in describing our society;

WHEREAS, new technological development has accounted

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for the projected elimination of 25 million jobs -- 28 percent of them in the private sector -- creating a permanent unemployment status in the U.S. (Wall Street Journal 3/16/93);

WHEREAS, the shaping of such "post-modern consciousness" must, of necessity, be multi-racial and multi-cultural if it is to be holistic.

WHEREAS, resource allocations for public schools vary dramatically in the U.S. and create unequal access to technology and education; and

WHEREAS, economic concerns involve not only basic access to hardware and technology but also the further cost of access to systems, services and networks, such as cable television, network service providers and the Internet;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

1. acknowledges the use of new information technologies and affirms their potential power to increase our knowledge and understanding of the world around us;
2. advocates for full access for all people including:
 - hardware (tools),
 - education,
 - control in helping to shape the use of technology in our society, and
 - network service providers;
3. supports diversity in ownership of business related to the creation and delivery of such technologies, including ownership by small entrepreneurs, women and people of color;
4. supports the rights of workers and unions to operate in these industries;
5. encourages clergy and lay persons to raise questions in a variety of settings, about technology access in order to improve educational opportunities, affect public policy and extend access to more people;
6. urges churches to act in local communities to help ensure that all students receive education and skills needed to make use of new technology;
7. urges local churches to become media and training centers as a resource, particularly to poor communities, and to do so as part of "The Church as a Safe Space" programs as well as day care and church school programs;
8. urges local churches to explore use of on-line services to connect youth and adults in building understanding of the diverse world in which we live;
9. requests the Office of Communication and the Office for Church in Society to develop resources to enable local churches to use their facilities and programs to address this issue and to communicate to local churches the

availability of these resources;

10. requests that the Office of Communication and Office for Church in Society continue to monitor Federal regulatory legislation which governs the creation, licensing and flow of such information and technology in a way which protects and includes communities of poor people and people of color; and
11. asks all settings of the church to continue to monitor the quality and content of information and programming that the various media and technologies offer, as well as the overt and underlying values communicated by that content.

Subject to the availability of funds.

19. RESOLUTION "FAIR AND JUST COMPENSATION: A REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD TWENTY-ONE"

Assistant Moderator Thomas called on Mr. Curfman to present the final action from Committee 10 on the Resolution "Fair and Just Compensation: A Report to General Synod Twenty-One."

Mr. Curfman briefly described the work of the Committee on this item of business and helped delegates locate printed materials on pages 113 to 115 in the Program, Worship and Business Book. Mr. Curfman shared changes in the original document that were made by the Committee.

Mr. Curfman moved, on behalf of Committee 10, that the Twenty-first General Synod adopt the recommendations, including the additions from the Committee, to the Resolution "Fair and Just Compensation: A Report to General Synod Twenty-One."

Mr. Curfman spoke to the motion.

The Rev. Julia Peeples (SOC) offered a friendly amendment to change the word "encourage" to "urge" on page 115, column 1, lines 1, 47, and column 2, line 12 and 22. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

A question was raised about why the report was limited to the local church.

Mr. David Anderson (WASH) offered a friendly amendment to change "local churches," to "all settings of the church," page 115, line 1, column 1.

This amendment was accepted as friendly.

Assistant Moderator Thomas called for the vote.

97-GS-50 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the recommendations contained in the Resolution "Fair and Just Compensation A Report to the Twenty-first General Synod."

FAIR AND JUST COMPENSATION: