

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON THE EFFECT OF THE PHILIPPINE MINING ACT OF 1995

“Our ideals, laws and customs should be based on the proposition that each generation in turn becomes the custodian rather than the absolute owner of our resources and each generation has the obligation to pass this inheritance on to the future.” Alden Whitman

The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 (Republic Act 7942) opens the era to unprecedented exploitation of the mineral resources of the country, aimed at spurring the economy to reach the targets of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan.

This law provides the unhampered entry, control and exploitation of big foreign mining companies to the Philippines. With a minimum investment of US\$50 million, a company may apply for 81,000 hectares of mineral land for a maximum of fifty years. The government provides fiscal and non-fiscal incentives like 100% equity, 100% repatriation of capital and profit, 5-years tax holiday extendible to another 5 years, tax-free capital investment, double acceleration of depreciation costs and Auxiliary Rights such as Water, Timber, and Easement Rights.

The law allows the use of modern technology, such as open-pit mining and bulk mining, that will mine low-grade ore profitably. This, however, will result in the vast destruction of the fertility of the lands, irreparable damage to the environment, and the wiping away of the livelihood sources of people in the affected areas.

We are aware that many of the Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) applications are in areas contested by indigenous people as part of their ancestral land, a matter that still remains unaddressed by the government. In the Cordillera alone no less than 16 FTAA applications are already filed covering more than 50% of its 1.86 million hectares total land area. With the approval of the FTAA applications, the rights of the national minority will again be relegated to the back burner. We do not want to be a part nor do we countenance the national oppression foisted upon our hapless brothers and sister, simply because they are in the minority.

But this is not only a national minority issue. We are convinced that this law is detrimental to the interest of the Filipino people at large.

The damage to our fragile environment is irreparable. Think of mountains and their forests gone from the face of the earth such as the case in Antamok, Benguet. Think of rivers forever unable to sustain life, with toxic mine tailings destroying croplands in San Manuel, Pangasinan, with mercury poisoning in Davao, and with the Marcopper disaster in Marinduque. As Bertrand de Jouvenal puts it, “He [the strip-mining engineer] has a well-defined purpose, which is to get the [mineral] out by the most efficient means; that these should involve the brutalization of Nature and the spoiling of the environment is irrelevant.”

Such massive mining will forever mar and alter the face of the earth, disturb the water cycle, lower the water tables and bring about water pollution, destruction of top soil and soil erosion.

But more than that, this law mocks the sovereignty and the national patrimony of the nation, by favoring the interest of foreign monopoly control and the country's mineral resources. This sell-out is

happening at the eve of the country's celebration of the Philippine Revolution makes this mockery all the more insulting to our nationhood.

We would rather remain in the state we are in but free, than become a developed country subservient to foreign interests and dictates. A new tiger in Asia, but one that is caged — this is not the development we seek.

The Church stands by its prophetic task and calls on the State not to sell our birthright for a bowl of porridge. Not to sell our dignity for some pieces of silver or even gold. The Church stands by its mandate as a steward of God's creation and therefore makes known its opposition to the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

Bishop HILARIO M. GOMEZ, JR., Ph.D.
General Secretary
UCCP

Atty. JOEL L. BODEGON
Chairperson, Executive Committee
General Assembly, UCCP

“THE BETRAYAL OF SOVEREIGNTY”
A Statement on APEC
United Church of Christ in the Philippines

*They shall not build and another inhabit;
They shall not plant and another eat their fruit;
For like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,
And my chosen shall long enjoy the fruits of their hands.
— Isaiah 65:22.*

We now live under darkening shadows which threaten the loss of our sovereignty. The unfolding saga of our binding relationship to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is the curtailment of our freedom to assert the interests and welfare of the Filipino majority over and against the dictates of foreign nations, and the undermining of our quest to develop a nationalist and democratic Filipino nation.

Our binding relationship to APEC violates our sovereignty by offering and submitting our human and natural resources to the unrestricted plundering by the eighteen (18) member economies of which the Philippines is among the weakest. By the natural laws of free market capitalism, which is the principle upon which APEC stands, motivation for profit shall overcome any humanitarian interest to sincerely develop the Philippines as a competitive economy. In the final analysis, our participation as a weaker national shall merely invite exploitation by the powerful nations who are driven by their lust to possess and amass for themselves the wealth and bounty of the earth.

Historically, our economic relationships with more powerful foreign nations have only proven to be an exercise in futility in our quest for genuine development. A history bound to foreign nations has brought us only the plight of being exploited and impoverished, and the dishonor of being a backward economy. Today, as never before in the history of humankind, competition among world economies has grown even more vicious. Any interest of the more powerful foreign nations to draw weaker economies into more open relationship with them must be seen from the critical perspective that their agenda is to succeed in power even at the cost of abandoning the welfare of weaker economies and of humanity as a whole.

Creating an atmosphere for active and exemplar participation in APEC, the Philippines has already introduced the liberalization, deregulation, and privatization of the Philippine economy through government legislation. These legislative actions have removed protective measures created to enable our national industries to develop free from unfair competition posed by more developed economies. They have unleashed major foreign-owned industries in the economy, allowing them to regulate their prices without government intervention and offering them 100% ownership of their investment enterprises. Finally, they have encouraged the sale of our basic services to private profit oriented business enterprises.

These initial legislative measures have shifted the economic and political power away from the Philippine government and transferred it into the hands of business enterprises. This trend is threatening the sovereignty of our nation because a nation whose government holds no command or control of the economy is unable to protect national interests. This trend is also threatening democracy

because if control is out of the hands of government and transferred to the private business sector, the people have no voice in the affairs of their basic services and no defense against exploitation.

OUR CALL

As stewards and faithful witness to the God of the Bible, we, members of the Executive Committee of the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, are impelled to break from our indifference and silence and call upon all people of God to denounce the active role of the Philippines in APEC.

We call upon our leaders in Government to respect the principles of our Constitution that uphold a truly democratic and nationalist Philippines, and appeal to their wisdom to realize the futility of involvement in APEC. We call upon them to retract all legislation aimed at deregulating, privatizing and liberalizing the Philippine economy and to refrain from any further legislation undermining the national interests of the Filipino people.

We call upon the Filipino people to stand vigilant in resisting foreign domination and control of our nation. We call on them to organize against laws, decrees, treaties and trade organizations that legitimate the interests of foreign nations over and above the interests of the Filipino majority.

We call upon our churches to conduct and launch a massive comprehensive educational campaign in our local churches regarding the issues surrounding APEC and foreign domination. We call upon all church members to be citizens of principles and stand firmly grounded in our common faith in the God of the Bible who embraces our nation and people as sovereign and independent.

Done on this 7th day of November, 1996 at Shalom Center, Malate, Manila.

Bishop HILARIO M. GOMEZ, JR., Ph.D.
General Secretary
UCCP

Atty. JOEL L. BODEGON
Chairperson, Executive Committee
General Assembly, UCCP

Stop the Plunder of Our Natural Wealth:

A Unity Statement for the Protection of the People and the Environment

We come from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, representing [x number of] people's organizations and [x number of] Church institutions/organizations throughout the Philippines. We have united through this historic Third People's Mining Conference to express our collective stand on the state's mining policy and practice and to reaffirm our aspirations for the country and the environment.

Seventeen years have passed since the Republic Act (RA) 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 was promulgated. After nearly two decades under the policy of mining liberalization, corporations have gained control over 1,125,000 hectares of the country's rich lands and earned billions of dollars through the extraction and export of minerals. This policy further intensifies foreign exploitation of our natural resources.

Mining as it has been pursued in the Philippines has earned massive profits for a few while causing destruction, dislocation and destitution for the majority of the people. Massive export-oriented and foreign-dominated mining operations are gobbling up our remaining forests and agricultural areas and are draining away the life from our rivers, seas, and coasts. The devastation and pollution of our environment cause great miseries to our people especially the women and children. Foreign and large scale mining have caused economic and social displacement of the majority of Filipinos: peasants, fisherfolks, indigenous peoples, and even small scale miners. Mine workers are subjected to dangerous working conditions, low wages and are denied job security. The state protects the mining companies by utilizing the military, police and militia, which have caused grave violations of human rights in mining-affected communities. Aside from these, mining companies have utilized "greenwashing" – spending billions of dollars to show Corporate Social Responsibility practices and conducting massive public relations gimmicks like TV and print ads – to deceive the people.

However, President Benigno Aquino III continues to make foreign and large scale mining a matter of national policy and has even exempted mining operations from the total logging ban. As of now, the government has approved more than 730 corporate mining contracts.

The people's resistance against foreign and large scale mining in the country continues to grow stronger and wider. It is difficult not to hear the rising crescendo of grassroots opposition. Indigenous peoples and peasants have staged barricades and declared tribal wars in their communities against mining companies. Almost six million people have already signed the campaign "No to Mining in Palawan". Multi-sectoral alliances against foreign mining operations are mushrooming everywhere. Local government units are imposing a moratorium on mining operations – at least twelve provincial governments have passed resolutions or ordinances banning large-scale mining in their areas – in defiance of a national government-sponsored mining policy. All these prove that the people see behind the veneer of the government claim that large scale mining will lead to development.

To substantially reorient the mining industry towards national development and environmental safety, people's organizations have crafted the People's Mining Bill which was consolidated with other similar legislative initiatives in Congress for the proposed Philippine Mineral Resources Act of 2012. This Act seeks to promote the wise utilization of our mineral resources for the benefit of Filipinos because it is premised on the defense of national sovereignty and patrimony.

Therefore, in this 3rd People's Mining Conference, as we resolve to heighten our struggle for land, life and the environment, we pledge to pursue the following calls:

- Scrap the Mining Act of 1995 and stop the government’s Mining Revitalization Program;
- Stop foreign and large-scale mining operations and projects;
- Nationalize the minerals industry;
- Defend our communities against human rights violations and militarization;
- Pass the proposed Philippine Mineral Resources Act of 2012 and declare a moratorium in mining operations and processing of applications;
- Expose the deceptive “greenwashing” offensive being done by mining TNCs;
- Support the grassroots initiatives against large-scale and destructive mining.

Bishop REUEL NORMAN O. MARIGZA
General Secretary

Bishop ELORDE M. SAMBAT
Bishop, North Luzon Jurisdictional Area

Bishop ROEL P. MENDOZA
Bishop, Middle Luzon Jurisdictional Area

Bishop ARTURO R. ASI
Bishop, South Luzon Jurisdictional Area

Bishop DULCE PIA-ROSE
Bishop, East Visayas Jurisdictional Area

Bishop JAIME M. MORILES
Bishop, West Luzon Jurisdictional Area

Bishop MELZAR D. LABUNTOG
Bishop, Northwest Mindanao Jurisdictional Area

Bishop MODESTO D. VILLASANTO
Bishop, Southeast Mindanao Jurisdictional Area

Bishop CONSTANTE D. CLARO
Bishop Emeritus

Bishop JUAN A. MARIGZA
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Bishop ISAIAS L. BINGTAN
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Bishop JESSIE S. SUAREZ

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Bishop Emeritus

UCCP STATEMENT AND RESOLUTIONS

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FOREWORD

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines was founded and organized on May 25, 1948. The denominations that came into the union were: The Evangelical Church in the Philippines, the Philippine Methodist Church, the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines. The three (3) Churches agreed that from then on they *shall be one Church known as the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.*

They also agreed that they would organize themselves *accordingly for the furtherance of the redemptive work of Christ in the world.* Since then the United Church of Christ in the Philippines has been confronting issues in the country — political, social and economic — in the light of the Gospel, with the faith that as a Church the UCCP exists to live and proclaim *the redemptive work of Christ.*

The resolutions and statements contained in this book are testimonies to the committed discipleship of the leadership and the constituent membership of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines to Jesus Christ. They are the deliberate, studied, and enlightened positions taken by the Church in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ.

I praise God for the succession of leaders that steered the life and ministry of this Christian community through its formative years as well as through the critical and difficult years of the dictatorship. I am grateful that in the Senate alone, we have four UCCP members; in the other branches of government, there must be many, many more.

I hope that the Resolutions and Statements contained herein will not only make all the constituency of this community of believers in Jesus Christ fully aware that the United Church of Christ in the Philippines has continuously sustained its commitment to proclaim "Christ's Gospel of redemption" but will also make them actively participate in the continuing mission of Christ to give life to all peoples and all creation.

I commend the book for study, reflection, and as a source book for committed and joyful discipleship.

JOVTTO R. SALONGA
Senate President
December 1990

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with a deep sense of awe and gratitude that we acknowledge the numberless men and women who have contributed to the wealth and meaning of this volume.

First, we make special mention of Bishop Emeritus Estanislao Abainza, who painstakingly and laboriously literally plowed through the volumes and volumes of General Assembly and National Executive Committee proceedings and lifting out from them these Resolutions and Statements.

Second, we acknowledge with fond memories the work of the late Mr. Jose L. Navarro, Sr. who was the recording secretary of the uniting assembly in 1948, even while he served as National Treasurer.

Third, we value the records of Dr. Faustino S. Quiocho who was the administrative assistant in the years 1948-1970.

Fourthly, there was Mr. Cirilo P. Malamion and of late, we have Ms. Leonora P. Villaluna and Angelina S. Acuna who served as office assistants and secretaries.

Fifthly, we celebrate the untiring labor of love and patience and gift of remembering of Ms. Ligaya N. Quiambao, who is herself a living historical 'document' for all her notes and notetaking and the precious historical facts stored in her memory, even today.

And all the leaders, members and friends of the UCCP who have in one way or another enriched the heritage of this Church through the years, we acknowledge with gratitude and joy.

And finally, to Ms. Edna J. Orteza, first CEN Coordinator who initiated this work that it may become a reality today, and all the CEN staff, who attended to the editing and the printing of this manuscript, we offer our endless thanks.

LYDIA N. NIGULDULA

Executive Secretary

Christian Education and Nurture Office

INTRODUCTION

The identity and character of a Church could be defined and made known in many ways. They could be known, for example, through the Church's formal confessions of faith, or through the size of the Church's congregations and membership, or through the work of the Church's various institutions, or through the Church's organizational structure and polity. Perhaps most decisively however, they could be known through the manner in which the Church responds to and interacts with the environment in which it is located, in short, through the manner in which the Church makes its confession and practices its life and mission in relation to the myriad needs, challenges and aspirations that form the *world* in which it lives and makes its witness.

What makes this publication so vitally important, both to the members of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and to the larger public which it serves, is the manner in which it puts together, for the first time in one volume, the official statements and positions that the Church has made, from its birth as a *united* Church to the present where it seeks to give a relevant witness in the midst of a society in turmoil. The materials cover a wide span of theological, missiological and social issues. Starting with the *Basis of Union* out of which emerged *one* Church from formerly several separated Churches, it moves through questions of ecclesial autonomy, of evangelistic and missionary strategy, of a theological understanding of social concerns, of the meaning of ecumenism and the Church's commitment to it, and ends with the Church's position on some of the most burning issues of contemporary national life, e.g., the issue of militarism, the foreign debt, agrarian reform, and the Church as sanctuary and zone of peace.

The publication is not meant to take the place of a history of the Church. That history, in fact, still has to be written, and should be a priority in the Church's activities in the coming months ahead. What is put here however will be a major part of that history whenever it will be written. What we find here in fact forms the kernel of that living tradition of the Church's life which provide testimony to its life and witness, edification and guidance for its Members, and direction for its mission and pastoral action.

The living tradition of the Church's life has no end. It moves, it develops, and it continues to grow under the weight of its past, the open challenge of its future, and the demands of the equally living and lively Lord of the Church. In this sense, the identity and character of the Church are never finally defined. They will simply be known as part of the Church's offering of obedient life and mission to its living Lord, who is and will be the final judge of the Church's faith and action.

FELICIANO V. CARIÑO

Chairperson, Faith and Order Committee

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*The shorter Basis of Union was sent to several churches who may have wanted to join an organic union of evangelical churches in the Philippines. The **Evangelical Church in the Philippines**, the **United Evangelical Church of the Philippines**, and the **Philippine Methodist Church**, approved the Basis of Union. The rest were not ready to commit themselves to a union of churches.*

A longer Basis of Union was adopted by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines after it has been organized on 25 May 1948. This longer Basis of Union governed the actions of the General Assembly until 1974 when a new Constitution was proclaimed as unanimously ratified by the 30 conferences in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

BASIS OF UNION

***The Uniting General Assembly
25-27 May 1948***

Article I — NAME

The name of this organization shall be: ***UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES.***

Article II — CHURCH PROPERTY

Church property may be held by individual congregations of other church bodies. It is desirable that property be held in the name of the church. Transfer of property should be held in the name of the church. Transfer of property shall be voluntary.

Article III — HISTORIC FAITH AND MESSAGE

We do preserve all of the heritage of faith brought into the Union by each of the constituent Churches and hereby declare as our common faith and message: ***Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Lord and Saviour.***

Article IV — CHURCH PRACTICES AND WORSHIP

Congregations may follow their customary practices and worship.

Article V — MEMBERSHIP

Members in good and regular standing of each of the Uniting Churches shall be regarded as such by all the others in the Union.

Article VI -- THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. A **local church** is a group of at least 25 baptized believers, 15 years of age or over, having officers and a regular time and place of worship.
2. **Membership:** Regular and affiliated members.
3. **Government**

The local church shall be governed by a church council composed of the Pastor, other church workers, officers, stewards and the heads of the various organizations of the church.

4. Duties and powers of the local church

- a. Subject only to the general laws and regulations of the Church, every local church or congregation shall, with its pastor, be responsible for watching over its members, keeping its life pure, ordering its worship, providing Christian education and proclaiming the Gospel.
- b. Call a pastor.
- c. Recommend candidates for the ministry.
- d. Elect delegates to the Annual Conference.

Article VII — THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1. Area

The geographical area of each Annual Conference shall be designated by the General Assembly.

2. Membership

- a. Ordained ministers in good standing and one elected delegate for every 200 members or major fraction thereof in each church or pastoral charge provided that a pastoral charge shall have at least one and not more than three delegates.
- b. Evangelists, Deaconesses and other Church Workers in active service in the area.
- c. Missionaries from abroad who have been received as members of the Conference.

3. Government

- a. The officers of the Annual Conference shall be a Moderator or Superintendent, who shall be the administrative officer of the Conference, a Secretary and a Treasurer. They shall be elected every two years.
- b. Executive Committee
It shall be composed of the Moderator or . Superintendent, the Secretary, the Treasurer and other members as may be desired by the Conference.

4. Meetings

- a. The officer of the Annual Conference shall be a Moderator or Superintendent, who shall be the administrative officer of the Conference, a Secretary and a Treasurer. They shall be elected every two years.
- b. Missionaries from abroad who have been received as members of the Conference.

5. Duties

- a. Care for pastoral charges within the Conference.
- b. Receive and dispose of petitions from lower church bodies or councils.
- c. Deal with matters sent down from higher church bodies.
- d. Supervise study of ministerial students.
- e. License lay preachers.
- f. Ordination of ministers of the Gospel through the bishop of the area assisted by other ministers.
- g. Install ministers in their respective churches through the Bishop of the area or the Moderator or the Superintendent of the Conference.
- h. Elect delegates to the Assembly.
- i. Propagates the faith and promote church expansion.
- j. Promote the missionary program of the Church.
- k. Promote evangelism and Christian education.
- l. Receive ministers from other communion subject to the regulations of the General Assembly.

Article VIII — THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. The **General Assembly** shall be the highest governing body of the Church. It shall meet every two years and shall be presided over by the Bishops alternating among themselves.

The Church shall have for its administrative officer a General Secretary who shall be elected by the General Assembly.

2. Area

The entire Philippines. It shall be divided into four jurisdictional areas:

Luzon	two areas
Visayas	one area
Mindanao	one area

3. **Membership**

- a. The Bishops.
- b. One clergy and one Layman for every 2,000 members or a major fraction thereof.
- c. The General Secretary and other general officers designated by the General Assembly.
- d. Annual Conference Moderators or Superintendents.

4. **Executive Committee Membership**

- a. The Bishops.
- b. The General Secretary and other general officers.
- c. One Moderator or Superintendent and one layman for each jurisdictional area.

5. **The Bishops**

- a. They shall be the administrative officers of the respective areas.
- b. They shall be elected by the General Assembly.
- c. They shall serve for a term of four years and may be elected for not more than three consecutive terms.
- d. They shall have joint general oversight over the entire Church; each one, more specifically, over a jurisdictional area to which he is assigned by the General Assembly.
- e. The Bishops shall exercise such other powers and prerogatives as are delegated to them by the General Assembly.
- f. They shall act alternately as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the General Assembly.
- g. Together with the Executive Committee of the General Assembly, they shall initiate and carry out plans of work for the entire church.
- h. Together with the General Secretary, they shall correlate phases of work which are inter-area in nature.
- i. They shall be responsible for the promotion and execution of plans approved by the General Assembly.

6. **Powers of the General Assembly**

- a. Set the number and boundaries of Annual Conferences and Jurisdictional Areas.
- b. Prepare, approve and amend the Constitution. Any proposed change in the Constitution must be submitted —
 - 1) by a General Assembly
 - 2) to the Annual Conferences
 - 3) returned by the Annual Conferences to the General Assembly
 - 4) and declared approved or rejected by the General assembly after a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly and a 3/4 vote of the Annual Conferences.
- c. Hold, own and dispose of property.
- d. Prescribe courses of study for ministers and lay workers.
- e. Set standards for the ministry.
- f. Receive and dispose of petitions, overtures and memorials.
- g. Appoint general committees and set up boards to handle the business of the Church.
- h. Seek union with other Churches, promote cooperation and participate in the ecumenical movement.
- i. Promote specific activities within the Church: Evangelism, Literature, Stewardship, Christian Education, etc.
- j. Prepare a budget and provide ways and means of raising the same.
- k. Provide a plan for ministers' insurance, pension and retirement.
- l. Serve as final Court of Appeal in all matters affecting the life of the entire church or its constituents parts.
- m. Propagate the Faith.

Article IX — ELECTION OF BISHOPS

The Bishops shall be elected by the members of the General Assembly in session. The election shall be **by ballot** without nomination or discussion and shall immediately follow a period of **quiet meditation and prayer**. A **majority vote** of the members present is required for election. To be qualified for election as a Bishop, one must have been an **ordained minister for at least 5 years** but with **at least 10 years in the active ministry** prior to his election. He must be **at least 35 years of age**.

Ref: *Book of Common Worship, 1964*, pp. 14-19.

DECLARATION OF UNION

The Uniting General Assembly
25-27 May 1948

- WHEREAS**, it is in accord with the *Divine Will* that Christians should be united in worship and in every effort to spread the Gospel.
- WHEREAS**, the unity of the Church is founded upon loyalty to Jesus Christ, the Head and Lord of the Church, and on fidelity to the cause of His kingdom;
- WHEREAS**, any unity is first of all a unity of spirit and life;
- WHEREAS**, having the same spirit and owning the same Lord, we nonetheless recognize the diversity of gifts and ministrations for whose exercise due freedom must always be afforded in the differences of interpretation, in forms of worship and modes of operation;
- WHEREAS**, the *Evangelical Church in the Philippines*, the *Convention of the Philippine Baptist Churches*, the *Philippine Methodist Church*, the *Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Cristo*, and the *United Evangelical Church of the Philippines*, by their respective General Assemblies, Conferences or Conventions did theretofore appoint commissions on Church Unions;
- WHEREAS**, these commissions at a joint session held on the 3rd day of November, 1947, by joint action did agree upon, approve and adopt a Plan and Basis of Union for the Organic Union of these Churches and thereafter presented said Plan and Basis of Union for the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines*** to their respective denominational bodies;
- WHEREAS**, the Bishops, Moderators and Secretaries of these uniting churches did issue a call for sessions of their respective General Assemblies, Conferences or Conventions, and for a subsequent Joint Session to the Uniting Assembly of the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines***;
- WHEREAS**, this uniting Assembly, now in session, is authorized to constitute itself, as it does hereby constitute itself as the First General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines;
- NOW, THEREFORE**, the delegates to this Uniting Assembly of the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines*** do hereby solemnly publish and declare in the presence of God and before all men the following statement of facts:
- I. That the *Evangelical Church in the Philippines*, the *Philippine Methodist Church*, and the *United Evangelical Church of the Philippines* are now and shall be one church known as the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines***;
 - II. That the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines*** places itself in readiness to continue to negotiate for an ever-expanding church union with these now in negotiation as well as with others;
 - III. That the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines*** as thus constituted is and shall be the ecclesiastical successor of these uniting Churches, namely, the *Evangelical Church in the Philippines*, the *Philippine Methodist Church*, and the *United*

Evangelical Church of the Philippines, permitting, however, in the meantime, the holding of properties by these churches by the different corporations registered under their respective names until such time as proper adjustments shall have been made with regard to such holdings;

- IV. That by adoption of the name ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines***, for this Church Union, no right, interest or title in and to their respective names by which the uniting churches have been identified and known, has been nor is surrendered, but all such rights are specifically reserved against the claims of all persons, associations and organizations whatsoever; and
- V. That we, delegates to the Uniting Assembly, hereby formally adopt the Plan and Basis of Union formulated by the Joint Commissions on Church Union of the Uniting Churches, as the fundamental declaration of faith and plan of government of the ***United Church of Christ in the Philippines***, and forthwith proceed to organize ourselves accordingly for the furtherance of the redemptive work of Christ in the World.

Ref.: ***The Uniting General Assembly***, 1948, pp. 8-9.

ON THE MINISTRY OF CHURCH-RELATED SCHOOLS

Executive Committee

13-14 May 1949

A. STANDARDS OR REQUIREMENTS FOR CHURCH-RELATED SCHOOLS.

1. Fulfillment of requirements of the Bureau of Private Schools.
2. The Bible should be taught at least two periods a week. There should be periodic student convocations patterned after the Protestant Worship, including the reading of the Scriptures, prayer, and sermon.
3. There shall be a preponderance of Evangelical Christians on the Faculty, and the head shall be an Evangelical Christian.
4. There shall be a preponderance of Evangelical Christians on the Board Trustees, and the Chairman shall be an Evangelical Christian.
5. Full cooperation with the general program of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.
6. The school shall have, as a definite aim for each student, the formation of Christian character and the consecration of the individual to personal loyalty to Jesus Christ and to life of service in name.
7. The school as an institution shall stand for high moral principles, for service, and for the application of Christian teachings to all of human affairs.
8. A Baccalaureate Service shall be held as a regular feature of the graduation activities.
9. The School shall be a non-profit institution. It is understood that a reasonable interest on capital loaned or invested may be paid.
10. Provisions shall be made to safeguard all donations to school, reserving such donations and their corresponding value increment for the purpose of the institutions.
11. In the event of dissolution, all excess of the property value, after the retirement of all stocks or loans, shall be turned over to the UCCP for educational purpose.

B. RECOGNITION OF A CHURCH-RELATED SCHOOL

Any school to attain the status of *church-related school* must accept as official actions of the governing body the requirements as authorized by the Assembly of the UCCP or the Executive Committee, and forward this acceptance, signed by the school director and the president or chairman and secretary of the Board of Trustees with a letter of application for such recognition to the Commission on Education. It is possible for a

school to be related to the General Assembly without being directly related to or controlled by the Annual Conference.

The provisions for the recognition of church-related schools apply also to those schools being established by Annual Conferences on condition that its Board of Trustees pledge in writing that in the course of the establishment of their school they will fulfill all the requirements for a church-related school.

C. BASIS FOR RECOMMENDING AID TO SCHOOLS

1. Recognition as a *church-related school*.
2. Submission of the request to Commission on Education and a copy of the request to the Annual Conference for recommendation.
3. All recommendations for aid will be on a project basis.

Ref: Action 49-46 *Executive Committee*, May, 13-14, 1949, p. 13.

A SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT TO THE BASIS OF UNION

Executive Committee
23-24 February 1950

The **Basis of Union** is in the nature of a contract and no point in it should be abrogated without the full consent of every party concerned. It is understood that the task of the Polity Committee in drawing up a Constitution for the **United Church of Christ in the Philippines** is to elaborate and to implement our basic document, always remembering the inclusive nature of our union, i.e. a ***union which preserves all of the heritage of faith brought into the union by the constituent Churches***, as well as the provision that *congregations may follow their customary practices and worship* (Basis of Union, Articles III and IV). As we face the provisions of Articles IV and V and apparent conflict needs to be resolved in this supplementary statement. The adjustments between Articles IV and V may take time and patience but can, without doubt, be worked out, since we have a strongly determined will to be one. This adjustment will prove to be a real test of our Christian brotherhood. We can and will accomplish it because our faith far outreaches our Theology or Polity. Article VI, Section 2 of the Basis of Union provides for *regular and affiliated members*. In the light of Article V which states that *members in good and regular standing of each of the uniting churches shall be regarded as such by all the others in the union*, it is necessary to explain that affiliated membership in local congregations which have always practiced immersion is understood to include only those who are full members in good and regular standing of the **United Church of Christ in the Philippines** in some other part of its area. It is also understood that no distinction will be observed in the rights and privileges of any member whether regular or affiliated since all are members of the **United Church of Christ in the Philippines**.

Likewise, this whole discussion rests upon the basic principle of the autonomy of the local congregation in all matters pertaining to its own life in the community. The phrase in Article VI, Section 4. (A) *Subject only to the general laws and regulations of the Church* simply refers to such matters as concern the corporate life of the denomination and does not imply any interference by the General Assembly in the life and practices of the individual congregation.

As we consider the fact that the Annual Conference set-up as it now exists has a large measure of homogeneity, the problems discussed above do not have any considerable importance for the Annual Conference administrations. For example, the Northwest Luzon Annual Conference is, with the exception of one congregation, wholly composed of the Former Disciples Church (Ilocano group) and the measure of control by the Annual Conference over the individual congregations can be a matter for easy adjustment within the Annual Conference itself.

The question as to the use of the title *Bishop* with reference to the *Executive Officer* of the Jurisdictional Areas of our Church is one that is not peculiar to the former Disciples Churches and since elasticity has been developed in our practice, especially in Mindanao, there is no reason why it may not offer a way for the Northwest Luzon

Jurisdictional area, may *be* Bishop of such Conferences as wish to designate him as such, while he may be to the Northwest Luzon Annual Conference, their Executive Officer.

The problem of fair representation in the Church Assemblies and Committees is one that requires careful attention. There is no good reason why, within the provisions of the Basis of Union, each area might not provide representation to all elements within its area. In fact there should be developed a studied procedure to meet any present deficiency in regard to representation.

Ref.: *Detailed Discussion Executive Committee*, February 23-24, 1950 p.1

RESOLUTIONS ON STREAMLINING AND STRENGTHENING THE CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND ON THE CHURCH'S WILLINGNESS TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CHRISTIAN PROGRAM IN THE PHILIPPINES

Executive Committee

27-30 November 1951

WHEREAS, the condition of the time call for the church to plan well ahead of time and wisely, the better to enable it to meet any emergency that might arise;

WHEREAS, the experience of the past years in the life of the Church has shown the desirability of streamlining and strengthening its organization;

WHEREAS, there is a need for responsible leadership for purposes of initiative and administration in the work of the Church;

WHEREAS, the Church must inevitably and continually face the problem of decreasing financial aid from abroad and increased finances to promote the life and program of the Church;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved:

First — that we recommend to the 1952 General Assembly the amendment to the Basis of Union changing the number of bishops from four to one and that it take the necessary steps to secure the vote of the Church on that question. We further recommend that the General Assembly in 1952 designate, from the four bishops that shall be elected, one to serve full-time, devoting his entire energy to the work of his office. He should be released from all other commitments — pastoral or administrative — that would interfere with full and active service to the Church-at-large. He should serve in the following capacities: moderator of the General Assembly, chairman of the Executive Committee of General Assembly, chief executive officer of the Church, official representative in the interest of the Church Union movement and in inter-church and federated relations and activities, as well as in public functions.

Second — to enable this bishop to give full-time service in the interest of the Church -at-large, and to make possible his release from such commitments as might tie him down, arrangements shall be made to provide him with salary, residence and facilities, sufficient and appropriate to the requirements of the Office;

Third — that there shall be set up a Church Secretariat, the members of which shall be the General Secretary who shall serve as chief promotional officer and carry the portfolio of each of the following other departments: Department of Missions, Department of Christian Education, Department of Ministry, Evangelism and Stewardship, and Department of Rural Life and Public Welfare;

These secretaries shall be expected to give a large measure of time in the interest of their respective portfolios. The members of the Secretariat shall serve as corresponding members of the Executive Committee of the General Assembly.

Fourth — the various boards, commissions and committees shall be grouped as far as practicable under five general departments as follows:

I. DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS

- A. Home Missions
- B. Foreign Missions

II. DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- A. General Education
 - 1. Church-related Schools
 - 2. Adult Education
- B. Christian Religious Education
 - 1. Children's Work
 - 2. Youth Work
 - 3. Adult Work: women's work and men's work
 - 4. Bible Schools
- C. Audio-Visual Education

III. DEPARTMENT OF MINISTRY, EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP

- A. Ministry
 - 1. Training
 - 2. Relief
 - 3. Pensions
 - 4. Seminaries
- B. Evangelism

IV. DEPARTMENT OF RURAL LIFE AND PUBLIC WELFARE

- A. Rural Work
- B. Medical Work

V. DEPARTMENT OF PROMOTION AND GENERAL AFFAIRS

- A. Personnel
- B. Literature and Publication
- C. Finance
 - 1. Budget
 - 2. Auditing
- D. Legal Affairs
- E. Judiciary
- F. Polity
- G. Other Matters of General Nature not Specifically Care by the Other Departments

Fifth — that in accordance with the expressed policy of the cooperating Boards in America, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines is in the process of setting up a streamlined organization (to be effected at the forthcoming General Assembly) to make ready for any step which the cooperating Boards may desire to take, towards the turning over to the Church for general oversight and direction such establishments and institutions as they may feel ready to entrust to the Church.

Sixth — that reach out of a sense of appreciation for what the Mission Boards have done and are willing to do for the Church in the Philippines, as well as from a sense of mission and duty, we, as a

Church and as leaders and supporters of the United Church movement, do hereby pledge our fullest devotion to the cause of Christian evangelism education, stewardship and service, binding ourselves in a closely-knit organization and in real brotherhood, and in the spirit of Apostle Paul, "forgetting the things that are behind we press forward...." to extend the frontiers of Evangelical Christianity in the Philippines and in Asia; and

Seventh and finally — That these resolutions except those pertaining to the election of the bishops which shall await confirmation and action by the General Assembly in 1952, shall be in full force and effect upon their approval by the Executive Committee here assembled with the understanding that this action shall be subject to the usual review by the General Assembly.

Ref: **Executive Committee**, actions # 51-77

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING BELIEF IN AND ADHERENCE TO AN ECUMENICAL CHURCH

General Assembly
12-17 May 1952

WHEREAS, We accept the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of men;

WHEREAS, Denominational distinctions are harmful to the progress and cause of the Church;

WHEREAS, The idea of one world can be strengthened by the unity of the Churches;

WHEREAS, The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, while it is a united Church, is also a uniting Church; and

WHEREAS, It was Christ's prayer that we all may be one;

BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, by the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, in session assembled, to express its belief in and adherence to an ecumenical Church;

THAT in view of the peculiar and admitted position that the Philippines is the only Christian country in the Far East, our Church takes active leadership in the effort to unite all Churches; at least those Churches all over Southeast Asia; and

THAT the Presiding Bishop, the Reverend Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña, be authorized to initiate the move as he attends the General Assembly of the Church of Christ in Thailand in Bangkok, Thailand, and in other places where he may stop.

BE IT RESOLVED, further, that copies of this resolution be furnished the Presiding Bishop and the Governing Bodies of Evangelical Churches of all countries in Southeast Asia;

BE IT RESOLVED, finally, that this message be spread on the Minutes of this General Assembly.

Done at Silliman University Church, Dumaguete City, this 17th day of May, 1952.

Ref: **General Assembly**, Action #52-61. (Appendix xi v p.102)

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING GAMBLING AND LIQUOR

General Assembly
12-17 May 1952

WHEREAS, with the termination of the last war, there has come a moral degeneration of many of our people;

WHEREAS, with this moral degeneration there has also been an extremely frequent use of liquor and a prevalence of gambling;

WHEREAS, gambling and the use of liquor is economically unsound and socially undesirable but is also morally wrong;

WHEREAS, the gambling habit and the frequent recourse to liquor is defeating the whole economic program of the Government because the former breeds the idea of getting money without work and the latter dissipates strength;

WHEREAS, it is of common knowledge that those who take to drinking and gambling not only ruin themselves but also wrong their people;

WHEREAS, it has been demonstrated through the centuries that gambling, drinking have been great factors in breaking up homes which have been seat of happiness;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines is committed to the responsibility of seeing to it that the people are free from vices especially liquor and gambling;

BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that this Third General Assembly in session assembled, of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, goes on record as being against and condemning gambling and liquor and hereby enjoins its constituents to refrain therefrom;

BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY, that this message be spread in the Minutes of this General Assembly.

Done in Silliman University Church, Dumaguete City, this 16th day of May 1952

Ref.: *General Assembly*, Action # 52-61.

RESOLUTION IN THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CREDIT UNIONS

*General Assembly
12-17 May 1952*

WHEREAS, In line with the Government movement regarding the upliftment of the living condition of the rural people and in line with the movement started by the American missionary, Rev. Allen R. Huber, especially Credit Unions; and

WHEREAS, In this General Assembly there are qualified men and women for the position to tackle this work as well as already existing credit unions represented in this General Assembly which are managed and sponsored by Evangelical Christians; and

WHEREAS, As per Executive Order of the President of the Philippines that two or more credit unions can form the National Federation of Credit Unions in the Philippines; and

WHEREAS, As per agreement made by Presiding Bishop Sobrepeña with Dr. Renne last night together with these laymen interested as a whole with the ECA.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Federation of Credit Unions be formed during this General Assembly and the officers be elected by the Medical and Rural Department so that request be presented to the ECA as soon as possible.

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this resolution be sent to the ECA and to the officers of the National Federation of Credit Unions.

BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY, that this message be spread on the minutes of this General Assembly.

**OFFICERS OF THE UCCP
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CREDIT UNIONS**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Mr. D. B. Ambrosio
Mr. G. Imperial
Mr. C. del Carmen
Mr. Julio F. Pascua
Mr. Otilio Gorospe*

CREDIT COMMITTEE

*Rev. E. Quebral
Rev. J. F. Santos
Miss Buenviaje*

SUPERVISING COMMITTEE

*Mr. S. Casel
Mr. F. Martinez
Atty. E. Tagatoc*

ADVISERS

*Mr. Santiago Manongdo
Rev. Allen R. Huber
Miss Josefina R. Phodaca*

Ref: *General Assembly*, Action # 52-61.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION TO BAN ROTC AND
PMT DRILLS, TEACHERS' MEETINGS, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES ON SUNDAYS**

*General Assembly
17-23 May 1954*

WHEREAS, it has been the common practice throughout the Philippines, both in public and private schools, to hold ROTC and PMT drills, teachers meetings, and school picnics, excursions and the like on Sundays;

WHEREAS, athletic events have often been scheduled to take place on Sundays, interfering with the desire of many to observe the day as a day of worship and rest;

WHEREAS, such above-mentioned events, functions, and activities do not encourage the growth and development of a more religious and spiritual life of the part of our people, especially the youth of the land who have at times been accused of drifting from things spiritual;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the fourth Biennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines now in session at Los Banos, Laguna, to appeal to the Secretary of Education to fix a different schedule of time for public and private schools for activities other than on Sundays with the end in view of encouraging the people to set Sunday as a day of worship and rest.

Done at Los Banos, Laguna, this 22nd day of May, 1954.

POLICY FOR CHURCH-RELATED SCHOOLS

Executive Committee

6-11 December 1954

1. Church-related schools, when their aim is definitely Christian and when administered efficiently, are to be regarded as a vital part of the program of the Church's evangelistic outreach and at the same time a valuable agency in the preparation of young people for responsible citizenship.
2. A school which fulfills the requirements for assuming a Church-related school status will be assisted in planning and implementing its total program, particularly with reference to the Christian aim, and will be extended well-defined financial aid when possible and necessary. This aid might be given in the following forms:
 - a. The providing of *full salary* of one qualified and approved teacher of Bible, who has completed a four-year course of study in Christian or religious education in one of our recognized theological institutions.
 - b. The providing of the necessary *textbooks* when the curriculum of Bible courses has been planned or approved by the Department of Christian Education.
 - c. By approving; when feasible, *grants* or subsidies from United States Mission Boards for occurring any special needs with particular consideration being given to those institutions which seek capital funds for the purchase of land to be used for agriculture projects thus to provide for both self-support and a training experience for the students.
3. The Church, while interested in strengthening the program of Bible instruction, is likewise concerned that the Church-related schools have a unifying philosophy of education which regards all truth as one, with God as its author, whether it be scientific, historical, or religious, so that every subject taught will contribute to the implementation of the Christian aim of the school and every teacher will be committed to the realization of that aim: namely, that of acquainting the student with God and His truth in all aspects so as to effect his well-rounded growth and fit him for a useful life in the community and nation.

Ref.: Action 54-242 *Executive Committee*, 6-11 December 1954, p. 27.

RESOLUTION ON ENRICHED RICE

Executive Committee

7-10 May, 1957

- WHEREAS, rice enrichment has definitely proved its effectiveness in combatting *beriberi* and other common dietary diseases as well as in improving the general health of the people, as shown by the famed and highly successful Bataan Experiment and by actual performance in the implementation of Rice Enrichment Law;
- WHEREAS, the positive and beneficial effects of rice enrichment on the health of the people and the consequent contribution to the economic progress and well-being of the Filipino people, practical health insurance in modern medical history;
- WHEREAS, the enrichment of staple cereals including wheat-flour, bread, corn and rice is observed by legislation in many modern and progressive countries throughout the world, thus showing that the fortification of staple food is in good measure universally practiced to promote good health and well-being;
- WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, through her Executive Committee, firmly believes in rice enrichment, and, therefore, in the full implementation of this outstanding health program, not only

because of the foregoing health benefits to be derived from it but also because of the fact that good health enhances moral and spiritual growth of the people;

WHEREAS, House Bill No. 6877 is now awaiting enactment by the Philippine Congress for the purpose, among other things, of giving free rice enrichment to the people to insure universal enrichment in this country;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, that we, the undersigned composing the Executive Committee of the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, being unreservedly convinced of the positive and beneficial effects of rice enrichment on the health of the people, hereby place on record our full support for this Bill;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we petition His Excellency, the President of the Philippines, and all members of Congress, to give their full support for the passage of this Bill for the sake of the people's physical and spiritual health and welfare, particularly the masses who stand to be most benefited by this essential health program.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be furnished His Excellency, the President of the Philippines, the Secretary of Finance, the Secretary of Health, and all members of both Houses of Congress.

Done in the city of Manila, Philippines, this tenth day of May, in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and fifty-seven.

PROPOSED BASIS OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Executive Committee

August 10-11, 1959

It is the understanding of the Executive Committee that the Board of Trustees of Union Theological Seminary will formally approve the agreement by trustee action.

- 1. That** the UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES agrees that the title on the land and buildings now occupied by the PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGES at Tennessee, Indiana, and Wright Streets, together with the playground across Wright Street be transferred and conveyed to the said Church which will in turn transfer and convey said title to the Philippine Christian College, with the understanding that if and when the said school will no longer use and occupy the said properties for the purpose for which it was originally given, the same will revert back to the said UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES;
- 2. That** the UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY with the approval of the donors will transfer to the PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGES a portion of its lot at the corner of Taft Avenue and Herran Streets, having an area of 2,000 square meters so that a college building may be constructed thereon, provided that if and when the said Philippine Christian College will cease to use and occupy said portion for the purposes for which it was originally given, the same will revert back to the Union Theological Seminary which will then determine, with the original donors, how the same is to be used for interdenominational purposes;
- 3. That** the remainder of the property of UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY will remain under the jurisdiction and disposition of the Board of Trustees of UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY as heretofore;
- 4. That** the title of the new college building would be transferred to the PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGES by the METHODIST CHURCH with the same reversion clause to the said METHODIST CHURCH, with the understanding that the said Church would work out with the Board of Trustees of the Union Theological Seminary and the original donors (WDM-WDCS) its further use for interdenominational purposes;

That if and when the METHODIST CHURCH is able to purchase the lot at the corner of Herran and Pennsylvania Streets adjoining the Seminary lot now proposed to be transferred to Philippine Christian College, the title to

the same will be transferred and conveyed to Philippine Christian College with the same reversion clause in favor of the METHODIST CHURCH together with any building which may be constructed thereon.

Ref: *Executive Committee*, Action # 59-138.

A STATEMENT OF SOCIAL CONCERN

General Assembly
19-24 May 1960

INTRODUCTORY THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

Throughout Asia today, people and their governments are in the midst of a political, economic and religious upheaval. The tremors of this upheaval have shaken the old foundations of Asian culture and are making way for the building of new political, economic, and religious structures. It is imperative that the Church ask herself what her role is in this new day.

The church cannot hold itself aloof from the world in which it lives. Even as the Lord of the church came ***not to be ministered unto, but to minister***, so He calls His disciples to be His servant-people. (John 13:14-17). They are ***called to witness and to serve Christ in the world***. (Acts 1:8; Matthew 20:26-28). It is through its members that the church ***confronts the world*** at all points of daily life. (II Cor. 5:17-20). Even as Christ came ***that men might have life and have it abundantly***, (John 10:10), so Christians are ***to bear witness to this and have been called from the world into a fellowship of unity and peace with forgiving love by their concern and compassion for the world***. (Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:23-27).

As one who has been sent forth to live in the world, the Christian needs to know the world in which he lives. He is ***to be in the world, but not of the world***. Being in the world, the Christian soon recognizes that there are often no clear cut answers to the issues he must face. He is dwarfed by the enormity of social evils and confused by the complexity of the issues of life. But as a Christian he knows he can neither abdicate his responsibility to face the social evils, nor can he comfort himself with easy answers to difficult social, economic, and political problems. (Phil. 2:12-13).

As he seeks to live in this world, the Christian realizes the necessity of thinking and acting together with other Christians as well as persons and groups other than his own. The Christian does not face the world alone. But he grows in strength through the Christian community into which he has been called. (Phil. 1:27). Within this community he is bound together in the unity of the Spirit with others who belong to Jesus Christ. (Eph. 4:15-16). The Church is composed of men and women from all walks of life and with a variety of experience. It is within this community that fellow Christians share their knowledge and their experience in the world. Within this community also God calls his people to listen to what the world is saying to the church. In this act of the church there is a need for this continual sharing and reflection upon the issues confronting Christians in the world. As the church does this in faithfulness to the mind of Christ, it can provide its people with a Christian understanding of the issues, a guide for living their faith, and strength for action in the present world.

It is in answer to this call to live and to serve God in the world that this statement of social concern is made. It is provided as a guide for Christian thinking and action in meeting the present problems of Philippine society.

The Church and Economic Development

Immediate economic development is today a pressing problem for all Asian countries. To meet the demands of their people for a more abundant life, the governments of Asia have concentrated their energies in discovering the right economic formula for increasing national income and alleviating their nation's economic poverty.

Population Trends

The necessity for immediate solution to economic problems has been intensified by concern over the consequences of present population trends. Population experts and governmental authorities throughout the

world are apprehensive over the ability of the earth's resources to meet the demands of the rapidly expanding world population. The problem is especially acute for those nations just beginning to develop their economic potential. In these lands, unrelenting population expansion put even greater pressure on speeding up the process of economic development.

Reliable estimates of Philippine population growth show an annual increase of almost 3%. In 1957, the Philippines showed a figure of 203 persons per square mile of land area. By 1980 an estimated population of 57 million will push this figure to over 500 persons per square mile. This increase in population will vastly affect the direction taken by the Philippine economy in the immediate future. *What should the Philippine government stress in its economic development plans?* The necessity for the agricultural sector to produce enough food to meet basic human needs stands high on the priority list. The ability of industrialization to provide the machinery for rapid development and to provide jobs for the increasing numbers entering the labor market is another major concern. Still another problem is the need to provide adequate space and facilities for already over-crowded urban areas.

Modern Technology

Faced by the immensity of their tasks, Asian governments have looked to modern technology as answer to their dilemma. In their plans for economic development, great stress has been laid upon building up the industrial masses. And industrialization produces mass results. To feed, clothe and house the growing millions require technological efficiency and the methods of production. With this in mind the Philippine government has made concerted efforts to industrialize its economy. Leaders in all areas of the nation's life have pointed to the need of a healthier balance between the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy. In the post-war period, industry has taken on a greater importance in the nation's economy. The industrial sector which has accounted for 13% of the total national income in 1948 has been raised to a figure of 24% in 1958. As industrialization becomes more of a force in the nation, the Philippines can look forward to more locally manufactured goods in meeting her people's particular needs. Not only will industry provide more jobs, it will decrease the dependence of the Philippines upon overseas manufactured goods. Industrialization will bring benefits to the people in the form of greater variety of locally produced goods, in terms of higher wages, and a rising standard of living. But in this movement to industrialize there are problems which should not be overlooked.

Need for Agricultural Development

There is a danger that in intensifying the demands for industrialization the nation will neglect its agricultural base. A healthy agricultural sector is not only necessary to the physical well-being of the people, but the income from productive and efficient agriculture can provide capital for the development of the industrial sector as well. It should, therefore, be the concern of the Philippine churches that in the development of the economy, due attention be paid to programs aimed at increasing the productivity and income of the agricultural areas. Alongside this problem is the need to encourage employment in the agricultural areas of the country. WE LOOK WITH APPROVAL UPON ALL ATTEMPTS AT MEETING THE PROBLEMS OF THE RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE BROAD PERSPECTIVE OF DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY LIFE. WE GIVE OUR SUPPORT TO PROGRAMS (I.E., PACD) WHICH FOSTER SELF-HELP AND FURTHER COMMUNITY COOPERATION ON THE BARRIO LEVEL. WE ENCOURAGE OUR PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS TO MAKE USE OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE PROGRAMS AIMED AT INCREASING THEIR FARM PRODUCTIVITY AND DEVELOPING SOUND COMMUNITY LIFE.

Believing in the process of grass roots democracy we encourage our rural people to discuss policies of the national government which directly or indirectly affect the agricultural areas. We, furthermore, encourage them to express their thinking on these issues through local government channels and to those national officials responsible for making Philippine policy and legislation.

Industrialization and Rapid Social Change

Another effect which should not be overlooked is the impact of industrialization upon the total culture. The growth of a strong industrial sector, which took over two centuries in Europe and the United States, cannot be capsulized into a short period of time without having repercussions both on Philippine culture and economy. The demands technology makes upon a people and the new social context it creates, disrupts old cultural patterns. Industry requires a new discipline which was unknown in farm work. Factories are run according to strict daily time schedules. These schedules do not take into account -the social obligations of family life or *fiesta* celebrations.

Industry breaks down old social patterns and draws men into new social relationships with other fellow workers, and with new friends in the city.

Urbanization

Industrialization spurs on the growth of cities. In the organization of industry, factory sites are chosen with an eye to the area's labor supply, the transportation facilities and a stable market for the product produced. In underdeveloped countries, industry chooses existing cities. Thus in establishing factories in these cities, industry has helped to create what a UNESCO Report called *primate* cities. Into these cities flock thousands of people looking for work or seeking an escape from the boredom and drudgery of farm life. In the rapid growth of cities, social problems have been multiplied beyond the resources of the city governments. Over-crowding in slum areas create health, law and order, and education problems.

Thus industry must bear some of the burden of the social problems it has helped create in the cities.

The Church must apply itself to the problems arising in the cities. The Church recognizes that the concentration of industry in one or two urban centers, not only creates over-crowding in these centers, but also deprives other areas of the benefits of industrialization. THEREFORE, WE URGE THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY TO SEEK WAYS IN WHICH THE GROWING INDUSTRY OF THE COUNTRY CAN BE DECENTRALIZED OVER A WIDER AREA. WE CALL UPON THE NATIONAL AND CITY GOVERNMENTS, AS WELL AS PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, TO EXPAND THEIR PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS TO PROVIDE FOR THE GROWING POPULATION OF THE CITIES. WE ARE CONCERNED WITH THE CITIES' SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND CALL UPON THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO WORK TOGETHER WITH CITY GOVERNMENTS IN EXPANDING WELFARE SERVICES FOR THE NUMEROUS SQUATTER FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS CAUGHT IN DISINTEGRATING SOCIAL CONDITIONS. AT THE SAME TIME WE OFFER OUR RESOURCES IN WORKING TOGETHER WITH GOVERNMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES IN STUDYING AND MEETING THESE PROBLEMS.

Unemployment

One of the factors which fosters poor social conditions within cities is the problem of unemployment. Many people is seeking to escape the boredom of the countryside some to the city for work. They come wholly unprepared for the conditions they will face and without the abilities necessary for employment in the cities' business life: *unemployment is the end result*. In viewing this situation the church realizes its own responsibility in appraising its own people in the rural areas of the difficulties of city life. Not only should the church educate its people in the rural areas to the personal and family adjustment required by city life, but it must point out the limited job opportunities that exist for unskilled workers.

IN THE LIGHT OF THIS SITUATION, WE ENCOURAGE THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM AND OTHER PROGRAMS OF THE GOVERNMENT AIMED AT DEVELOPING THE VOCATIONAL SKILLS OF THE PEOPLE IN AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY. WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT THESE TRAINING PROGRAMS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED ACCORDING TO PRESENT AND FUTURE INDUSTRIAL NEEDS. AT THE SAME TIME AS YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ARE BEING TRAINED FOR INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION, WE CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT, TOGETHER WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY, TO STRENGTHEN THOSE AGENCIES WHICH ARE CONCERNED WITH THE QUALITY AND STANDARDIZATION OF LOCAL PRODUCTS.

In the rural areas where seasonal unemployment often times sends people to seek their 'fortunes in the city, the church recognizes the need for the development of household and cottage industries. WE CALL FOR THE CONCERTED EFFORT OF THE GOVERNMENT IN CARRYING THROUGH COTTAGE INDUSTRY PROGRAMS. WE NOT ONLY ENCOURAGE OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS TO INVEST IN WELL-PLANNED COTTAGE INDUSTRIES WHICH WILL MEET LOCAL NEEDS, BUT WE ALSO OFFER OUR SUPPORT TO ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE COTTAGE INDUSTRY PROJECTS.

One of the necessities of spreading the benefits of industrialization is the development of roads in the outlying areas. Not only do roads help in raising the economic level throughout the country, but they also encourage the movement of industry to other areas. WE CALL UPON THE NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS, TO PROVIDE FOR A WIDER NETWORK OF ROADS IN FURTHERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMIC POTENTIALITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Trade Union Movement and Management Relation

In the last 10 years the trade union movement has come to play an active role in the Philippine economy. Since 1953 with the passage of the ***Magna Carta*** of Labor, trade unions have grown from 803 to 2,505 in 1959. As industrialization continues it can be expected that trade unions will also increase. Not only has the trade union movement been organizing the industrial sector of the Philippines, but it has moved into the agricultural sector as well.

Trade unions exist to see that the benefits of the industrial system are more equitably distributed to those who help produce these benefits. In a rapidly growing society responsible trade unions are not only means for seeking justice, but they also provide a new social grouping for workers drawn away from the older social patterns of the countryside. Trade unions have the great task of training those in the lower economic groups to take responsibility as citizens within their own community and in the nation as a whole. Besides this educational task of the trade union, there is also the need to better prepare their people for the discipline required by the new industrial society. Responsible trade unions have the opportunity of serving the whole people by training their trade unionists to understand their role in the production needs of a growing nation. Responsible trade union leadership seeks to foster better labor-management relations.

IN THE LIGHT OF THIS SITUATION WE ENCOURAGE A FREE, RESPONSIBLE AND DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. WE SEE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EDUCATING THE GREAT NUMBERS OF WORKERS TO RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP AND WORKMANSHIP THROUGH THE TRADE UNIONS. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THE PLACE OF TRADE UNIONS. IN ACHIEVING A MORE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE BENEFITS PRODUCED BY LABOR. WE CALL UPON OUR OWN CHRISTIAN WORK MEN TO SUPPORT THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND TO PROVIDE THE RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP NECESSARY TO ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE IN SOCIETY. WE ARE CONCERNED ALSO WITH THE TREMENDOUS TASK AND RESPONSIBILITY PLACED UPON MANAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF THE NATION. THEREFORE, WE ENCOURAGE THOSE ENGAGED IN THIS TASK TO DISCOVER WAYS AND MEANS OF DIRECTING THE FORCES OF ECONOMIC LIFE INTO HEALTHY PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY LIVING.

The Responsibility of the Laity

INDUSTRIALIZATION NOT ONLY BRINGS ABOUT NEW SOCIAL STRUCTURES, BUT CREATES NEW ATTITUDES TOWARD LIFE. OUR JUDEO-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE, WHICH SEES THE WORKS AS CREATED AND RULED BY GOD, IS REPLACED IN A TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY BY AN OVER-APPRECIATION OF MAN'S POWER IN CREATING THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE. IN A COMMERCIALIZED SOCIETY, THINGS BECOME MORE VALUED THAN PEOPLE. RELIGION BECOMES MORE AND MORE RELEGATED TO THE PRACTICE OF ANCIENT RITUALS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES. REALIZING THE DANGER OF MODERN SOCIETY TO PUSH RELIGION OFF INTO A CORNER, WE REMIND OUR PEOPLE OF THEIR OBEDIENCE TO JESUS CHRIST IN ALL AREAS OF LIFE. WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LAYMAN'S WITNESS IN HIS WORK AND CALL UPON OUR PEOPLE TO LIVE OUT THEIR CHRISTIAN CALLING RESPONSIBLY IN THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REALMS OF DAILY LIFE. WE DECLARE THAT THE LORD OF THE CHURCH IS ALSO THE LORD OF THE FACTORY, THE FARM, AND THE OFFICE, AND IS SOVEREIGN WHEREVER MEN LIVE AND WORK.

POSTSCRIPT

Our attention has been called to other social issues which should concern us as a church. Some of these issues are planned parenthood and birth control, rural credit and cooperatives, effect of fiestas upon economic life, and Filipino First Policy. While we consider these issues worthy of the church's attention we have not had time to study them carefully and thoughtfully. We, therefore, pass on these problems of the Department of Public Welfare for further consideration and study:

Ref: Action 60-55 ***General Assembly***, Legaspi City, May 19-24, 1960 pp.32, Statement is in Appendix pp. 222-227; Action 60-141 ***Executive Committee***, May 27-29, 1960 p. 58.

RESOLUTION APPROVING UNION WITH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (DISCIPLES) IN THE PHILIPPINES

*General Assembly
21-27 May 1962*

WHEREAS, in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines there are included the evangelical churches which have through the years led in the church union movement; and,

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Union adopted by the United Church, when this church was formed in 1948, stated the continuing desire of this church that those Christian bodies in the Philippines not able at that time to participate with us in the United Church would in due time be able to join with us in a larger union of Christian churches in the Philippines; and,

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines has especially hoped through the past fourteen years that the Churches of Christ (Disciples) in the Manila area which were not ready to participate in the United Church of Christ in 1948, would in due course join their Disciples brethren from Northern Luzon in the United Church; and,

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines appointed a standing committee of the General Assembly that the function of promoting church union and interchurch relations matters; and,

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in session December 13-15, 1960, received an encouraging progress report on negotiations between the Church of Christ (Disciples); and,

VOTED: ...to approve the coming of the Tagalog Convention of the Church of Christ (Disciples) as a Conference unit, with the hope that within a reasonable period of time isolated congregations may find themselves_ adjusted to the fellowship of the conferences in which they are located. It is understood that where the pace in the church union conversation is so accelerated as to make possible inter-church relationship before the 1952 General Assembly, the Church Union and Interchurch Relations Committee be authorized to work out such preliminary arrangements as are deemed necessary.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that in view of the foregoing, this General Assembly having received report from the Church of Christ (Disciples) in the Philippines that their congregations had voted affirmatively on the proposed union in a plebiscite conducted December 10, 1961, which action was approved in the convention January 5, 1961, that this General Assembly now declares the union of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and Church of Christ (Disciples) in the Philippines be proclaimed to the glory of God and for the spread of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Approved by the Eight Biennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in session May 22, 1962, Cebu City, Philippines.

Ref: *General Assembly*, May 21-27, 1962, - Appendix p. 103.

ON THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES/CONCERNING RELATIONSHIP/WITH OTHER CHRISTIAN BODIES

General Assembly

21-27 May 1962

VOTED: That the General Assembly adopt the pronouncement of the World Council of Churches as guide in our relationship with other Christian bodies where transfer of members often takes place:

That we in our churches respect the conviction of the churches whose conception and practice of church membership differ from our own. That we consider it our Christian duty to pray for one another and to help each other rise above our respective short-comings through frank theological interchange, official or unofficial discussion and personal encounter between individuals in search of truth, experiences of common worship and concrete acts of mutual service.

That we recognize it as our obligation, when in exceptional cases private or public criticism of another church seems to be required of us, first to examine and always to speak the truth in love and to the identification of the churches.

That we recognize it as the primary duty of every awakened Christian to strive prayerfully for the renewal of that church in which he is a member.

That we recognize the right of the mature individual to change his church allegiance if he becomes convinced that such change of allegiance is God's will for him.

That since grave obstacle to brotherly relationship between churches are created when churches are denied the religious liberty which is accorded to others, all Christians should work towards the establishment and maintenance of religious liberty for all churches and all their members in every land.

That we disavow any church action by which material or social advantages are offered to influence a person's church affiliation, or undue pressures are brought to bear on persons in times of helplessness or stress.

That while it is proper for churches to make their clear position with regard to marriages between persons belonging to different communions, the conscientious decision of marriage partners as to their future church allegiance should be respected.

That before a young child is received into the membership of a church other than that of the present affiliation of the parents or guardians, due pastoral concern over the unity of the family should be exercised. Where the proposed change of affiliation is contrary to the desire of those directly responsible for the child's nurture and upbringing he or she should not be received into the membership of the other churches unless there be reasons of exceptional weight.

That due pastoral care should be exercised before receiving anyone into the membership of a church, if he is already a member of another church or under discipline by that church, or if there is evidence that his reasons for seeking membership in a different church are unworthy.

That whenever a member of one church desires to be received into the membership of another church, direct consultation should be sought between the churches concerned; but if conscientious motives and sound reasons are apparent, no obstacle should be placed in the way of such change of membership before or after its accomplishment.

That while there may be situations where a church already present in a given area seems to be inadequate in its witness to Christ as to call for more faithful witness and proclamation of the Gospel to its members, the first effort of other churches should be patiently to help that church towards its renewal and the strengthening of its own witness and ministry.

That we should aid churches in areas where they are already at work, by offering fraternal workers and exchanges of personnel as well as by sharing knowledge and skills and resources, rather than by establishing a competing mission with some other church.

Ref: *General Assembly*, May 21-27, 1962, pp. 36-37.

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE ASSIGNMENT OF A PROTESTANT CHAPLAIN TO EVERY MAJOR SERVICE OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

General Assembly
21-27 May 1962

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines considers every agency in the life of the country as its field of witness;

WHEREAS, at the present time, chaplaincy service is not provided for the major branches of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, such as the Philippine Army, the Philippine Constabulary, the Philippine Air Force and the Philippine Navy;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Eighth Biennial Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines now in session strongly recommend that a Protestant Chaplain be assigned to each of the major services;

BE IT RESOLVED, farther, that a copy of this resolution be given to the offices of the President of the Philippines, the Secretary of National Defense, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the Chief of Chaplains of the Armed Forces of the Philippines for implementation and action.

Ref: *General Assembly*, Action # 62-96

RESOLUTION URGING THE PASSAGE OF H.B. 2141 CALLING FOR THE CREATION OF A MORAL COMMISSION

General Assembly
21-27 May 1962

The United Church in the Philippines, at its Eighth Biennial General Assembly, composed of leaders among ministers and laymen from all parts of the Philippines, now convened in Cebu City;

NOTING the great concern and earnest desire of those they represent part toward the Moral Regeneration of our People;

NOTING further that this is one goal in which all groups whether religious, civic or governmental have a common stake and interest;

KNOWING that the fight against vice of all forms, more particularly gambling, white slavery, traffic, prostitution, and all other forms of traffic in person is one of the major objectives of civic and religious groups, which the government would want to assist and intensify;

NOW, THEREFORE, the delegates, assembled at this Eight General Assembly, hereby resolve to urge the Congress of the Philippines to pass at an early date H.B. 2141 which would create a Moral Commission which has been initiated by the executive department of the government;

IT IS RESOLVED, further, that copies of this resolution be sent to the President of the Philippines, members of the Congress of the Philippines, the head of the office of local government at Malacañang, and to all

ministers of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines so that all efforts may be directed jointly by these recipients towards the early passage and the effective implementation of the measure.

Ref: **General Assembly**, Actions # 62.95

STATEMENT ON CHRISTIAN UNITY

General Assembly

31 May - 5 June 1964

Rejoicing over promising changes during the past several years toward better relations among Christians of the major branches of the Church, and especially in our relations with our Roman Catholics brethren; and recognizing that a renewed emphasis on our common faith in Jesus Christ brings more trust and less suspicion, more cooperation and less conflict;

This General Assembly expresses its gratitude to God for the growing manifestations of progress in Christian unity; commends the efforts at better understanding already made by our Church; and encourages its members, ministers, institutions and agencies to join with others, including Roman Catholics, in fuller expressions of that unity which is God's gift in Jesus Christ to all believers.

Ref: **General Assembly**, May 31 - June 5, 1964, pp. 24-25.

STATEMENT ON RELATIONS WITH ROMAN CATHOLICS AND OTHERS

General Assembly

31 May. 5 June 1964

Recognizing the growing number of opportunities being presented from time to time for mutually helpful relations with Roman Catholics and others, this General Assembly encourages several kinds of association with Roman Catholics and others, including:

1. Dialogue among well-informed members of the churches which should include common study of the Word of God and the history of the Christian Church, in order to understand more clearly the issues which separate us;
2. Cooperation in common concerns involving social service and action at the general civic and community level, such as: better community, medical and health services; working for social justice; reduction of juvenile delinquency; and raising of standards of public morality; and
3. Joint discussion of problems of common concern, such as: religious liberty; mixed marriages; need and forms of family planning; and public policies regarding religious instruction in public schools.

Ref: **General Assembly**, May 31 - June 5, 1964, p. 25.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

General Assembly

31 May - 5 June 1964

God, the Creator, has placed rich resources at the disposal of man: the land, the forests, the sea, the minerals within the earth, and all the plants and animals that abound in nature. To man alone He has given the intelligence to develop these resources; and He has charged man with the responsibility of using them for the enrichment of the life of all mankind.

The development of a sound economy is a major concern of the Filipino people. Three-fourths of the people receive less in goods and services than is necessary to live in health and decency. The maintenance of a democratic system of government depends upon an economy that will provide for the needs of all the people.

Therefore, ***We Call Upon Our Churches and their Members to Study. Pray and Work:***

1. For the introduction, development and use of modern agricultural methods and techniques to the end that the present standard of living will be raised;
2. For the protection of the forests from abuse and misuse, so that this rich resource will continue to be available to Filipinos in years to come;
3. For the conservation of the water resources of the nation; and for their development for the use of the towns and cities, for irrigation of the land, and for hydro-electric power;
4. For the development of economic enterprises that will provide employment to the ever-increasing army of unemployed and under-employed persons;
5. For the formation of Filipino capital; for the encouragement of foreign investments within constitutional and legal limitations; and for cooperative or joint ventures with Filipino businessmen;
6. For fairer distribution between labor and capital of the fruits of economic enterprises; for the adoption of practices and principles, such as profit-sharing, that are conducive to the just and fair distribution of the fruits of investment — both labor and capital;
7. For the organization and development of free, responsible and democratic cooperatives and credit unions in local situations, and for the utilization of the facilities of the government and private entities dealing with democratic cooperatives and credit unions;
8. For sound taxation and wise government spending for the development of the nation;
9. For the formulation of community organizations for the purpose of achieving a higher standard of living for the low-income groups; and
10. For the reaffirmation of the statement of the Trade Union Movement and Management Relations adopted by the 1960 General Assembly;

In the light of this situation we encourage a free, responsible and democratic trade union movement. We see the opportunity for educating the great number of workers to responsible citizenship and workmanship through the trade unions. We also recognize the place of trade unions in achieving a more equitable distribution of the benefits produced by labor. We call upon our Christian workmen to support the trade union movement and to provide the responsible participation and leadership necessary to achieving the goals of freedom and justice in society. We are concerned also with the tremendous task and responsibility placed upon management in developing the economic resources of the nation. Therefore, we encourage those engaged in this task to discover ways and means of directing the forces of economic life into healthy patterns of community living.

Ref: ***General Assembly***, May 31 —June 5, 1964, pp. 21-22.

STATEMENT ON RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

General Assembly

8 June 1964

God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is the ruler of all human affairs — families, towns, nations, economic systems, social orders. To him belong our souls and bodies, our possessions and cultures, our communities and churches. The Government makes many fateful decisions concerning the life and welfare of the people; yet it also is under the judgment of God. In a democracy, the course that the Government should take, is the will of God.

THEREFORE, WE CALL UPON OUR CHURCHES AND THEIR MEMBERS TO STUDY, PRAY AND WORK:

1. For effective, representative, responsible government from the smallest sitio to Congress and the Presidency. To this end we encourage church workers to study Republic Act 3590, commonly known as the Barrio Charter, and to call it to the attention of the members.
2. For the development of a deep concern for the affairs of government, including the election of responsible and dedicated citizens to public office. Toward this end, it is suggested that a program of non-partisan political education be conducted by the **United Church Men**, the **National Christian Women's Association**, the **Christian Youth Fellowship** and other groups within the Church.
3. For the effective endorsement and implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines and all of the laws and legal orders of the duly constituted authorities, including those separating church and state.
4. For understanding of the financial structures of the Government; and for the payment of taxes and other financial obligations as an expression of Christian and civic responsibility for the common good.
5. For critical evaluation, within the fellowship of the church and in the perspective of the Christian faith, of policies, political issues and practices of candidates, of office holders and of government agencies and institutions.
6. For increasingly effective social welfare agencies (governmental community, and private); for more specific information about their services; for fuller understanding of their functions and for more voluntary services to them. To this end, we request the Department of Public Welfare, in cooperation with the Moderators, to prepare a list of the social welfare agencies which are available for referral, consultation and cooperation.

Ref: *General Assembly*, Action # 64-30.

RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-UNITED CHURCH GROUPS

General Assembly

8 June 1964

PROBLEM

The main problems confronting the Commission is the problem of our relationship with Non-United Church groups and movements penetrating our local churches, throughout the country.

SPECIFIC CONCERNS

1. **Proselytism** — A very real danger. These foreign groups come into our churches offering their so-called "services" and "cooperation." Just as soon as they have established themselves among our church members, they pull out and create a group of their own.
2. The problem is not only that of drawing people away from our church, but also **weakening** the local church victimized by these groups with their divisive spirits.
3. **Literature** — Having made access into the homes of our members, these groups flood our parishes with literature from their own publishing houses. Many of these materials do not express our ecumenical spirit.
4. As a result, our local churches' growth toward ecumenicity is not only delayed but stunted or arrested.
5. As a further result, confusion prevails.

POSSIBLE ACTION

General

1. In the light of our ecumenical concern, we as a United Church must not close a continued dialogue between these penetrating groups and us.

2. Depth-Confrontation — In our dialogue with them, we must seek earnestly to frame our relationship with them from the perspective of our theological orientation. No superficial ties with them will do.

Specific

1. Since we as leaders of the Church (clergy and laity) have the responsibility of protecting our congregations from the unhealthy penetration of foreign groups, it is suggested that *all* groups going to our local churches in the provinces should first secure the written endorsement of the National Headquarters in consultation with the Bishops and Moderators. In the absence of such written endorsement, it is further suggested that the local churches should not accept the offer of cooperation from these foreign groups.
2. To recommend that we in the United Church promote a progress that will avail our members of our own reading materials. Perhaps the reason why literature not ours are in abundance in our parishes is that not enough of our own materials are accessible to our people.

Ref: **General Assembly**, Action # 64-52.

ON PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGES

Executive Committee

11-13 May 1965

1. We hold that our primary mission in the Philippine Christian Colleges is the building up of a strong college of arts and sciences, and the continuation of the relationship of the high school and elementary school, which have already proven their high standards, as departments of Philippine Christian Colleges.
2. We urge the exploration of the development of a unified program for training workers in the field of religious education, whereby existing institutions offering this course are consolidated; i.e., Ellinwood College of Christian Education, Harris Training School, Union Theological Seminary and Philippine Christian Colleges. The unified approach affords us a more responsible discharge of our stewardship.

POLICY STATEMENT ON EVANGELISM

Executive Committee

16-17 June 1966

UNDERLYING CONVICTIONS

An old definition of evangelism, originally coming from the Archbishop's Committee of the Anglican Church, goes thus:

To evangelize is to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Saviour, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church.

It is clear from this well-accepted definition that the essence of evangelism is proclamation — the proclaiming of the evangel. It is the presenting of the gospel to all men, in the hope that in accepting the good news they will become active members of God's people. This is primarily an individual matter, for it means the presentation of the gospel in such a convincing and compelling manner that it will bring about the possibility of a free, personal response to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, which in turn will lead a decision for membership in the Church and participation within its fellowship as it witnesses for Christ in the world.

But evangelism also has a social concern. For God loves the whole man, including his world, and is concerned about man's life in society. It is also a part of evangelism to declare the judgment and love of God upon the

structures of contemporary life which keep men from being the free, truly human persons God intends them to be, or which keep men from a free response to Jesus Christ.

The proclamation of the gospel is the main business of the Church. But we must realize that there are various ways of presenting this saving word. We are prone to think that it must always be a matter of verbalization. But we can proclaim God's love for men in Christ not only by word (which is undeniably important) but also by deeds and actions. These deeds, which may be also described as Christian love in action, are ways of declaring the nature of God in living terms so that the outsider may perceive the meaning of the gospel. When seen in this light, there is a direct connection between social service and evangelism, although evangelism may be different by virtue of its specific goals as stated in the opening definition.

However, we must be a little careful when we too strictly define evangelism as bringing people into the fellowship of the church. There is a danger here of becoming primarily interested in membership statistics, of getting people for our church and of seeing people-as means to our end. There is also the possibility of thinking that the credit is all ours when we are able *to win one*. We must remember that it is only the Holy Spirit who can recreate, forgive, and bring men into fellowship with God. God is always at work in the hearts of men, not only when we arrive on the scene. Our real duty is to faithfully proclaim the gospel and live by it, in all areas of our lives, and leave the result to God. In some instances this may result in more members of our United Church of Christ; in other instances it may not.

This is not to deny the necessity of bringing new Christians into the fellowship of the church for nurture and growth in the faith. We believe that common worship prepares for witness and service. The ultimate goal of the work of evangelism is to develop evangelists from those who are being evangelized. ***The end goal of our evangelism is the evolvment of true witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ, who loyally and consistently witness in all areas of their lives.***

It follows from this that ***evangelism is a corporate task***. It is a work to which the whole church is called. Every member must be involved in this great job — not only the ordained, set-apart members. In reality, in being faithful to this high task the local church finds its real life and strength. Therefore, evangelism must be a continuing concern of the local church, not simply a seasonal, once-a-year effort.

This is not to underestimate the role of the ordained clergy. Their role in this task is indispensable. By faithfully teaching and guiding all members, ***the pastor helps to prepare them for their witness in the world***, and to become articulate proclaimers of the gospel. By the faithfulness of his teaching ministry he may help the church to fulfill its common calling to evangelism. We further believe that ***the seminary curriculum should include courses designed to help the future pastor in this responsibility.***

An additional word should be raised regarding the corporate witness of the church. The church not only witnesses through its members as they participate in various areas of secular life, it also witnesses by what it is, and by what it does and by what it says. A church rent asunder by quarrel, bitterness and strife makes witness a very negative one. A spirit of unity in our local congregations makes our witness more convincing. An active concern for the people or the community and their passing needs also facilitates our witness to God's love in Christ.

In the preceding paragraph it is evident that the line dividing evangelism and Christian Education or nurture is quite a thin one. Although the main task in evangelism is the proclamation of the evangel by whatever means possible, follow-up, and conversation have also been considered a part of effective evangelism. The desire to help all members become evangelistic has also been part and parcel of the program of evangelism. Thus we believe that the ***task of evangelism and Christian Education should not be rigidly separated***, but go hand in hand.

STRATEGY AND TECHNIQUES

This policy statement on evangelism has the following objective: TO HELP THE WHOLE CHURCH BUILD EVANGELISTIC STRATEGY AND TECHNIQUES APPROPRIATE TO THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH IN ITS MINISTRY TO THE WHOLE MAN AND HIS PARTICULAR SOCIETY. To this end we would like to set forth ten suggestions for your thoughtful consideration.

We should state at the outset that many of these suggestions are based on the prior assumption that in the light of our changing society there is an imperative need for some new approaches and directions in this work of

evangelism. This is not to say that all of our old methods must now be thrown away. It is always foolish to discard the old before the one has something better to take its place. Rather than throw away the old, we must build on the old. In some areas the so-called old method of mass evangelism is still very effective. Generally speaking, in the urban areas it is no longer. There is one basic question we must ask about both old and new approaches. *Are we reaching the outsider, the non-Christian, through this method?* If we aren't, it is time for us to ponder.

Another assumption here is that at least a minimum of unity already exists in a local church committed to the ministry of evangelism. We doubt that a church (local and national) divided by personal animosities and strife can effectively fulfill its calling to evangelism, unless it goes through renewal and change. Unity is a pre-requisite for dynamic evangelism.

1. ***Understanding our Society***

We believe that we must give more attention to the kind of culture and society in which we live. We must listen to the world, in order to know how to speak to it. Our Filipino people have a particular culture, with a particular worldview. Of course, this does not change the message of the gospel; but it is related to how we frame the message in order to get it across.

2. ***Dialogue with the Outsider***

We believe that if we want to reach the outsider and proclaim the gospel to him it may first be necessary for us to listen to him — even to the so-called atheist or agnostic. In the past, the church has usually wanted to do all the talking. Now, in some parts of the world the church does not want to do all the talking anymore. This is the other extreme. There is a need for real dialogue, which may eventualize when we are first willing to listen. We believe that this is becoming more important in our increasingly secularized society. Especially is it true with the *intelligentsia* and students who are enamored by science and who seem to think that the church and the gospel are irrelevant. If we are going to confront philosophies which many of our citizenry embrace we will have to cultivate this art of dialogue with the outsider.

3. ***An Ecumenical Enterprise***

We believe that in our day evangelism should be viewed as an ecumenical undertaking. In our kind of world where Christians are not growing as fast as other groups, and where people seem to be indifferent to the gospel, the challenge to evangelism is too great for us to assume in isolation from other Christians. We must cooperate with all other groups dedicated to proclaiming the same gospel. We should present a united front. In this day we believe that this also includes our brethren in the Roman Catholic church, for it is becoming more and more obvious that our goals are very similar, if not identical. Some may raise the question as to whether this means that we should no longer seek to win Roman Catholics to our evangelical faith. We believe this is not our purpose. However, if through our witnessing to nominal Roman Catholics they desire to join our fellowship we should be glad to receive them. But we should not put great pressure on them to make this step. It is time for us to recognize that there are sincere and committed Christians in the Roman Catholic Church.

4. ***Urban and Rural Approaches***

We believe that while our country is industrializing at a good rate and while urbanization is also significant, the majority of our people are still rural-oriented. This means that if our pastors are to be effective in mobilizing our membership for evangelism, we will need to have a definite training for each situation, for despite similarities there are real differences between rural and urban people. We believe that urban pastors should be guided so as to be able to work in an urban-industrial context.

We think it is also necessary to prepare pastors for a ministry in rural areas. We would like to eradicate the idea that the rural pastor is lower on the ladder and that a sign of his progress is the move into a city pastorate. But we believe that in order to keep some of our best pastors in the rural area, we should consider the possibility of paying all our pastors an equal salary from a central fund.

5. ***The Small Group-Neighborhood Approach***

We would like to recommend the revitalization of the neighborhood meetings plan, whereby a local congregation is divided into parish groups which meet from time to time in homes. This approach provides an opportunity to invite uncommitted or indifferent neighbors to the meeting, and in a friendly atmosphere introduce them to the Christian faith. This kind of an approach also helps to prepare members for witnessing in the world.

6. ***Study Class for New Members***

We believe that new members should undergo a period of study and preparation before being formally received into the membership of a local church. Our members should understand what they believe and know their faith. This study will help them to give a reason for the hope within. These classes should consist of some serious biblical and, theological studies. If we make such study mandatory, church membership will mean more, and we may have more and better evangelists among our membership.

7. ***The Role of the Church Building***

We believe, as many have said, that the church building itself is a form of evangelism. A beautiful building (not necessarily ornate or luxurious), kept neat and clean may attract outsiders to our worship services. Well-kept surroundings also help. It is certain that people are more attracted to beauty than ugliness. However, a word of caution should be added. While the church building is necessary and helpful, it is not an end in itself. ***We do not erect our church buildings simply to impress society with our cathedrals. Nor do we build in order to seclude and isolate ourselves from the world that God loves. Our purpose is primarily to have a place of assembling ourselves for common worship and nurture.*** We must never allow our desire for a nice church building to stand in the way of our primary calling to evangelism in the world.

8. ***Concerned Local Churches***

We believe that every local church should be actively concerned about the people in its community who have not yet found abundant life through Christ. The local church should be ***a fellowship of the concerned.*** (Elton Trueblood). This means that each local church should have a committee on evangelism, a list of people to be contacted, a regular program of visitation by the pastor and lay people, and an up-to-date record of all members and their whereabouts. From time to time it might be helpful for a local church, either by itself or in conjunction with other churches, to conduct a laymen's seminar on evangelism at which time the church's evangelistic task is squarely faced and plans developed to fulfill the same.

9. ***Use All Available Media***

We believe that there are various media which can be very effectively used in communicating the gospel to non-Christians. Among these we should call attention to the following, but at the same time emphasize the need for continuing experimentation with these and other media.

- a. ***Drama*** may be especially helpful. We are thinking here of two types — that presented in the church and that presented in public. Drama presented in the church, preferably in local dialects, may be very simple and still very effective. Chancel dramas may be presented without props or costumes and be more effective than the more elaborate ones. A team of young people might do a fine job in presenting public drama, even on the plaza. We need people who will attempt to write dramas for the Philippines with an evangelistic thrust, as well as people who will experiment with this form.
- b. ***Radio*** can be used to reach the outsider, as well as nurture present church members. We would like to see the radio stations of the National Council of Churches more widely used. We also believe that the influence of these stations would be increased if they were to prepare first class religious programs which could be used by the commercial stations now proliferating all over the country. We believe that some of our funds for evangelism could well be used for this purpose. We would also like to encourage some of our larger city, churches to have their own weekly radio program. We also feel that we should be open to the possibilities of using ***television.***
- c. ***Audio-visual aids*** can be more effectively used than they are presently. Here we are referring to such things as filmstrips, slides, posters, charts, flannel boards, films, etc. Even simple visual aids can be very

useful in communicating the gospel. For this reason we highly endorse the plan of our Audio-Visual Committee to sponsor, in conjunction with the Audio-Visual Commission of the National Council of Churches, Skill Shops of Communication throughout the country beginning May, 1966.

We also heartily approve the plan to establish Conference audio-visual centers and help conferences to secure some of the basic audio-visual aids.

- d. The power of the **printed page** is greater than we think. A well placed leaflet, magazine or book can often lead a person toward Christian faith. The United Church of Christ has published many fine materials which could be used in our program of evangelism. We expect and hope that more will be produced by our denomination and the National Council. We would like to encourage every local church to help in the distribution of these materials.
 - e. The **Written Word** is one of the most effective media for the proclamation of the Gospel, which is the essence of evangelism, Hence, it must be the chief concern of every evangelist to bring God's Word to the world, to consider always the common responsibility to distribute the Holy Scriptures, especially at a time of multiplying populations and rising literacy. The Bible is recognized as the incomparable treasure of God's Word which is power for the salvation of the world. There is no part in the Church which does not acknowledge that it needs the Scriptures for its very life, and there is no part of the Church which disowns the obligation to pay its part in bringing to all men the knowledge of Him of whom the Scriptures speak.
10. **Natural and Spontaneous Witnessing** We believe that one of the main emphasis in our evangelistic strategy and techniques is simply that of **person-to-person evangelism**. While not despising mass evangelism, we do believe that small natural and informal settings may be more conducive to sharing the gospel with outsiders. We believe that our members must be equipped to carry on evangelism in such situations. This does not mean giving memorized speeches or quoting a series of biblical passages, but simply sharing with another what Christ means in one's life. God usually works through persons, and an evangelist is one who believes that imperfect as he may be, God wants to work through him and does.

SEEKING UNITY IN CHRIST

Executive Committee

8-9 December 1967

Four days of October, 1967, the 24th through 27th may be regarded as red letter days in the religious history of the Philippines. On those days, significant pages were added to the chapter on mission and Christian unity, when 38 representatives from the Methodist Church in the Philippines, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the Division of World Mission of the Methodist Church (U.S.), and the Division of World Mission of the Evangelical United Brethren Church (U.S.) met to discuss cooperation and unity between the two major Protestant Churches in the Philippines.

The consultation was inspired by the decision to unite on the part of two of the Churches in the United States, which are related to the two Philippine Churches. It was recognized that the union of the two American Churches into the United Methodist Church will have far reaching implication for their continuing participation in Christian mission in the Philippines, including the relationship of two Philippine Churches to each other. Both the Methodist Church in the Philippines and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines will now be related to the continuing missionary effort of the new United Methodist Church in the U.S.

The first two days, October 24th and 25th, were spent in two consultative groups meeting separately; representatives of The Methodist Church and the deputation from the Division of World Mission of The Methodist Church (U.S.) in one group; and United Church representatives and the deputation from the Division of World Mission of the EUB Church (U.S.) in the other. The following two days, October 26th and 27th, were spent in joint consultation. Most of those who participated believed that it was a fruitful consultation which was brought about by the prayers of intercession of many, and by the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The most effective way to report the result of the consultation is to present the Joint Communique, prepared by Bishop Jose L. Valencia and myself, together with the opening and closing statements I was requested to make.

A JOINT COMMUNIQUE

Executive Committee

8-9 December 1967

We rejoice in the arrival of the era of Church unity, particularly in the union recently consummated between the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church in the United States, creating the new Church, The United Methodist Church. We, their respective counterparts in the Philippines, The Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ, are grateful to God for this development and feel drawn more closely together than ever before.

We recognize the great responsibility that this union has brought to the two Churches in the Philippines that are related to those uniting Churches, particularly as it relates to our task of mission in this country.

Realizing the full implications of the church union creating The United Methodist Church, The Methodist Church in the Philippines and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines are ready to consider changing patterns of relationship — both with the United Methodist Church and between themselves.

For the purpose of considering those matters of relationship and partnership in mission, a joint consultation was held on October 26 and 27, 1967, in the headquarters of the National Council of Churches in Quezon City and the Conference Room of Philippine Christian College in Manila, gathering together leaders from both Churches and leaders from the Boards of Missions of the two uniting American Churches. In the joint consultation, there was a most cordial atmosphere, frank and open sharing of ideas and concerns, and the genuine desire to learn from each other. We have been amazed at the wonderful results that have come from this conversation. Realizing our human limitations, we can only contribute the success of our common effort to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the inspiration given by the coming into being of The United Methodist Church, for which we thank God.

We are happy to report to our constituencies and churches the findings of the joint consultation, which give the general direction our two Churches will take in the future:

FINDINGS

1. A Consultation between the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and The Methodist Church in the Philippines, together with representatives from the boards of missions of the Methodist Church and of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, was held in Manila on October 26 and 27, 1967.
2. The purpose of the Consultation was to explore the implication of the forthcoming union of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church for the relationships of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Methodist Church to the Board of Missions of The United Methodist Church, and for the relationships between the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and The Methodist Church in the Philippines.

The Consultation discussed the present lines of relationships:

- a. between The Methodist Church in the Philippines and the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church in the United States of America; and
- b. between the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the five cooperating Churches through their mission boards, with a view to finding ways of improving or adjusting the existing set-up as a result of the changes brought about by the union of the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church.

The Consultation established the need for more adequate liaison between the two churches in the Philippines; it recommends to the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and to The Methodist Church in the Philippines the establishment of an Interchurch Council, which is described as follows:

- a. There shall be a liaison agency for consultation between the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and The Methodist Church in the Philippines.
 - b. The name of the liaison agency shall be the Interchurch Council
 - c. The Interchurch Council shall be composed of 24 members, with 12 members selected by each Church; it is suggested that each church include three, women in its delegation.
 - d. The Interchurch Council shall be an instrument of consultation and recommendation concerning:
 1. basic policy, financing, property, and personnel relating to the cooperative work in which the two churches are already engaged.
 2. new areas of cooperative work as a continuing effort to promote partnership in mission.
 - e. In transmitting the deliberations of the Interchurch Council to the two churches for consideration and action, copies will be transmitted also to the Philippine Interboard Office and to the World Division of The Board of Missions of the United Methodist Church, for purposes of information.
 - f. It shall have the following officers: two co-chairman, and two co-secretaries.
 - g. It shall have a steering committee consisting of the two co-chairmen, the two co-secretaries, and three others.
 - h. The tenure of membership is to be graduated in such a way that one-half of the total membership shall be elected every two years.
 - i. It shall meet at least twice a year, one of which meetings shall be the annual meeting; special meetings may be called by the steering committee.
 - j. It shall be convened for organization purposes by Bishop Benjamin I. Guansing not later than the last week of February.
3. The Consultation discussed the need for more adequate care of the missionaries in the two churches and recommends to the Philippine Interboard Office and the World Division of the Board of Missions, in consultation with the Churches, the setting up of an interchurch missionary office to consider such matters as joint missionary maintenance, language study and orientation.
 4. The Consultation discussed firmly and openly the ways in which the two churches handle finance and property. The Methodists expressed the conviction and the intention that any existing Evangelical United Brethren property in the new United Methodist Church in the Philippines shall be under the control of and for the use of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Moreover, where legal problems of transfer are involved. The Philippine Methodist conference will be glad to help in every way possible to achieve this end. The United Church of Christ representative welcomed these sentiments, with appreciation.

It is our common hope that both of our Churches in the Philippines will rejoice in this development and will pray for God's richest blessings on our growing unity and enlarging partnership in mission in this part of the world.

BISHOP JOSE L. VALENCIA

Senior Bishop

The Methodist Church

BISHOP ENRIQUE C. SOBREPEÑA

General Secretary

United Church of Christ in the Philippines

October 27, 1967

ATTESTED BY MEMBERS Oef.H.E JOINT CONSULTATION:

THE METHODIST CHURCH

Bishop Jose L. Valencia

Bishop Benjamin I. Guansing

Bishop D. D. Alejandro
Mr. Pedro S. Angeles
Rev. Benjamin Asis
Rev. Gregotio Bailen
Mr. Froilan B. Calata
Rev. Byron Clark
Rev. Cornelio M. Ferrer
Rev. Cornerlio M. Ferrer, Jr.
Mr. E.G. Gacutan
Mr. Francisco Gaspar

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES

Bishop Juan I. Pia
Bishop Enrique C. Sobrepeña
Bishop Onofre G. Fonceca
Bishop Marciano C. Evangelista
Mr. Ludovico S. Agulto
Dr. Cristina C. Albano
Rev. Samuel G. Catli
Dr. Cipriano Navarro
Rev. Noel D. Osborn
Mr. Faustino P. Quiocho
Rev. Cirilo A. Rigos
Dr. Norwood B. Tye

**POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING RELATIONSHIPS
AND SUPPORT OF PERSONNEL OF OTHER COUNTRIES**

Executive Committee
6-7 December 1968

In order to encourage the missionary outreach of related churches in other part of the world, and to further the internationalization of personnel, the Commission VOTED to establish the following policy guidelines:

1. To encourage regional and ecumenical bodies to expand channels for negotiation and support of new missionary and interchurch service relationships.
2. To encourage direct negotiation between potential sending and receiving churches on proposed missionary appointments and interchurch service relationships. Such matters as length of term, salary, allowances, housing, furloughs, travel, transportation where required, recruiting, selection, administrative supervision, and other arrangements should be determined by those directly involved in the interchange of personnel and the Commission should not become involved in these matters.
3. To make grants, as opportunities present themselves and budgets permits, for the support of personnel interchange arrangements, encouraging sending and receiving churches combined to provide at least 25% of total support costs.
4. Grants may be made through one of the following alternative patterns:
 - A. To sending churches for partial support of particular missionaries,
 - B. To sending churches for a proportionate share of their total overseas missionary budget,
 - C. To a regional council or other ecumenical body for participation in ecumenical systems of missionary support (e.g., E.A.C.C. Asian Missionaries Support Fund),

- D. To receiving churches or institutions for a share in the cost of their employment of overseas personnel.
5. Grants will be made only for fixed periods of time and for agreed upon amounts (or percentages) with the understanding that all responsibilities (including provision for emergencies or unforeseen eventualities) will be the responsibility of sending and/or receiving churches or institutions, as agreed upon in advance.
 6. Appointment, or administrative supervision by the Commission of citizens of other countries will be considered an exception to these policies, except as career relationships which exist with personnel as of December 31, 1968- may imply a moral commitment to consider reappointment at appropriate times as provided by the new policy on the Development and Deployment of Personnel (CA. # 672-1318). When unusual circumstances require service in our missionary force of someone of another nationality, this will be accomplished by means of secondment by his church.
 7. As long as citizens of other countries continue as our missionaries, to provide for them pension coverage within their own nation or church, and where this is not possible, to provide coverage through the Annuity Builder Plan, rather than the United Presbyterian Pension Plan.

STATEMENT ON MISSIONARY CONCERN, LAW, ORDER, AND NATIONAL UNITY

General Assembly
24-28 May 1970

LAW, ORDER AND NATIONAL UNITY

The General Assembly views with deep concern the outbursts of lawlessness and the rampant disregard of order which disrupt national unity and solidarity. These have become barriers in the united effort of our country and people to pursue the goals of progress and national development.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, believing in, the oneness and the solidarity of mankind and confessing that Christ came to reconcile the world unto himself and made us agents of reconciliation to bring about peace, harmony and love to all people and in all places, hereby endorse this approach on the local, regional and national level.

1. In areas where there has risen a strain in the relationship of Christians and those of other faiths, we urge the local churches and conferences to take the initiative in bringing about a dialogue or series of dialogues where the problems were brought into light, and efforts in promoting unity and understanding achieved. At the same time Christians are to seek opportunities whereby they could join hands with other agencies that seek to promote peaceful solutions to the problems.
2. In areas where hostilities have broken up in the form of violence and where armed elements frustrate the efforts for a peaceful and productive way of life, we call on the President of the Philippines to exert immediate and exhaustive efforts to ease those problems and to bring justice to all. In this regard the General Assembly authorizes its bishops and officers to make representations with the President.

Ref: *General Assembly*, Baguio City, May 24-28, 1970.

A STATEMENT OF SOCIAL CONCERN

General Assembly
24-28, May 1970

Social change, which has always been a part of man's existence, has accelerated greatly during the past decade. The Philippines, which is feeling the impact of this change, has set herself to the task of modernizing her society. There is a need for the church as we enter the decade of the 70's to assess the changes taking place in the

Philippines and to define goals and to provide guidelines for the action of the Church and individual Christians in the process of national development.

The 1960 Statement on specific issues is relevant for the decade of the 70's. We reiterate our declarations on the various issues:

ON POPULATION TRENDS

The increase in population will have vast effects on the direction taken by the Philippine economy in the immediate future. What should the Philippine government stress in its economic development plans? The necessity for the agricultural sector to produce enough food to meet basic human needs stands high on the priority list. The ability of industrialization to provide the machinery for rapid development and to provide jobs for the increasing numbers entering the labor market is another major concern. Still another problem is the need to provide adequate space and facilities for already over-crowded urban areas.

ON MODERN TECHNOLOGY

As industrialization becomes more of a force in the nation, the Philippines can look forward to more locally manufactured goods in meeting her people's particular needs. Not only will industry provide more jobs but it will decrease the dependence of the Philippines upon overseas manufactured goods. Industrialization will bring benefits to the people in the form of a greater variety of locally produced goods, in terms of higher wages and a rising standard of living. But in this movement to industrialize there are problems which should not be overlooked.

ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

We look with approval upon all attempts at meeting the problems of rural areas within the broad perspective of the development of community life. We give our support to programs (e.g. PACD, cooperatives) which foster self-help and further community cooperation on the barrio level. We encourage our people in rural areas to make use of government and private programs aimed at increasing their productivity and developing sound community life. Believing in the process of grass roots democracy we encourage our rural people to discuss policies of the national government which directly or indirectly affect the agricultural areas. We, furthermore, encourage them to express their thinking on these issues through local government channels and to those national officials responsible for making Philippine policy and legislations.

ON URBANIZATION

We urge the government and private industry to seek ways in which the growing industry of the country can be decentralized over a wider area. We call upon the national city government, as well as private enterprise, to expand their programs for low income housing projects to provide for the growing population of the cities. We are concerned with the cities social problems and call upon the national government to work together with city governments in expanding welfare services for the numerous squatter families and individuals caught in disintegrating social conditions. At the same time we offer our resources in working together with government and other agencies in studying and meeting these problems.

ON UNEMPLOYMENT

We encourage support of the apprenticeship program and other programs of the government aimed at developing the vocational skills of the people in agriculture and industry. We are concerned, however, that these training programs should be carefully planned according to present and future industrial needs. At the same time as young men and women are being trained for industrial production, we call upon the government, together with private industry, to strengthen those agencies which are concerned with the quality and standardization of local products.

We call for the concerted effort of the government in carrying through cottage industry programs. We not only encourage our own individual members to invest in well-planned cottage industries which will meet local needs, but we also offer our support to economically feasible cottage industry projects.

We call upon the national, provincial and municipal governments to provide for a wider network of roads in furthering the development of the economic potentialities of the Philippines.

ON TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

We encourage a free, responsible and democratic trade union movement. We see the opportunity for educating the great number of workers to responsible citizenship and workmanship through the trade unions. We also recognize the place of trade unions in achieving a more equitable distribution of the benefits produced by labor. We call upon our own Christian workmen to support the trade union movement and to provide the responsible participation and leadership necessary to achieving the goals of freedom and justice in society. We are concerned also with the tremendous task and responsibility placed upon management in developing the economic resources of the nation. Therefore, we encourage those engaged in this task to discover ways and means of directing the forces of economic life into healthy patterns of community living.

More than ever, the **Christian Church must actively engage itself in the task of bringing about social justice.** Development and progress have been impeded because of the imbalance existing in all sectors and levels of Philippine Society. This has resulted in the virtual oppression and deprivation of the many and the abusive affluence and preferential treatment of the few. This condition has caused many ills, even to the extent of dislocating moral values.

Where the land is concentrated in the hands of the few, the church must seek all available and appropriate means within the structures of government and society to cause bringing about fair and equitable distribution of land resources. Where people are being dispossessed of their land holdings by unscrupulous entrepreneurs and speculators, the Christ must join the ranks of all those seeking justice and reforms to help people hold on to their lands.

Part of the responsibility is the process of education related to the meaning and responsibility of land ownership on the part of the people and the profitable cultivation thereof. Without this, the landless acquiring land and those assisted to protest their land holdings will just as soon sell them out to smart manipulators for easy and immediate cash which is meaninglessly squandered.

The urban situation is seething with the squatter problem, with the accompanying elements of filth, disease, malnutrition, crime, immorality, etc. We declare the conviction that each human individual or family is entitled to a decent roof over his head and a patch of land to set it up, from where his place of work is accessible. Dole outs to squatters do not provide them with their needs, nor would help them in setting up themselves as responsible citizens in the community.

We call the attention of the national government and all authorities concerned to the situation obtaining in the Tondo Foreshoreland. The settlers should be awarded lots wherein to establish their homes. We urge upon the national government to act quickly on this situation, and award lots to the thousands of settlers.

We urge upon the national government and local governments concerned to take immediate action to improve the living conditions in the Sapang Palay and Carmona resettlement areas. Such facilities as water, transportation and lighting should be adequately provided. We urge extensive training of these resettled men and women in the various vocational and technical skills and the formulation and implementation of an effective job placement program.

We are in accord with the student population in demanding for just reforms. We unconditionally give our backing for their demands for just wages for all workers, speedy implementation of the land reform program, adoption of constitution responsive to the Philippine situation and needs, application of single standard in the administration of justice, etc. We declare full support to all peaceful means of pursuing demands and expressing and seeking redress to grievances. We, however, deplore any and all forms of violence and subversion as means of seeking reforms.

We are for free and non-partisan constitutional convention to rewrite the already out-moded fundamental law of the republic. We uphold the principle that the forthcoming constitutional convention be a truly representative body, with delegates coming from all sections of Philippine society.

General Assembly
May 24-28, 1990
Baguio City

STATEMENT ON EVANGELISM

Executive Committee

1971

BIBLICAL BASIS

*He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor
To bind up the hearts that are broken,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
freedom to those in prison ...
to comfort those who mourn ...*

Isaiah 61:1 -2

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor,
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind;
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*

Luke 4:18-19

*For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink;
I was a stranger and you made me welcome,
naked and you clothed me,
in prison and you came to see me.*

Matthew 25:39

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all
that I have commanded you; and lo,
I am with you always, to the close of the age.*

Matthew 28:19-20

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit
has come upon you,
and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and
in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.*

Acts 1:8

*Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth,
and the life no one comes to the Father, but by me.*

John 14:6

A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

*The faith and trust given by Jesus Christ
Evangelism is the bearing of our witness,
in Jesus Christ for the world.*

*A witness in word and deed.
A movement from word to deed
the oneness of Word and deed.*

*Not a privilege but a compelling and humbling task
Evangelism is communication with the world,
of the mighty acts of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit.*

*Discovering, discerning, and celebrating and sharing
His reconciling acts of love in the midst of Humanity.*

*Evangelism is God's work in us;
A concern for human life
for its potentiality and abundancy.*

*A concern for liberation,
liberating men from all sinful
dehumanizing pressures and systems.*

*A concern for participation,
participating in the task
of love and justice for all.*

*Evangelism is not image building,
But genuine self-giving
springing from Jesus Christ alone and
a commitment to Him
rooted in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.*

*To this task Jesus Christ was obedient,
To this task we commit ourselves,
To this task,
The United Church of Christ in the Philippines commits herself.
Ever conscious that men of courage, dedication and
steadfast purpose in love,
obedient to His Spirit
are channels of God's power and Grace.*

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR EVANGELISM

*To witness is to Proclaim,
To Proclaim is to Preach,
To Preach is to Live
The Living Word, Jesus Christ.
His Good News of Life,
And to Celebrate His Mighty
Act of Redemption in the Cross and His Resurrection.*

The Local Congregation

The local congregation is the concrete reality of the Church Universal. It is the concrete reality of the gathered people of God. It is her liturgical life *Liturgia* (work of the people) offered in worship that witness is proclaimed in the Preaching and the Acting of the Holy Word of God, Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are to strengthen, enrich, and equip the saints in the worship life of the local congregation. For in the gathered community in worship, we are God's people. *It was there from the beginning; we have heard it; we have seen it with our, own eyes; we looked upon it, and felt with our own hands; and it is of this we tell. Our theme is the word of life. This life was made visible; we have seen it and bear our testimony; we have declared to you the eternal life which dwelt with the Father and was made visible to us. What we have seen and heard we declare to you, so that*

you and we together may share in a common life, that life which we share with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:1 -3 NEB).

A Style of Life

The Christian presence is a presence of LOVE. It is the Christian's style of life to be SALT, A LEAVEN, A LIGHT, expressed in individual relationships with one another in the family, and in our daily life of responsibility.

I give you a new commandment: Love one another; as I have loved you, then all will know that you are my disciples. (John 13:34-35 NEB)

A Life of a Citizen

To witness to the concerned love of Jesus Christ is to live a life in the given world of God. Participating in human development and nation-building is the Christian's witnessing life. As Christians, our earthly citizenship should be a manifestation of our citizenship of the Kingdom of God. This is made clear and known in our being good citizens of our country. We are to be deeply involved in the ongoing social process of needed changes in our society and nation, that man may become fully human and that our nation share in the humanization of all mankind.

Stand firm against the device of the devil. For our fight is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the super forces of evil in the heavens. Therefore, take up God's armour; then you will be able to stand your ground when things are at their worst, to complete every task and still to stand. (Ephesians 6:12-13 NEB)

Ecumenical Life

The whole body of Christ, local, national and universal is the witness, the Mission of God's loving concern here on earth. To live in Division is Sin. Where there is no unity, the vision is blurred, and the evangelistic task of liberating men from sin is dimmed.

In the pursuance of our evangelistic task we affirm Unity without Uniformity, and Unity in the midst of Diversity. We shall join to witness an ecumenical life together, any local congregation, denomination, religious or non-religious bodies where God is active in love, hope, and faith for the glory of God and the salvation of Mankind.

Ref: **Executive Committee**, Action # 71-171 , 1971.

EMPHASIS OF THE WHOLE CHURCH

Executive Committee

7-8 December 1973

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE AND POLICY ON MISSION¹

We reiterate our conviction that mission is the summation of the task and responsibility of the Church. However, the committee wishes to direct the mind of the Church to the understanding and implementation of our concern for mission in our response to the need and care of our *cultural minorities* and *peoples overseas* in terms of missionary funds and personnel.

In the light of our present financial resources and personnel strength, we declare that our program in home mission constitute our major missionary task without abandoning our interest in needs of peoples overseas within the scope of our capacity to provide for.

That the growth of national leadership is the dominant factor in the decrease of our missionary personnel for overseas mission. We, therefore, hope that this prevailing condition which is a progressive trend will determine the action of the program of the Mission Board and associated brethren in their plan of sending new missionaries to work with us in the next quadrennium.

STATEMENT ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONS²

General Assembly
16-20 May 1974

The whole body of Christ, local, national and universal, is the witness, the mission of God's loving concern here on earth. To live in division is sin. Where there is no unity, the vision is blurred, and the evangelistic task of liberating men from sin is doomed. In the pursuance of our evangelistic task we affirm unity in the midst of diversity. We shall join to witness an ecumenical life together, and local congregation, denomination, religious or non-religious bodies where God is active in love, hope, and faith for the glory of God and salvation of mankind."

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON EVANGELISM³

General Assembly
16-20 May 1974

That evangelism is the proclamation by word and by life of the unbounded love of God in Jesus Christ for the world to the end that Man may be persuaded to accept Christ, our Lord and Saviour and to relate himself to the 'body of Christ: — the Church and its mission for man and his society of reconciliation and liberation.

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON STEWARDSHIP⁴

General Assembly
16-20 May 1974

We believe that God is the Creator and Owner of all things. We believe that God is the ruler and sovereign of all things and rules with justice and love. We serve and worship God with all these things or token of our thanking for the redeeming power of the love of Jesus Christ. So we offer to God in service and our worship, our time, talents and influence."

¹Ref: **General Assembly**, Action # 74-63.

²Ref: **Executive Committee**, Action #72-147.
General Assembly, Action #74-63.

³Ref: **Executive Committee**, Action #72-153.
General Assembly, Action #74-64.

⁴Ref: **Executive Committee**, Action #72-154.
General Assembly, Action #74-65.

STATEMENT ON RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD AND FAMILY PLANNING

General Assembly
31 May -5 June 1974

For countless centuries, man lived a precarious existence upon the earth. He was threatened with extinction by wild animals, by famine, by pestilence, by disease and by war. It is only within the last two centuries that over population or the *population explosion* has become a threat to human beings. At least, the command God gave to Adam and Eve has been fulfilled: *Be fruitful, and multiply, replenish the earth.*

While the birth rate in the Philippines has not increased, phenomenal advances in medical services and other factors have resulted in a very rapid growth in population. From seven and one-half million in 1903, the population has increased to more than thirty million today. With the present rate of birth and with decreases in the rate of deaths, the population is expected to double every 24 years.

While over-population is a great danger to the nation as a whole, too many babies may be catastrophic for an individual family. It may frustrate the possibility of further education for the father; it may ruin the mother's health or sanity; and it may make it impossible for the children to receive the care and education that will enable them to develop their God-given capacities and be assets to society.

THEREFORE, we call upon our churches and their members to study, pray and work.

1. For study and implementation of the Reports of the East Asia Christian Conference Consultation on ***The Churches in Asia and Responsible Parenthood***; especially, for serious consideration of the position set forth in the Introductory Statement of that Report which reads:

In its physical purpose, marriage offers a means to marital companionship for the expression of love and the nourishment of the one-flesh marriage union, and also a means for the majority of couples to express their love and fulfill their union in procreation (Gen. 1:28). Through the gifts of medical science, these ends are more clearly seen to be separable in God's intent, Both contribute to the completeness of the marital union, but neither is subordinated to the other. Whether marital sex relations shall serve the need for companionship or also the claims of parenthood depends on the concrete circumstances of the marriage at a given time. The new knowledge of revolution and contraception underscores the responsibility of the couple to make parenthood or its postponement matters of ethical and care decisions.

2. For responsible parenthood and for bringing into the world only as many children as can be properly raised and prepared for full participation in life;
3. For the offering by church vocation-training institutions of suitable courses and seminars under competent leadership on marriage counselling including preparation for marriage and family responsibilities. Such a program will enable church workers to help provide for church member pre-marriage and marriage counselling, as well as education in responsible parenthood; and
4. For positive efforts by competent persons in giving sound family planning information and materials to under-privileged families who come to church-related hospitals, clinics, community centers and other social agencies. This counsel would be given as a matter of routine, as other needs are met.

Ref: **General Assembly** May 31-June 5, 1974, pp. 22-23.

A STATEMENT ON MARTIAL LAW AND EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ON RELATED ISSUES

**General Assembly
20 May 1974**

We, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, responding to what we believe is God's will for us these days, solemnly pledge to do our best in the building of a new society:

1. By **challenging** all to a life of faith and holiness, beginning with those who are within the fellowship of the Church;
2. By **giving** unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, unto God the things that are God's;
3. By **praying** for those who are in authority, that they may be instruments of God in preserving peace and order, promoting righteousness and justice, securing equality and opportunity for all, and safeguarding the worth and dignity of human persons;
4. By **seeking** the truth which makes men free and working for freedom that makes men whole;
5. By **witnessing** to the liberating power of the Gospel which sets free both the oppressed and the oppressor;
6. By **opposing** abuses and corruption in the church and in the government;
7. By **gearing** and girding our educational programs to help meet the pressing needs of our people;
8. By **engaging** in various forms of Christian service to those detained but not charged in court, to prisoners in need of spiritual comfort and pastoral care, to farm and industrial workers seeking just wages and better conditions of living, to the poor and the underprivileged who need to feel the touch of the Master's love;

9. By **upholding** the due processes of democracy in church and society;
10. By **nurturing** church members into a more aggressive and dynamic discipleship that will dispel the atmosphere of fear, knowing that God has given us the spirit of love and not of fear;
11. By **being prophetic** in preaching, serving, and witnessing and being true to the mandates of our Lord;
12. By **offering** ourselves as a reconciling agent to heal broken relationships and foster understanding, trust, and brotherhood.

In the context of this total concern, we address ourselves to some specific issues which affect the entire Filipino nation:

1. Announcement has been made that there might be another *referendum* within a month or two. Whenever it may be and whatever the issues are, we request the President that he reassures us that there is *freedom of speech* so that voters can discuss the issues intelligently. Our people should be encouraged to speak out their minds candidly. Furthermore, to help give maximum assurance to our people that fairness and freedom are truly respected, we suggest to the President that the conduct of the coining referendum be entrusted to an independent body composed of citizens whose integrity is beyond reproach, such as the retired justices of the Supreme Court.
2. We are alarmed by the **rapid growth of multinational corporations** in the Philippines. We are particularly concerned about the adverse effect of the Philippine-Japan Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. We therefore call on the appropriate authorities and knowledgeable citizens to be most vigilant and to share their thinking as widely as possible, so that the people can participate in making decisions that affect their livelihood and their future.
3. Under the regime of Martial Law, the military has a big hand in the carrying out of government programs. We pray that they will have the strength equal to the task. We are deeply concerned by the fact that many of those being detained have not been charged in court. We appeal for a **more speedy dispensation of justice**. Furthermore, we express disapproval of any maltreatment of citizens, believing that every individual, however lowly and humble he may be, is a child of the Heavenly Father.

Ref: **General Assembly**, May 20, 1974, Appendix XVI pp. 152-153.

**STATEMENT OF PETITION TO THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA
REGARDING THE DISPOSITION OF THE PROPERTY ON GUERRERO STREET,
MALATE, MANILA**
Executive Committee
5-7 December 1974

The Executive Committee of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines has received information, from reliable sources, that the abovementioned property is being considered for turn over to the Philippine Christian College (PChC).

We learned, further, that PChC intends, and has laid out plans to use the property for the setting up of a building complex for commercial purpose, the profit from the operation to be used by PCK in its programs.

We were also informed that PChC intends to incorporate in the scheme a share of 10% of the profit to be given to the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and another 10% to the United Methodist Church.

The General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines through its Executive Committee strongly petitions the United Presbyterian Church in the USA to turn over the said property to the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, *not* to Philippine Christian College or its foundation.

The reasons behind this petition are as follows:

1. If the property be used for such purpose as PChC has planned, the United Church of Christ can undertake the same plan and extend assistance from the same earnings, not only to PChe but to many other programs and projects of the whole United Church constituency. The turn over to UCCP is petitioned on the basis of a *wider coverage* of assistance to UCCP programs, if the said property be maximized for earning purposes.
2. The *continued use of the property as hotel* for church leaders and members travelling from and to Manila is very necessary in view of the increasing cost of hotel accommodation which is, even-presently, beyond the reach of Filipino salary. Such leaders and members who have been making use of this privilege testify to the edification, fellowship, and mutual enrichment afforded them through conversations, contact, and informal dialogues during their guest house stay. This experience, we submit, is our experience that should not be lost due to the unavailability of guest house services.
3. Manila will continue to and, in fact, grow to be a *venue* for meetings, conferences, consultations, workshops, dialogues of the United Church of Christ in particular, and NCCP-related bodies in general. The Manila Christian Guest House affords an inexpensive accommodation for such programs within the reach of participants. To deprive us of such a possibility for the sake of profit to a single institution is to commit a sad mistake and to favor the elite over the less economically privileged.
4. The United Church of Christ has presented several requests for the said property. We consider it to be a *matter of priority and propriety* that the turn-over of properties owned by US Churches related to us be in consultation with the United Church of Christ and in deference to our priorities.

It is hoped that the United Presbyterian Church in the USA considers this petition favorably and advance the cause of partnership with the whole church rather than just a segment of it; promotes the interest of the wider constituency rather than the metropolitan population.

For and On Behalf of the Executive Committee, UCCP:

(Sgd) **Eliezer D. Mapanao**
Chairman

(Sgd) **Estanialao Q. Abainza**
General Secretary

(Sgd) **George M. Baladjay**
Vice-Chairman

(Sgd) **Ludovico S. Agulto**
National Treasurer

(Sgd) **Pedro Raterta**
Bishop, Visayas

(Sgd) **Mercurio M. Serina**
Bishop, Mindanao

(Sgd) **Aquilino F. Guerrero**
Bishop, Northern Luzon

(Sgd) **Eligio A. Hernandez**
Bishop, Southern Luzon

Ref.: **Executive Committee**, 74-291
December 5-7, 1974, p. 30.
Petition is appendix XII, pp. 107-108.

FIVE YEARS SELF-RELIANCE PLAN

Executive Committee
5-7 December 1974

NAME OF PROJECT: FIVE (5) YEARS SELF-RELIANCE PLAN

OBJECTIVE

To make the United Church of Christ in the Philippines fully self-supporting and self-reliant in the carrying out of its ministries after five years from 1 975.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To obtain from supporting churches in America, namely: UCMS, UCBWM, UPC-USA for five years to be invested for earning purposes.
2. To raise local resources apart from the one million pesos fund campaign the amount of P100,000.00 annually for five years.

IN RESTROSPECT : ANALYSIS OF THE 10 YEARS SUBSIDY TO THE UCCP

Years	In Dollars	\$-P Rate	Peso Equivalent
1974	\$ 70,000.00	P 6.70	P 502,005.54
1973	68,132.36	6.70	456,486.00
1973	92,949.46	6.55	635,019.00
1971	121,921.11	6.40	780,295.13
1970	176,158.36	3.90	687,017.63
1979	159,347.00	3.90	621,453.32
1968	159,937.00	3.88	620,555.56
1967	164,495.95	3.87	636,599.36
1966	169,407.29	3.87	655,606.25
1965	173,817.03	3.87	672,671.91
1964	165,262.33	3.87	639,567.56
10 years	<u>\$1,525,989.49</u>		<u>P 6,405,272.54</u>

From 1964 to 1974 the United Church of Christ in the Philippines received from the Boards \$1,525,989.49 or P6,405,272.54. There is no iota of a doubt the UCCP sustained its commitment to the Gospel ministry very actively and meaningfully because of the funds that came from the cooperating Boards. Of course both UCCP and the churches in the United States represented by the Cooperating Boards are agreed that these funds, while channeled through the churches in the United States, are basically (theologically) God's money. There is no denying the fact however, that the giving churches specially lately have felt the pinch of the tight money situation. The UCCP does not want to abuse, however, the stewardship of our partners in mission in the United States. Like them we would also like to mature fully in our stewardship of God's money.

IMPLICATIONS

If the partnership of the US churches and the UCCP continues to be the same, the UCCP will forever be dependent upon them for financial support. Whether the churches in the USA can sustain this dependency is very hard to tell. Changes in both attitudes and structures may make it more and more difficult for the cooperating Boards to continue nurturing, as a child, the UCCP. National politics, cosmic economic and social situations may drastically and adversely affect this relationship.

A PROPOSAL

A new proposed system of partnership therefore between the cooperating Boards and the UCCP has to be evolved before the *night* comes.

RATIONALE

The traditional system of aid gave donors the final say in the specific use of every penny they sent. It was the donors who decided whether a certain program was still relevant or not. But now donors cannot ignore the techniques available for bringing new benefits with dollar aid. These are:

1. **Increased financial efficiency**

An investment of say P1 million pesos earns a minimum amount of P120,000.00 a year forever. In thirty years the same total amount can have created a permanent income of three times the annual amount. The effects snowball. On the other hand a million pesos in annual gifts will last only 10 years.

2. **Increased selfhood and emotional self-reliance** is the best gift of all, far transcending the immediate physical benefits of annual gifts. Everything has its price - in this case extra work for the donors are:

- a. to give attention to the form of the investment.
- b. establish with receivers a careful form of words, to be written into the constitution of the investment, on how the income may be used. This must be specific enough to give a real flexibility to the receiver, that is, the income shall be used for all or any of the programs of the UCCP, or for any subsequent UCCP plans in the areas of education, community development, evangelism, etc.

Donor agencies sometimes fear that:

1. Their constituency will not give towards general programs;
2. That they will not be consulted on specific implementation of the general plans;
3. That they will not receive reports.

None of these fears need materialize. An effort in clear education and good subsequent reporting will persuade the man *in the pew* of the overwhelming advantages of the new form of aid, and the receiving church or churches usually welcome consultation, especially so when they do not *feel* threatened.

The ministries to be supported by the UCCP after it has attained sufficiency and self-support are, primarily, the following:

1. ***Continuing Leadership Development***

- a. theological education scholarships
- b. teachers education scholarships
- c. hospital personnel scholarships
- d. agricultural technicians scholarships
- e. scholarship to upgrade personnel
- f. non-theological education
- g. other personnel training

2. ***Christian Education***

- a. production of indigenous Christian Education materials
- b. annual training of Sunday School teachers
- c. youth work
- d. women's work
- e. men's work

3. ***Church Growth*** (Evangelism)

- a. equipping the UCCP constituency for service
- b. increasing UCCP membership
- c. production of materials in evangelism, stewardship, etc.

4. Assisting ***Church-related schools*** improve school plants, curricula offerings

5. Continuing ***research*** to pinpoint weaknesses and strengths of UCCP's ministries in order to improve its program concerns, thus making those concerns humanizing and meaningful to people

6. ***Home Mission programs*** in cultural communities

- a. organization of settlement areas for the people in cultural communities
- b. literacy programs
- c. economic (agricultural), medical programs
- d. helping the people in the survey and titling of their properties

7. ***International Ecclesiological Relationships***

- a. Ecumenical sharing of funds and personnel (ESF)
- b. Christian Church in Asia participation (CCA)
- c. World Council of Churches participation (WCC)

- d. Alliance of Reformed Churches Participation (WMC)
- 8. **Pension** and Retirement for Church workers
- 9. **Development programs** among the *poorest of the poor*
- 10. Continuing church **leadership training**
- 11. Assisting calamity victims in their **emergency needs** and in rehabilitation
- 12. **Salary subsidy** for Moderators and other church workers working among the *poorest of the poor*.

74-237 VOTED: That the 5-year Self-Reliance Plan (Appendix VI) be presented to Philippine Joint Action Group as the only project proposal from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines; provided that this action shall not prejudice the askings and/or project proposals, already submitted and favorably responded to, including, but not limited to the case of Union Christian College School of Nursing.

Ref: **Executive Committee** December 5-7, 1974, p. 16.
Proposal is in Appendix VI pp. 62-66.

STATEMENT ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AFFAIRS

Executive Committee
19-20 May 1975

1. **That** the Church recognizes the inadequacy of its understanding of the history and culture of the -cultural communities which at times has resulted in action contrary to their history and culture.
2. **That** a Study-Action Committee be created with the following tasks:
 - a. Dig into the historical background of the Mindanao conflict involving Muslim-Christian relations, and other ethnic groups;
 - b. Affirm positive values of the cultural communities;
 - c. Produce study materials for seminars with the aim of overcoming prejudice against the cultural communities.
3. **That** the Church take a firm stand in its concern for justice for both Christians and other cultural communities, thus paving the way for development.
4. **That** the church encourage, wherever feasible, dialogue between Christians and other cultural communities.
5. **That** the Church enter into a long-term program of development, with the end in view of liberating and enabling people and communities in securing lands thus helping them in their struggle for development as a people of God.
6. **That** the Church make a firm stand against forces of underdevelopment, especially among the cultural communities. Such a condition is sin and people manipulating such factors to further their greed at the expense of the people, are sinners in any language.

Ref: **Executive Committee**, May 19-20, 1976, Action # 75-52 pp.18-19.

ON THE CHURCH AND DEVELOPMENT

General Assembly
21-26 May 1978

GENERAL STATEMENT

From the documents of our Church, past, and those of this quadrennial General Assembly, Cagayan De Oro, May 21-26, 1978 focused on the theme **The Christian Presence in the Last Quarter of the Century**, we were provided the opportunity to reflect and faithfully express the meaning of our presence today and in the future.

The reports of our Bishops summon and challenge us to direct our commitment, concerns, involvement and programs towards the development of people and communities. The process of development must have meaning only if set into motion by the direct participation of people themselves.

Our awareness of the concrete situation has led us to repentance, and the experience of forgiveness is manifested through our definite action to change de-humanizing situations, the brutal effect of which are significantly felt by the poor, oppressed and the dispossessed.

In this context, development becomes a continuous liberating process wherein God's children respond to and participate in God's redemptive plan for the world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Inspired by the Holy Spirit and in response to the challenge of the present, we humbly recommend:

- I. The adoption of the following documents herein to the challenge • of the present, we humbly recommend:
 - a) The **Statement on Priority and 'Strategy on Development** approved by the NCCP Executive Committee in 1914 and reiterated in 1978;
 - b) The **Epistle to the Christians of Today**, written by 30 participants during a study on society and institutions sponsored by the Mindanao Jurisdiction.
- II. The adoption of the same documents mentioned above as basic guidelines in the quest for solutions of social problems and in any development programs and projects, which we may undertake.
- III. That our Church take a more unified direction in pursuing programs and projects on development, that in these and in all areas of concern, we should always express our primary task which is Christian witness.
- IV. That we reiterate our commitment to the Church Self-Reliance Program as expressive of the development thrust.

In working for the achievement of these goals, it is recommended further:

- A. For the Church on all levels to review the Evangelism and Development programs thrusts, re-examine policies on self-reliance, and see whether this is expressive of our development direction during this interim period as we work towards attaining self-reliance rather than dependence of foreign funding.
- B. For the Church to have a desk on Research and Documentation for the following basic purposes:
 1. **gather, collate** and **document** concrete experiences or our involvements in development programs all over the country.
 2. **systematize** these with respective theological reflections, come out as materials which can be disseminated to local churches for Bible studies, devotional guides, Sunday School references, etc.
 3. **conduct** educational programs on development, research, project proposal making, administration of projects and the like.
 4. **process** and **evaluate** these proposals as a monitoring and clearing-house.
 5. **coordinate** and **oversee** development programs and projects of the Church.
- C. Encourage conferences to conduct seminars aimed specifically at reviewing government policies and programs on development, that in all these activities the participation of the broad masses directly affected be encouraged for the attainment of human dignity.
- D. Encourage the churches on all levels to set aside in its budget funds for community development programs.

Reference: **General Assembly**, May 21-26, 1978, Action 78-120 p. 35.
The Position Paper is in **General Assembly**, May 21-26, 1978,
Appendix XXIV, pp. 556-567.

ON THE MINDANAO SITUATION

General Assembly
21-26 May 1978

We See Mindanao

as a land of promise and many broken promises;

as a land of ongoing conflicts and struggle of people hoping for peace based on justice and genuine development;

as a land where cultures do not only meet, but melt as well;

as a land where faith shines best in people even in the midst of

D-espair searching for hope,
E-nslavement groping for freedom,
A-ccusation awaiting trial,
T-reachery hungering for friendship, and
H-and grenades if not Howitzers hoping for love instead;

as a land where people can possibly live in love based on the principle of the kinship of people under God.

We Perceive

the Mindanao conflict as a historical development where the factors of politics and economics play the dominant and determinant roles, respectively; and bound intricately by cultural and religious factors;

the present efforts to its solution as palliative and mercenary in its stance to further enhance the greed for political and economic powers;

the Moro National Liberation Front and the Bangsa Moro Army, including the Mindanao Independence Movement, as attempts to solve an existing problem;

the New People's Army, a new corner in the area of battle and occupying some of the northern portions of Mindanao, as another alternative offered to the people of Mindanao;

the Church in ecumenical ventures as desperately looking for the light through programs and projects that could only produce a dent in the solution of the problems.

We Confess

that we are innocent, if not ignorant, of the roots, shape, growth and fruits of the Mindanao conflict;

that we have neglected grossly the challenge of Mindanao to the Body of Christ in the Philippines;

that we have used more of our time, talents and treasures on the minor issues rather than on the major concerns of the here-and-now;

that we have been aloof, if not arrogant, to the solution of the Mindanao problem.

We Resolve

to develop our latent humility in our approach to the Mindanao conflict;

to identify ourselves with the oppressed and exploited Muslims of Mindanao;

to stand for and with the Muslims as a people searching for their identity and direction in history;

to assist in the process of building-up a people in their struggle for peace where genuine dialogue can take place on an equal relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed.

We Act to Propose

the creation of a Muslim Desk in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines with the following tasks:

- a. to educate the people of God in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines regarding the complexity of the Mindanao conflict;
- b. to present a program for the radical awareness of the afflicted after proper consultation with the people directly and indirectly affected by the conflict;
- c. to collate materials and data pertinent to the desk;
- d. to present officially the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in seminars and conferences related to the desk;

a workshop-seminar for orientation and contact with the Muslim world for the leader of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in all levels;

the changing of attitudes through the radical change of situations and conditions that nurtured the same negative attitudes toward the Muslim;

the participation of the local churches in the celebration of *RAMADAN* 1398 — August 4 to September 3, 1978 — through the use of the PACEM lesson guide **Breaking Down of Walls**;

the concept of Christian Presence as our guidelines in the ministry to the Muslim World;

a complementing and coordinating relationship with other agencies and institutions having goals and objectives of solving the Muslim Conflict.

ONLY WHEN THE BODY OF CHRIST MOVES FROM ITS POSITION OF STATUS QUO TO ITS HIGH CALLING FOR EXODUS BASED ON ITS VISION FOR THE LAST QUARTER OF THE CENTURY CAN IT BE TRANSFORMED AND TRANSFORMING AS WELL.

Ref: **General Assembly** May 21-26, 1978, Action 78-116 p. 35.

*The Statement on the Mindanao Situation is in **General Assembly**,*

May 21-26, 1978, Appendix XXI, pp. 552-553

EPISTLE TO THE CHRISTIANS OF TODAY

General Assembly

21-26 May 1978

In the spirit of concern, we 30 participants to a study seminar on society and institutions sponsored by the Office of the Bishop — UCCP Mindanao Jurisdiction from 27 March to 2 April, 1978, in Davao City, reflected on the following issues:

1. The increasing concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few;
2. The preferential treatment accorded multi-national Corporations resulting in the exploitation of our natural resources for the benefit of these foreign interests; and the irreparable damage inflicted on our environment due to the uncontrolled operations of agricultural and industrial corporations;
3. The violation of basic human rights of the greater majority of our people, including the right of food, clothing and shelter;
4. The enslavement of the greater majority of our people, producing crippled beings, not creatures of God, enmeshed in a culture of silence;

5. The sense of helplessness and despair of the greater majority of our people, resulting from and reinforcing their powerlessness;
6. The political and economic inequality as the primary divider, particularly in the Mindanao and Sulu, rather than cultural religious differences which are often times over-played; and,
7. The reinforcement by the institutionalized Church of the unjust social structure which is faithlessness to its prophetic and transforming ministry.

THEREFORE,

1. We reiterate our stand for genuine human development seeking solidarity with the people in their struggles for justice and liberation;
2. We urge all to take positive steps towards the protection of our environment from agricultural and industrial exploitation and desolation;
3. To encourage the formation and strengthening of people's organizations to ensure popular participation in decision-making;
4. We call upon the institutional church to fulfill its commitment of identification with the deprived, the enslaved, the accused and the despised;
5. We seek the peace that can only spring from situations where "justice rolls like a mighty stream" and development take cognizance of the dignity of the people.

Ref: **General Assembly**, 78-117, 21-26 May 1978, p. 35.

A RESOLUTION ON THE RESTORATION OF CIVIL POLITICAL LIBERTIES AND THE DISMANTLING OF THE MACHINERY OF MARTIAL LAW

General Assembly
21-26 May 1978

WHEREAS, as a church body, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines should make a clear and forthright stand on the prevailing crucial issue which confronts the Philippine society at the present time;

WHEREAS, this prevailing crucial issue relates to the suppression and curtailment of the civil and political liberties of the citizens under the domination of Martial Law;

WHEREAS, it is in keeping with the democratic tradition of the evangelical churches in the Philippines that these civil and political liberties be restored, and the machinery of Martial Law scuttled;

WHEREAS, the system of one-man rule or of total concentration of power in one man is **anathema** to the full growth and enrichment of a Christian community and oppressive to the challenges of a creative and responsible Christian discipleship;

WHEREAS, most of the elected members of the **Interim Batasang Pambansa** (IBP) have come out for the lifting of Martial Law;

THEREFORE: It is hereby resolved by the General Assembly in plenary session, that its Will and desire in this regard be duly noted and made of record — in that this church body is against the perpetuation of a one-man rule in the country; that it is for the immediate restoration of all the civil and political liberties of the citizens; and that it is for the immediate dismantling of the machinery of Martial Law in the country.

Ref: **General Assembly**, May 21-26, 1978, Action 78-119 p. 34.

The resolution is in **General Assembly**, May 21-26, 1978, Appendix XXI, pp. 552-553

RESOLUTION FOR THE CREATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DESK

General Assembly
21-26 May 1978

WHEREAS, as a church body, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines should look at the prevailing universal concern for human rights as a great opportunity to advance the Christian concern for the dignity and well-being of people;

WHEREAS, we believe that human rights are gifts from God, and that His will is for us to enjoy the fullness of our humanity;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need for us as a Church to make more manifest our concern for human rights;

THEREFORE, It is hereby resolved that a desk for human rights be created within the structure of the Church, and that human rights be among our major thrusts in the next quadrennium.

Ref: *General Assembly*, 21-26 May 1978.
The Resolution is in Appendix XXII, p. 564.

STATEMENT OF POLICIES AND/OR GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH-RELATED INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE INCORPORATED AS JUDICIAL ENTITIES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Executive Committee
12- 14 July 1979

1. That Church-related institutions such as hospitals, schools, and or foundations are incorporated as agencies of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines: to enable them to operate and/or transact business with legal personality and/or to administer the temporalities of the Church.
2. That the Charter of Incorporation of said institutions must be consistent with or supportive of, the policies of the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines as contained in its Constitution and By-Laws or such rules and regulations as may be promulgated by the General Assembly or its Executive Committee.
3. That the governing boards of such incorporated institutions and/or agencies must operate and/or conduct the affairs, or business of said corporation within or under the general policies of the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.
4. In case where the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of said corporation or inconsistent with the policies and rules promulgated by the General Assembly, the same shall be amended in accordance with the provisions of the Corporation Laws of the Philippines to be consistent with the said policies and/or rules promulgated by the General Assembly; the same shall be required of Church bodies or judicatories that intend to establish corporations as hooding bodies for and in behalf of the General Assembly, the Jurisdiction, the Conference, or the local Church.
5. Any privately-owned institution or agency that are incorporated and wish to be affiliated with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, shall be required to make the necessary amendments in their Charter of Incorporation that shall be consistent with or supportive of the policies or rules of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.
6. Membership and/or representation in the Board of Trustees of Church-related institutions shall be in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations of the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

7. In order to comply with statutory requirements or the provisions of the Corporation Law, the following procedures in the election of the Board of Trustees shall be observed:
 - a. The Church officer and/or representative to the Board of Trustees of a Church-related institution as mandated in the General Assembly policies/rules, shall be considered as a nominee for membership in the corporation and to the governing board of trustees; the members of the corporation shall elect said nominee to the Board of Trustees at their corporate membership meeting immediately following said nomination.
 - b. Membership in the Board of Trustees of said Church-related institution shall be co-terminus with the term of office of said officer or representative nominated by the Church judicatory.
1. In the event that the corporate meetings of the Church-related institution would not, or does not coincide with those action or nomination by said Church judicatory, the nominee shall be allowed to sit in the meetings of the Board of Trustees and participated in the business of the corporation without vote until such time as they are elected to the governing board by the corporate members immediately at its next meeting called for the purpose.
2. Considering that only natural persons may be members of the corporation and/or its Board of Trustees, it is understood that any representative of the General Assembly or the Jurisdiction, or Conference to the corporation or its Board of Trustees shall carry and/or represent the concerns of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and shall so act on behalf of the Church.
3. All institutions and/or agencies organically related to the United Church of Christ in the Philippines shall make a provision in its Charter of Incorporation that in the event of its dissolution, all properties or assets, after having satisfied its legal obligations or debts should there be any, shall revert and/or pass on to the United Church of Christ in the Philippines or such institution or agency as may be designated or appointed by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.
4. All real properties of Church-related institutions acquired from Mission Boards or through the instrumentality of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, shall not be sold, disposed of, or encumbered without the previous approval of the General Assembly or its Executive Committee.

Ref: **Executive Committee**, Action # 79-62.

CHURCH PARTICIPATION IN THE CREATION OF PEOPLE'S CONSENSUS ON THE CURRENT NATIONAL ISSUES

Executive Committee
December 1983

Cognizant with the NCCP Statement on National Reconciliation, especially the call on the churches, to wit:

We call on our Churches to join our people in seeking and mobilizing for a clarification of the issues that affect most of our national life, of the root causes that have brought about the very many difficulties we face, and of the options and alternatives we might take in order to bring about authentic national well-being. We call on our churches to assist in initiating and facilitating the formation of people's fora, where our people can express frankly and get a fair hearing of their grievances and their hopes.

Cognizant too, with the Biblico-theological foundation in the UCCP Statement of Social Concern adopted by the 1960 General Assembly and reiterated in the 1970 Statement:

Following the mandate of our General Assembly theme: **Living in Christ with People;**

Recognizing that the gift of prayer is available to God's people as a dynamic power for change and renewal;

And acknowledging that our local churches and conferences have trained manpower, facilities and other resources which can be made available to serve God and our people.

BE IT RESOLVED, THEREFORE, that we call on our churches and conferences to initiate, facilitate and participate in prayers, prayer rallies, ecumenical and community people's assemblies on the local level consistent with the demands of the Christian Faith and in solidarity with other bodies, committed to the same ideals and objectives.

Ref: *Executive Committee*, July-December, 1983, pp.67-68.

A STATEMENT OF PROTEST AGAINST U.S. INTERVENTIONIST POLICY TOWARDS THE PHILIPPINES

Council of Bishops

19 March 1986

The Council of Bishops, United Church of Christ in the Philippines, in a meeting held on March 18, 1986, at its National Offices, Quezon City, discussed and reflected on recent events and the present situation in the light of the UCCP Statement of Faith. The UCCP Statement of Faith affirms, among other things, that man *is created in the image of God, sinful but destined to live in a community with God and fellowmen; entrusted with God's creation and called to participate in the establishment of a meaningful and just social order.*

In the light of recent events, particularly that which happened on February 22-25, 1986, we have seen clearly the **people power** expressing the aspiration of the Filipino people for a change that will give meaning, justice and peace to their lives. The Filipinos aspire not only for a stable and peaceful nation but also for a just international community. The Filipinos are aware that there are alien forces which are at work in the country which tend to destroy their freedom and their sovereignty as a people, and undermine their search for self-reliance and self-determination.

After thorough reflection then, we reached the conclusion that the apparent and constant U.S. intervention in Philippine affairs is a matter of grave concern because it runs counter to the Filipino people's aspiration to have genuine freedom and independence. Therefore, as Filipino church leaders who realize the detrimental effects of such intervention upon our nation and people, we do strongly express our sentiment of protest and call for action:

1. We **affirm** the sovereignty of the Filipino people and their right to self-determination, free from any external interference, particularly from the United State of America.
2. We **abhor** and reject the U.S. interventionist policy towards the Philippines. We are aware of the prevailing U.S. domination in the economic, political, military, cultural and religious aspects of our national life. The economic and military dependence of the Philippines on the U.S. has brought us to a miserable situation which is being exploited and taken advantage of by the —U.S. government and its international partners. We deplore the strong colonial mentality of our people.
3. We **pledge** support to the present government under President Corazon C. Aquino and we call upon it:
 - a. to *be cautious* of U.S. economic and military aid, investments, and loans, especially those coming from the international Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB);
 - b. to *be discriminating* in accepting foreign aid; only those aids which in the long run may redound to the welfare of the Filipino people should be accepted; others which have onerous conditions should be rejected;
 - c. to *opt* for not renewing the RP-US military bases agreement when it terminates in 1991, so that our nation may be free from the devastating U.S. domination and probable nuclear annihilation;
 - d. to *declare* a revolutionary, government if borne by a serious study of its meaning and implications, in order to hasten the dismantling of the vestiges of dictatorship, facism, feudalism and imperialism,

embedded in laws, decrees and treaties which legitimized the interests of local and foreign capitalists and their cronies over and above the interests of the majority of the Filipino people;

- e. to *facilitate* the immediate adoption of a new constitution that will hasten the establishment of a truly democratic and nationalist government, resistant to any foreign intervention.
4. We also *call* upon our church people and other Filipinos to be alert and vigilant in defending our newly-found freedoms from the danger of new forms of dictatorship, imperialism and totalitarianism, be they religious or secular, which may arise again this country. We further call upon our people to actively participate in the building of a national and international community that is just, participatory and sustainable through the following:
 - a. *continuing education* on the prevailing situation and on the disciplined and responsible use of people's power;
 - b. *organizing* the people at the grassroot level for the empowerment and for vigilance;
 - c. *engaging* in productive endeavors and activities for self-sufficiency and self-reliance.
 5. Finally, we *call* upon our partner churches and our ecumenical solidarity groups abroad, particularly in the United States of America to support our continuing Efforts And struggles for self-determination and genuine independence by:
 - a. conducting massive educational activities among their people to enlighten them on the problems and aspirations of the Filipino people;
 - b. helping influence in the reshaping of their government's policies towards respect for the sovereignty and independence of the Filipino people.

In closing we reiterate our protest against U.S. interventionist policies towards our country; we are a sovereign people and we aspire to be free from any external domination. May the Lord of life and history reign supreme in our land as we continue to establish a nation that is responsive to the demands of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Done and approved on the 19th day of March 1986, at the UCCP National Offices, Quezon City, Philippines.

THE STATEMENT OF FAITH

*General Assembly
May 1986*

We Believe

In One God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer in whom creation finds order, purpose, meaning and fulfillment.
In Jesus Christ He became a man and rules as Sovereign Lord of life and History.

In the Holy Spirit He is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to live out and understand their faith in Jesus Christ.

We Believe

Man is treated in the image of God, sinful but destined to live in community with God.

Entrusted with God's creation and called to participate in the establishment of a meaningful and just social order.

We Believe

In the Holy Bible as a faithful witness of God's self-revelation in the history of God's people, God's inspired instrument to illumine, guide, correct, and edify the people for their faith and witness.

We Believe

In the Church, the one Body of Christ, the community of those reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with Jesus own ministry.

We Believe

God is working to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world His Kingdom.

The reign of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, where liberty is given to the captive and oppressed, where love, justice and peace prevail.

We Believe

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death, gives assurance of life even after death, and we look forward to His coming again in all His fullness to gather His children and to make all creation new.

POLICY STATEMENT ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

Council of Bishops

1986

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines is an ecumenical endeavor by the union of five Churches — *Presbyterian, United Brethren, Philippine Methodist, Disciples, Congregational* and some indigenous churches -- and has been in the forefront of ecumenical dialogue and movements. By the very nature of its historical background the UCCP is a member of the *National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the World Council of Churches, the Christian Conference of Asia, the World Methodist Council, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches*. Being a united and uniting Church, her character is evangelical and evangelistic, her ministry is wholistic, her concerns are universal and inclusive, her spirit is progressive and her attitude is open-minded.

The UCCP is open to the spirit of new ecumenism which goes beyond the traditional denominational lines. This new ecumenism has come out of the Church's ministry in identity and solidarity with the people's struggle for justice, peace, and freedom. Its main objective is the restoration of the individual to full humanity and the transformation of society to usher in the Kingdom of God.

With the above understanding and spirit, the UCCP adopts the following policy statements:

1. For a more united and effective Christian witness and service of the Christian churches, the UCCP relates herself with churches, denominations and world confessional bodies through the *National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) World Council of Churches (WCC), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), and World Methodist Council (WMC)*. These relationships are defined in the Constitution and By-laws, memoranda of agreements and concordats adopted by these churches. The NCCP-member churches with which the UCCP relates are the following: *Philippine Independent Church (PIC), United Methodist Church (UMC), Lutheran Church of the Philippines (LCP), Salvation Army Church (SAC), Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches (CPBC), Philippine Episcopal Church (PEC), Iglesia Evangelica in Las Islas Filipinas (IEMELIF), Iglesia Unida de Cristo (UNIDA), and the Christ-Centered Church (CCC)*.

2. With regards to the non-NCCP Churches and other groups, the UCCP relates to them in the following manner:

- a. ***On development projects/programs***

The UCCP in the local, conference and jurisdictional levels may engage in development projects/programs with any religious or non-sectarian groups on the following guidelines:

1. that these projects/programs are mutually agreed upon after consultations by the parties concerned.
2. that these are endorsed by the following entities, where any of these are considered:
 - a. local church council or the pastor;
 - b. conferences executive committee or the moderators;

- c. jurisdictional executive committee of the bishop;
 - d. General Assembly Executive Committee or the General Secretary;
3. That if these projects/programs use primarily the facilities, equipments, and involve the UCCP pastors and church members, said projects/programs should be under the management and control of the UCCP.
 4. That in the periodical evaluation of the projects/programs, the office of moderators, the bishops, or the general secretary, or their duly authorized representatives shall participate.

b. ***On ecumenical activities for evangelism, Bible studies, prayer rallies, worship, and the like***

The UCCP in the local, conference, and jurisdictional levels may participate as a Church in any ecumenical activities and gatherings provided that said activities are truly ecumenical in nature, content, planned and participated in by the churches concerned. Otherwise, participation should be left to individual conscience.

c. ***On the use of the pulpit and other church facilities***

Any local church pastor or church council may invite a non-UCCP preacher to use the pulpit; and may offer the use of church facilities to any person or group which is non-UCCP, provided that there is an approval by the church council and/or by the moderator of the conference whenever possible. Without such approval no one should be allowed to preach in the pulpit and use church facilities of the UCCP.

d. ***On church workers participating in any ecumenical movement***

1. Any church worker or church leader may participate in any ecumenical group, movement or program on his own individual capacity, provided that such action is not inimical to the unity and growth of the church and provided further that he/she informs his/her immediate group to which he/she is responsible;
2. Provided further that in case she/he wants to act in an official way, she/he should get the authority of the body concerned.
3. Any church worker may be allowed to work fulltime in any ecumenical program/project not considered as conference project;
 - a. provided that he/she secures recognition from the conference.
 - b. provided that during his/her employment with this other group that he/she does not get benefits from the UCCP insurance and hospitalization plans.
 - c. provided further that these benefits are to be shouldered by his/her employer.

For the General Assembly
 United Church of Christ in the Philippines
 May 20-24, 1984

By the Council of Bishops

Bishop Juan A. Marigza

Northern Luzon Jurisdictional Convention

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol

Southern Luzon Jurisdictional Convention

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura

Visayas Jurisdictional Convention

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva

Mindanao Jurisdictional Convention

Bishop Erme R. Camba

General Secretary

TOWARD POLICY STATEMENTS ON UCCP ECUMENICAL VIEWS AND RELATIONSHIPS

*General Assembly
20-24 May 1986*

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines is a product of an ecumenical endeavour by the union of five Churches — Presbyterian, United Brethren, Methodist, Disciples, Congregational, and some indigenous churches — and as such has been in the forefront of ecumenical dialogue and movements. By the very nature of its historical background the UCCP is a member of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the World Council of Churches, Christian Conference of Asia, The World Methodist Council, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and as such, her concerns are universal and inclusive, her spirit is progressive and her attitude is open-minded.

As such the UCCP is open to the spirit of new ecumenism which goes the traditional denominational lines to the new and progressive sectoral groupings. This new ecumenism has come out of the people's for justice, peace, human dignity, genuine freedom, and democracy. Its objective is not primarily the survival of the churches but the welfare of Filipino masses especially those most depressed and oppressed.

With the above understanding and spirit, the UCCP adopts the following policy statements:

1. For a more united and effective Christian witness and service of the Christian churches, the UCCP relates herself with some churches and denominations and world confessional bodies through the framework and structures of the National Council of Churches (NCCP), World Council of Churches (WCC), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), and World Methodist Council (WMC). These relationships are defined in the constitution and by-laws Memorandum of Agreements and Concordat adopted by these churches. The NCCP-member churches with which the UCCP relates are the following: Philippine Independent Church (PIC), United Methodist Church (UMC), Lutheran Church of the Philippines (LCP), Salvation Army Church (SAC), Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches (CPBC), Philippine Episcopal Church (PEC), Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas (IEMELIF), Iglesia Unida de Cristo (UNIDA), and the Christ-Centered Church (CCC).
2. With regards to the non-NCCP Churches and sectoral groups, the UCCP should relate to them in the following manner:
 - a. **On development projects/programs.** The UCCP churches in the local, conference and jurisdictional level may carry on development projects/programs with any religious or non-sectarian groups on the following basis:
 - 1) provided that these projects/programs are mutually agreed upon, after some consultation by the parties concerned.
 - 2) provided also that these are concerned by the following entities, where any of these are concerned:
 - a. local church council or the pastor;
 - b. conference executive committee or the moderator;
 - c. jurisdictional executive committee or the bishop;
 - d. General Assembly Executive Committee or the General Secretary;
3. Provided further that if these projects/programs use primarily facilities, equipments and involve the UCCP pastors and churches members, said projects/programs should be under the management and control of the UCCP;

4. Provided furthermore, that in the periodical evaluation of the project/program, the office of the moderator or of the bishop, or their duly authorized representative be invited or whoever is directly concerned, on the basis of the project/program submitted and endorsed.
 - a. On activities for evangelism, Bible studies, *prayer rallies and worships*

The UCCP churches in the local, conference, and jurisdictional levels may participate in as a church in any ecumenical activities and gatherings provided that said activities are truly ecumenical in nature, content, agreed upon, planned and together and participate in by the churches concerned. Otherwise, participation should be left to individual conscience.
 - b. *On the use of the pulpit and other church facilities*

Any local church pastor or church council may invite a non-UCCP preacher to use the pulpit; and may offer the use of church facilities to any person or group which is non-UCCP provided that there is an approval by the church council members and by the moderator of the conference whenever possible. Without such approval no one should be allowed to preach in the pulpit and use church facilities of the UCCP.
 - c. *On Church Worker Participating in any ecumenical movement*
 1. Any church worker (or church leader/leaders may participate in any ecumenical group or movement or program on his own individual decision, provided that such action is not inimical to the church and provided further that he or she informs his/her immediate group to which he is responsible;
 2. provided further that in case she or he wants to act on any official way, she or he should get the authority of the body concerned;
 3. Any church worker may be allowed to work fulltime in any ecumenical program or project not considered as conference project;
 - a. provided that he/she secures recognition from the conference.
 - b. provided that he/she does not get benefits from the UCCP insurance and hospitalization plan.
 - c. it is understood that these benefits will now be shouldered by his/her employer.

RESOLUTION ON THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT

Executive Committee

31 July -2 August 1986

WHEREAS: The UCCP-MJ Executive Committee. met in UCCP, Lagao, General Santos on July 24-26,1986;

WHEREAS: The said Executive Committee, discussed among others, the Tripoli Agreement between the MNLF headed by Nur Misuari and the Marcos Government of the Philippines headed by Col. Carmelo Barbero, in 1976;

WHEREAS: The said Executive Committee, after an exclusive discussion on the issue, feel and believe:

- a. That the Tripoli Agreement was highly irregular because it was done by two parties where one came into official power by force in 1972 and the other came into international recognition by OPEC countries, also by force;
- b. That the Tripoli Agreement was done without the necessary approval of the people in the thirteen provinces, especially the ordinary Muslims, the tribal Filipinos, and the ordinary Christians;
- c. That the Tripoli Agreement is claiming thirteen provinces which are highly questionable due to the claim of the Tribal Filipinos that Mindanao is also partly theirs;

- d. That the Sh - based justice of courts, as provided for in the Tripoli Agreement, may not be appreciated by the people of the affected provinces, including the ordinary Muslims;
- e. That even in the light of the above revelations, the Tripoli Agreement need not be abrogated nor implemented per se but can be re-negotiated through study, consultations and amendments by the people affected in the principle of self-determination, if not autonomy;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved, that the UCCP Mindanao Jurisdiction, request the United Church of Christ in the Philippines through its Executive Committee Meeting on July 31 — August 2, 1986, to endorse the idea of re-negotiation through study, consultation, amendments and final ratification of the Tripoli Agreement, by the affected people of the thirteen provinces to the Revolutionary Government of the Philippines, specifically to the office of the President, Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry on Muslim Affairs, the proposed Ministry on Constitutional Convention.

Done this 26th day of July, 1986 in UCCP, Lagao, General Santos City.

For: the UCCP Mindanao Jurisdiction

By: Bishop Lorenzo Genotiva

PEACEMAKING: OUR MINISTRY

Council of Bishops

21 August 1986

*Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.
And the effect of righteousness will be peace ...*

Isaiah 32:16-17

ALL-ENCOMPASSING MEANING

The Prince of Peace compels us to be peacemakers. We thus affirm and renew our commitment to peace through continued prayer and action. This commitment flows from our conviction that genuine peace can be attained only when founded on justice.

The Scriptures expand the meaning of peace to cover wholeness, wellbeing, growth, harmony, security, equality — not just the absence of violence and war. Real peace happens when the roots of conflicts and violence are removed, when a just social structure is built and when human rights and dignity are held sacred.

When justice and righteousness prevail, peace (**shalom**) reigns supreme. As Isaiah put it: *My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places (32:18).*

THREATS TO PEACE

The ascendancy of the Aquino government brought hopes for peace and prosperity to this violence-torn land. But, while we have begun enjoying the democratic space so long denied us, the forces of evil around us continue to threaten peace.

Riding on the wave of our people's popular and legitimate quest for genuine peace, some elements in our society — who claim to be bearers of peace — are in fact agents of conflicts and violence. They have not stopped destabilizing the present government in the guise of *national reconciliation*. In the face of this ill-disguised attempt to subvert peace, we should remain vigilant.

MILITARIZATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDES

While the Aquino government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) expressed a desire for a ceasefire, some elements are opting for a military solution to insurgency. Intensified military operations designed to eliminate

insurgents have wrought havoc on the lives of our brothers and sisters in the country sides, eliciting defensive responses from the insurgents. This unfortunate situation tends to derail the ceasefire negotiations, and can frustrate efforts to attain genuine peace.

REAL THREAT TO PEACE: STRUCTURES OF INJUSTICE

The real threat to peace is not the intransigence of hard-core rebels but unjust socio-economic political structures that breed insurgents. President Aquino herself, in her UP Commencement address, recognized that *the roots of insurgency are in the economic condition of the people and the social structures that oppress them*. What is considered *insurgency* is in many ways, a defensive action of people to protect their lives and rights.

GENUINE AND LASTING PEACE COMES WHEN PEOPLE'S NEEDS ARE SERVED

Genuine peace comes when justice is served.

For as long as peasants remain landless,

For as long as laborers do not receive just wages,

For as long as we are politically and economically dominated by foreign nations,

For as long as we channel more money to the military than to basic social services,

For as long as the causes of social unrest remain untouched,

There will be no peace.

OUR MINISTRY OF PEACEMAKING

The ministry of peacemaking is an imperative of the faith we profess. The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines calls us *to participate in the establishment of a meaningful and just social order*. Hence, the peace we seek should result from our active participation in building structures that promote human development and uphold human dignity.

Our affirmation of faith demands the end of our indifference and silence. It calls for an unwavering commitment to the all-transcending task of building peace founded on justice.

As a people of God, we should identify threats to peace and human dignity in our national life. We should critically evaluate national and international policies and challenge them when they do not contribute to peacemaking.

As a Church, we should actively work for understanding, reconciliation and unity. We should join hands with peoples of the world in the common quest for peace based on justice. Above all, we should follow Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. ***Shalom!***

STATEMENT ON THE PLEBISCITE

Council of Bishops

January 1987

Affirming our faith that the Lordship of Jesus Christ encompasses all peoples and societies and touches upon all aspects of life, and recognizing within that faith our responsibility for the building and maintenance of a just and a viable social and political order, we address ourselves once more to an issue of great public concern and debate.

The February 2, 1987 Plebiscite for the ratification of the new Constitution is an event of great significance for our country. After many years of martial and authoritarian rule, a new Constitution is being brought to the judgment of our people which, as its preamble states, *shall embody our ideals and aspirations ... secure to ourselves the blessings of independence and democracy ... under a regime of truth, justice (and) freedom ...* The Constitution is the fundamental law of our common life as a people. Its importance goes beyond the immediate needs of political strategy and the urges of personal political ambitions. Its ratification therefore is an event that the Christian, impelled by faith and by love and service to the people, cannot allow to pass by without involvement. It is in this spirit that we express the following concerns:

1. We have been disturbed by the fact that the campaign for the ratification of the Constitution has on many occasions called on the popularity of personalities. We have been disturbed even more profoundly by the fact that the ratification of the Constitution has been linked with political posturing of candidates seeking either local or national office. We think that such a development points not only to a major defect in our political processes, but also vitiates the importance of the document that it is being brought to our attention. We can only express disgust over this matter.
2. We recognize the vital need which our country now faces — to have a fundamental law that could provide for the basic structure within which our national life would be governed. We submit that the Constitution now presented for ratification to our people meets that need. We are glad for its many positive points, as for example, those providing for people's various rights and of their protection. We are also, however, saddened by its weak provisions, as for example, those that show tentativeness in regard to certain very important social, economic, and foreign policy issues as pointed out by our peasant, labor, and other nationalist sectors of society.
3. We are convinced, nevertheless, that given its deficiencies, the ratification of the Constitution at this point in our political life is necessary and therefore, ask that it be given approval by our people. We say this as a way of recognizing the advances in political will and understanding which the Constitution embodies. We say this too, in the name of maintaining and helping to forward that modicum of peace and stability that it seeks to attain — no matter how fragile and inadequate it might be. We say this finally, with the strong belief that even after the Constitution's ratification, our people will continue to work for a better and more just framework of our national existence.
4. In having expressed ourselves, we recognize and fully respect those who, for reason of honest conscience, could only give a "grudging" or "critical" affirmative vote, and those who must say a "principled" negation of what they think is an inadmissible Constitution at this time. We hope, in short, that on this instance, as it should always be in any instance of getting involved in a matter of national priority, people should go to the polling places armed with a judicious and conscientious study on the issues, and with the thought that as we vote, we are alone with our conscience, with our God, and with our people.
5. In this light, we hope that all would vote on February 2, 1987. Let us do so conscientiously, studiously, and prayerfully, for ourselves, for our people, and for our future as a nation.

The Council of Bishops

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol
Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura
Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Juan A. Marigza
Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva
Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Erme R. Camba
General Secretary

STATEMENT ON THE CEASEFIRE AND PEACEMAKING

Council of Bishops
January, 1987

On August 21, 1986, bearing in mind our calling *as peacemakers before God* and our responsibilities to our people, we issued a statement on **Peacemaking: Our Ministry** in which, among other things, we indicated our unequivocal commitment to peace, our firm conviction that peace cannot come apart from the attainment of true justice and

freedom, and our hope that the ways of war shall soon give way to the ways of peace. We issued that statement based on our faith that peacemaking and peacebuilding are rooted in our calling as Christians and in our ministry as a Church that is part of the Body of Christ. Five months after we issued that statement, an agreement on a preliminary ceasefire was reached between our government and the Moro National Liberation front (MNLF) and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA); a sixty-day ceasefire agreement has been forged with the National Democratic Front (NDF). As these ceasefire agreements begin to lead to the substantive discussion of the foundations of peace, we wish to express ourselves again and indicate the following concerns:

1. Along with the rest of our people, we were gladdened by the forging of these ceasefire agreements. We say so not because we think that the cessation of hostilities would mean the automatic installation of peace, but because we believe that even the temporary silencing of the sounds of warfare could provide the necessary space in which the language of peace can begin to be expressed and put into play. We say so also not because we think that the settlement of the issues that have brought about conflict could be dealt with merely by the laying down of arms, but because we believe that an opportunity should at least be given so that the settlement of those issues could be talked over rather than fought for. Despite the contrary accusations of the violations of the ceasefires, we think that the ceasefire agreements have been a positive step towards the attainment of peace and hence provided the occasion in which not only the negotiating panels, but more importantly also our people, have been able to understand better the conditions that have bred war and the possible requirements for peace.
2. As the ceasefire agreements and the peace negotiations begin to unravel the roots of war and possible foundations of peace, we hope that ceasefire agreements could continue and be extended beyond their initial periods of efficacy. We hope too that similar ceasefire agreements could be forged with other elements in our society that are still engaged in war. Despite the fact that the cessation of hostilities remains fragile, we should by now realize that the ways of peace are superior everywhere to the ways of war, so that no time is too long and no effort is too much where these are devoted towards the attainment of our people's demands for justice and for true and lasting peace.
3. We are disturbed by the fact that while the negotiating process is going on, much is being done by various sectors of our society to sow mistrust and suspicion and to cast aspersion, on the integrity of the negotiating partners. We are even more disturbed by the fact that while the negotiations for peace are going on, negotiations for more arms are also being undertaken elsewhere. We must realize that negotiations for peace require above all mutual trust and confidence. We must realize even more importantly that we can not build peace where we are preparing, all the while, for more deadly, wars. We hope to God and to our people that such efforts to undermine the peace process will stop, and that Christians above all should help to build the atmosphere of confidence that is crucial to the building of peace.
4. We stand unequivocally for peace, and reiterate that now as always, the foundation of peace is justice. Now as always, real security for our nation and our people can only be attained when justice and righteousness reigns in the hearts of all and in the common life of our society.
5. We call on all Christians to help build peace, and to join together in a continuing effort and prayer for peace, justice, unity and reconciliation in our land.

The Council of Bishops

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol

Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura

Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Juan A. Marigza

Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva

Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Ernie R. Camba
General Secretary

*The **Mission Statement on the Healing Ministry**, categorically said that **health is a basic human right**.*

*The Statement affirmed that **the ills of society which give rise to poverty of body and spirit**, must be confronted with seriously. This is not done in the Philippines. Because of such oppressive social structure in the country, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines said that **it is therefore necessary for the Church to address herself to the historic problems or domination, unequal distribution of land, inequality in economic opportunities and resources, and oppression and exploitation of less privilege and marginalized Filipinos**.*

Health programs can only be effective if the social structure does contribute to making persons acquire healthful bodies and spirits.

MISSION STATEMENT ON THE HEALING MINISTRY

Executive Committee
20-27 August 1987

The UCCP engages itself in wholistic health ministry in obedience to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ for abundant life for all.

In affirmation of this conviction, we thus further state that health is a basic human right.

While it is the duty of the State to provide health care, the Church has a moral responsibility towards the attainment of a wholesome and healthy life for everyone as God intended, recognizing that the art and science of healing is an integral part of the message of salvation.

The active participation of the people of God through her various institutions shall enable the Church to fulfill her healing ministry.

Though the Church focuses her attention upon people, she cannot close her eyes to the ills of society which give rise to poverty of body and spirit. It is therefore necessary for the Church to address herself to the historic problems of domination, unequal distribution of land, inequality in economic opportunities and resources, and oppression and exploitation of less privileged and marginalized Filipinos.

Ref: **Executive Committee**, 20-27 August 1987

AN OPEN LETTER

30 October 1987

Her Excellency
President Corazon C. Aquino
Hon. Senators and Congressmen/Congresswomen
Hon. Cabinet Members
Republic of the Philippines

Our Filipino Sisters and Brothers:

We, the undersigned, representing the leadership of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) and gathering in the 2nd National Moderators and Church Leaders Consultation under the theme ***The Church for the Life of the World*** have struggled, discussed and prayed to arrive at ***a common understanding of the Biblico-theological and historical foundation of our faith as the basis of the mission and ministry of the UCCP in the present context.***

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines is rich in historical background of involvement in the socio-political and economic milieu. She seeks at all times to fulfill faithfully the mission and mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ inscribed in these words:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free those who are down-trodden; to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.

Luke 4:18-19

In the present national consultation, we, the leaders of our Church, have undertaken a process of study and analysis of the present national situation. Our study and reflection have led us to the following conclusions:

1. There is **widespread poverty** all over the country. We have become more fully aware that this poverty is rooted in the unequal distribution of our national wealth and resources, particularly land; in the implementation of IMF/WB-dictated policies (e.g. import liberalization, debt-to-equity swap scheme, Omnibus Investment Code); and in the rapacious greed of some of our *kababayans* who are out to grab more wealth and power.
2. There exists a deepening and **worsening political crisis**. The democratic space, in spite of the Constitution, Congress, and Cabinet, is slowly narrowing. The present political leadership, from national to local, is still dominated by a wealthy few who lord it over the vast deprived majority. The general political situation is characterized by conflicts and disunity.

Moreover, **intervention/interference** of the United States is becoming more apparent and bolder as seen lately in the case of Lt. Col. Victor Raphael and in the implementation of the U.S. exported Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) strategy which has resulted in the rise of armed vigilante groups sowing terror in the countryside.

3. There is a pervading **climate of fear and uncertainty**. Crimes against persons and property have escalated to anarchic proportion. The continuing killing of human beings both civilians and military, perpetrated by armed groups such as vigilantes, rebel soldiers, MNLF, NPA and others, are horrible and deplorable. This fact, we feel, is symptomatic of the deep divisions and cleavages in our economic and political conditions.

Compounding this climate of fear and uncertainty are divisive elements and influences coming from conservative and fanatical religious groups and cults which, while engaged in the propagation of an escapist and individualistic gospel, are quick to label as *satanic*, *communists* and *subversives* others who are seeking meaningful creative actions. The increasing number of new militant cause-oriented groups is indicative of this fact.

The ongoing armed response of the New People's Army and other revolutionary groups is indicative of loss of confidence of some of our people system in the present system which has opted for a *total war strategy* to deal with the insurgency problem.

Based on the above-stated understanding, we UCCP Church leaders hereby express our appeals to you as government decision-makers in behalf of *the least of Christ's brothers and sisters*.

1. Knowing that more than 70% of our people are tenant farmers, we exhort and enjoin you to approve a just and equitable land distribution program effective January 1988.
2. Knowing that management, labor and industry are key factors to our nation's self-sufficiency and progress, we enjoin you to adhere to a nationalist-oriented industrialization scheme, the implementation of which will contribute to a massive employment of our people. The government should ensure and defend the rights of workers to just wages and benefits, and to self-organization for redress of grievances.

3. Knowing the need for self-rule and national sovereignty, we enjoin you to resist all forms of foreign intervention/interference and control of our economy, politics (including military) and culture. We should not become mere pawns of geopolitics; instead we should pursue an independent foreign policy. We should seek to establish a nuclear free and military bases-free Philippines.
4. Knowing that peace and order contributes to growth and prosperity, we enjoin you to exert more efforts through legislation or other means to dismantle all armed and violent groups and fanatical cults. We suggest that our government should respond to the insurgency problem through sincere negotiations, addressing itself to the basic problems of our people and putting as top priority the interest of the majority of the Filipino people.

For our part, as leaders of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, we pledge to act out our pastoral and prophetic role in the building of our nation. We pledge to work with and pray for you as our nation's leaders to the end that the needs and demands of our people will be fully realized and the kingdom of God may be truly present here on earth.

May the will of God and his people be done!
In the service of God's people,

Ms. Alice R. Ylizarde
National Treasurer

Bishop Erme R. Camba
General Secretary

Bishop Estanislao Q. Abainza
Bishop Emeritus

NORTHERN LUZON JURISDICTIONAL CONVENTION

Rev. Marcelo Maduli
Moderator
Northwest Luzon Conference

Rev. Romeo Sunggay
Moderator
North Central Luzon Conference

Rev. Rufino Balacang
Moderator
Highland Conference

Rev. Jose P. Luat
Moderator
West Central Luzon Conference

Rev. Ely Madlang-awa
Moderator
Northeast Luzon Conference (Absent)

Rev. Jose G. Mejica
Moderator
Central Luzon Conference

Rev. Samuel S. Velez
Moderator
Apayao Conference

Rev. Allan Sarte
Moderator
Manila North Conference

Bishop Juan A. Marigza
Jurisdictional Bishop

SOUTHERN LUZON JURISDICTIONAL CONVENTION

Rev. Alfonso Salterio
Moderator
Greater Manila Conference

Rev. Ely Pascua
Moderator
Southern Tagalog Conference

Rev. David Asurto
Moderator
South Bicol Conference

Rev. Samuel Torres
Moderator
North Bicol Conference

Rev. Quirino Bayle
Moderator
Metropolitan Conference

Rev. Rodolfo Q. Tigas
Moderator
Southeast Luzon Conference

Rev. Rodolfo Lllamar
Moderator
Mindoro Conference

Rev. Reynaldo T. Abad
Moderator
Palawan Mission Conference

VISAYAS JURISDICTIONAL CONVENTION

Rev. Francisco D. Quezon
Moderator
Bohol Conference

Rev. Glicerio V. Remasog
Moderator
Negros District Conference

Rev. Humbert A. Montes
Moderator
Samar Island (Absent)

Rev. Jose A. Sidaya
Moderator
North-Eastern Leyte Conference

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura
Jurisdictional Bishop

Rev. Nathaniel Sanchez
Moderator
Cebu Conference

Rev. Rodolphus M. Pesquera
Moderator
Western Visayas Conference

Rev. Rizalino Q. Taganas
Moderator
Southern-Western Leyte Conference

Rev. Sofonias A. Cuerbo
Moderator
Masbate Conference

MINDANAO JURISDICTIONAL CONVENTION

Rev. Julieta Orteza
Moderator
Northern Mindanao Conference

Rev. Alejo Villarmea
Moderator
Northern Mindanao Conference

Rev. Vicente Catalan
Moderator
Northeastern Davao Conference

Rev. Alan Ramos
Moderator
Central Mindanao Conference

Rev. Noli de Aquino
Moderator
Western Mindanao Conference

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva
Jurisdictional Bishop

Rev. Daniel L. Ostoy
Moderator
Cotabato Conference

Rev. Aguinaldo Jamandre, jr.
Vice Moderator
Surigao Conference

Rev. Ricarte P. Beley
Moderator
Lanao Conference

Rev. Winfred Casiple
Moderator
South Cotabato Conference

Rev. Claudio Lobaton
Moderator
Southern Mindanao Conference

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Jurisdictional C.E. Coordinator
Mindanao Jurisdiction

Rev. Ruben dela Cruz
Jurisdictional CWS Coordinator
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Rev. Marim C. Urbano
Jurisdictional C.E. Coordinator
Visayas Jurisdiction

Pastor Danilo Mariano
Jurisdictional CWS Coordinator
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Mrs. Angelita Esquiedo
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Ms. Edna J. Orteza
Education and Nurture Desk

Ms. Catalina Buenviaje
National Coordinator
NCWA and NUCM

Ms. Ale Dacanay
National Coordinator
NCYF

Mr. Alvaro O. Senturias, Jr.
Justice, Peace, Human Rights Desk

RESOLUTION RE SOLEMNIZATION OF MIXED MARRIAGES BY UCCP PASTORS

Executive Committee

7-9 September 1988

WHEREAS, the sad plight of a number of Filipinas married to foreign nationals and who are now living abroad has been brought to the attention of the General Assembly Executive Committee of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

WHEREAS, a number of factors, among which is the lack of understanding of the cultural background of these couples, have resulted to the break up of most of these marriages;

WHEREAS, a number of these mixed marriages were performed in UCCP Churches and by UCCP pastors;

WHEREAS, these marriages were solemnized by UCCP pastors sometimes without the benefit of counselling;

WHEREAS, there are no policy guidelines in the UCCP concerning mixed marriages;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS RESOLVED, that the General Assembly Executive Committee of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines advises all its pastors authorized to solemnize marriages to exercise due care in officiating such mixed marriages through counseling and reflection on the possible difficulties often brought about by cultural barriers and differences. All UCCP pastors are hereby enjoined to be discriminate in solemnizing mixed marriages in order to avoid the exploitation and abuse of Filipino women.

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this resolution be furnished all the UCCP pastors for their guidance and that this be published in the United Church Letter and other publications of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

Approved unanimously by the General Assembly Executive Committee during its regular session held on September 7-9, 1988 at the CENDET Building, 85 Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City, Philippines.

JUSTICE NOT VENGEANCE

***An Open Letter to the National Democratic Front and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines
3 July 1989***

We, of the Human Rights, Justice and Peace Desk, together with various other bodies of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), and the Human Rights Desk of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCP) deeply grieve over the 37 members of our church in Sitio Lower Rano, Binaton, Digos, Davao del Sur who were killed by members of the New People's Army on June 25, 1989.

We condemn this heinous act, and in the name of the victims, demand justice. Yet in this time of grief, we recognize that we must not succumb to hate and vengeance. Such will only serve to further the bloodshed. As a church committed to a just and lasting peace, we call on the National Democratic Front to acknowledge full responsibility for the massacre and to ensure that such a tragedy will never again occur. We also remind the Philippine Government that its military approach to solving inevitably leads to the escalation of the level of human suffering in this country.

To the National Democratic Front

You claim to be a responsible alternative to the present government. The massacre in Digos raises grave questions about the consistency of your efforts toward social transformation based on justice. We have completed our initial fact-finding in Lower Rano. According to our reports, members of the New People's Army killed 37 persons and wounded ten. All victims were part of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Three of those killed were armed with guns, at least two had bolos. Most of the victims were women and children who were killed as a result of the repeated strafing of the house behind the UCCP Chapel. Two bodies were beheaded.

According to your letter to the Coalition for Peace dated April 11, 1988, you declared your adherence to and willingness to abide by the provisions of Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions on the conduct of war. In that letter, you stated that you have instructed your combatants *to ensure that their conduct of the people's war adheres to and complies with Protocol II provisions particularly those guaranteeing the rights of civilians (especially women and children) and prisoners of war.*

In a statement dated May 18, 1989, the National Democratic Front of Negros condemned human rights violations committed by the armed Forces of the Philippines by invoking the Protocol's rules which *unarmed and non-combatant civilians are protected persons even if /they be political constituents of a belligerent force* (Malaya, June 3, 1989, p. 6). Obviously, these protocols were broken.

We recognize the responsibility shown by the New People's Army in accepting their guilt. Of course, no apology however sincere can relieve the pain and grief of the bereaved. No claim of *defensive action* can excuse the slaughter of innocents. The National Democratic Front — Southern Mindanao has reportedly begun an investigation and will undertake *all steps to rectify whatever errors were committed and to meet our justice when justice is due* (Manila Chronicle, July 1, 1989, p. 1).

We can only hope that this investigation will be conducted with appropriate objectivity and transparency. On behalf of the Lower Rano congregation, we demand that the National Democratic Front properly indemnify the victims and that the, NDF send, direct to the United Church of Christ, a full explanation of the following:

1. *Why was the house strafed without investigation as to whether the occupants were armed or not, and again after such was known?*
2. *Why did a defensive action result in the beheading of two bodies?*
3. *Why did your combatants enter the community at a time of worship?*
4. *Can you explain the disappearance of money and belongings from the home of the church treasurer?*
5. *As the people involved belong to a tribal community, how did you take their indigenous practices into account?*

As the aggrieved church, we claim the legal right and moral responsibility to represent the victims. We are prepared to participate in the proceedings. All of God's children — *Ituman* and rebel, soldier and civilian, tribal and lowlander — deserve justice. We expect nothing less from those who claim to speak for the oppressed.

To the Philippine Government

We all grieve over the death of our brothers and sisters in Lower Rano and for our country at war. We hold the insurgent forces responsible for this terroristic act. Yet, as citizens and Christians, we are also called to address our government about policies which sow dissension and hatred in this land.

We have received reports from our congregations in southern Mindanao that the Armed Forces of the Philippines has been using some of our churches and chapels as bases of operation. Our pastors tell us that rural congregations have been organized into anti-Communist *vigilante* units and fanatical cults. Worse yet, government forces have armed these groups, using them as instruments in their counterinsurgency effort.

Through this policy, some members of our church have been drawn into the armed conflict and the distinction between combatant and civilian has narrowed to a thin, gray line. Further, the use of churches as camps during military operations invites suspicion and hostility from opposing forces and turns the church and its members into targets. Such occupation of church property is a clear violation of Article 16 of Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions which prohibits the use of places of worship *in support of the military effort*.

In the case of the UCCP church in Lower Rano, our members there have told us that the military enticed and coerced members of the community into joining their anti-Communist movement. It has been reported that some members of the Christian Youth Fellowship and other members of the congregation had participated in surveillance as well as military operations.

This of course in no way excuses the attack on the unarmed congregation. But neither does the attack excuse the tragedy which is now unfolding and for which we must hold the government responsible.

According to members of our fact-finding team, high-powered weapons are currently being supplied by the military *to anyone willing to undergo a fifteen-day training course*. We understand that many are taking this course, and will subsequently be sent out to fight insurgents. This will only lead to more senseless deaths.

In an open letter dated October 20, 1987, the leadership of the UCCP called on President Corazon Aquino to *dismantle all armed and violent groups and fanatical cults and respond to the insurgency through sincere negotiations*. Our pleas were ignored.

We agree with the President's 1986 statement that ***the roots of insurgency are in the unjust socio-economic structures that oppress the people***. We call on the President to address the insurgency under the Biblical injunction of *beating swords into plowshares*. Let us not turn our tribal communities into battlefields and our churches into garrisons. Let us not turn this tragedy into a carnival for propaganda. Above all, let us not allow the spirit of vengeance to engulf us. Let our claim to be a Christian nation bring us to the path of justice and peace.

An Appeal and an Offer

Consistent with our commitment to the Gospel of peacemaking and reconciliation, we *once* again call on the New People's Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to cease hostilities. We call on the National Democratic Front and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to enter into negotiations and pursue alternative, life-alarming means to build a just and peaceful nation.

Our church has always been a sanctuary for all those in distress. To this end, we offer ourselves to serve as meditators to facilitate negotiations toward a true peace. We call on our member congregations and all other churches and church-related organizations to join us and offer whatever services will support dialogues and negotiations between the contending forces.

It is our fervent prayer that the grief and anguish wrought by the massacre in Digos will not divide us in hatred, but will unite all Filipinos in our determination to bring forth a true and lasting peace.

(Sgd.) **Alvaro O. Senturias, Jr.**
National Coordinator
Human Rights, Justice and Peace Desk, UCCP

(Sgd.) **Liberato C. Bautista**
Program Coordinator Chairman,
Human Rights Desk, ANCCP

(Sgd.) **Rev. Corazon A Abugan**
National Coordinator, Christian-Muslim-Tribal
Filipinos Desk, UCCP

(Sgd.) **Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva**
Mindanao Jurisdiction,
UCCP

(Sgd.) **Atty. Emilio C. Capulong, Jr.**
General Assembly,
UCCP

(Sgd.) **Bishop Erme R. Camba**
General Secretary, UCCP
Quezon City, July 3, 1989

**List of Victims killed at Lower Rano
25 June 1989
as Documented by the UCCP Fact Finding Team**

1. <i>Abadia Ayap</i>	male	41
2. <i>Clemente Ayap</i>	male	38
3. <i>Clemencia Ayap</i>	female	16
4. <i>Edgar Ayap</i>	male	10
5. <i>Elenita Ayap</i>	female	24
6. <i>Emilie Ayap</i>	female	11
7. <i>Felipe Ayap</i>	female	16
8. <i>Gemie Ayap</i>	male	22
9. <i>Jackson Ayap</i>	male	1
10. <i>Jenesel Ayap</i>	male	3
11. <i>Jonel Ayap</i>	male	7
12. <i>Lucia Ayap</i>	female	25
13. <i>Luningning Ayap</i>	female	40
14. <i>Nelo Ayap</i>	male	13
15. <i>Nida Ayap</i>	female	16
16. <i>Ponciana Ayap</i>	female	36
17. <i>Reynaldo Ayap</i>	male	12
18. <i>Ronelo Ayap</i>	male	8
19. <i>Ruben Ayap</i>	male	32
20. <i>Susana Ayap</i>	female	55
21. <i>Nenita Ambad</i>	female	16
22. <i>Belen Ayo</i>	female	13
23. <i>Niguela Ayo</i>	female	50
24. <i>Julito Caniedo</i>	male	23
25. <i>Crisanta Dominguez</i>	female	35
26. <i>Julieta Dominguez</i>	female	2
27. <i>Larena Dominguez</i>	female	14
28. <i>Line Dominguez</i>	female	19
29. <i>Narcisa Dominguez</i>	female	13
30. <i>Cresilda Ebad</i>	female	19
31. <i>Lila Ebad</i>	female	13
32. <i>Nora Ebad</i>	female	16
33. <i>Peter Edianon</i>	male	22

34. <i>Gerisa Endar</i>	female	16
35. <i>Obita Gumanan</i>	female	45
36. <i>Dodong Omo</i>	male	7
37. <i>Felicita Omo</i>	female	28

STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON AN ORGANIC ACT FOR THE CORDILLERA AUTONOMOUS REGION

Council of Bishops

24 November 1989

On December 27, 1989, Republic Act. 6766 entitled An Organic Act for the Cordillera Autonomous Region shall be subjected to a plebiscite in the provinces of Benguet, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Abra and Kalinga-Apayao, and the chartered City of Baguio. Affected are the Cordillera people who are of diverse religious, cultural, and social milieu. Diverse in socio-cultural identity, they shall go to the polls, hopefully one in the aspiration for self-determination and in the expression of the freedom of choice to chart their own destiny as Filipinos.

History reveals that for years the Cordillera people have been subjected to humiliation and discrimination. They have been regarded as subordinate citizens not worthy of respect, nor deserving of a decent and progressive livelihood. They have been marginalized as a minority people and even forced to accept their marginality while their land and cultures have been exploited and displayed to entertain the world.

Today, these indigenous people of the Cordillera continue to suffer as victims of brutal attacks because of militarization and political repression that have worsened the already miserable life that they have had to endure. This situation is further aggravated by the implementation of the *Total War Policy* which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians.

As a Church bound to Jesus Christ and called to minister in the context of the Philippines, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines affirms the aspirations of Moro and Tribal Filipinos as they seek the preservation of their land, their culture and their integrity as people.

Moreover, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines believes that the people in the proposed autonomous region have the right to self-determination and to determine their future through peaceful, democratic processes.

Furthermore, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines is concerned about the level of understanding among our people as to the contents and intentions of the Republic Act No. 6766. As of this date, we know that copies of the said Bill are not yet in the hands of those affected.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, therefore, would like to participate in the on going educational campaign through consultations, symposia, fora and seminars, throughout the Philippines. We hope to bring into dialogue men, women and youth leaders of the Cordillera peoples on the following:

1. *To view Republic Act. 6766 as a possibility to bring the Cordillera people together to build the proposed autonomous region where trust and confidence can be fostered and a community of peace, prosperity, justice and unity may prevail.*
2. *To unlearn prejudices and change attitudes as we move towards a wider inter-faith fellowship.*
3. *To arrive at a common decision for Republic Act No. 6766, or plan alternatives which shall be more conducive and responsive to the common aspiration of the Cordillera people in the proposed autonomous region.*

This concern shall be shared with the constituents of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the member churches of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the Office of the President and Congress and organizations such as *Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas* and Cordillera People's Alliance.

THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

Bishop Juan A. Marigza

Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol

Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura

Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva

Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Erme R. Camba

General Secretary

PASTORAL LETTER AND ADVENT MESSAGE

Council of Bishops

12 December 1989

Greetings — joy and peace be unto you — sisters and brothers in Christ!

It is advent — a season of great expectation and hope that once again we may claim the promise of peace, freedom and fullness of life.

Recent events in our country, however, have marred the season of joy and goodwill, and have brought anxiety, suffering and great losses to many. The December 1, 1989 coup was the most vicious and deplorable attempt by the so-called Reformist faction of the military and its civilian supporters to overthrow the government. This attempt was met with an equally violent retaliation by the government forces, by the intimidating intervention of the United States military and consequently by the declaration of the state of national emergency. On the whole, this event brought a deep sense of fear and uncertainty over our land and people.

But we would like to remind you, sisters and brothers, of the greatest event in human history as prophesied by Isaiah:

*Every boot of tramping warrior in battle tumult
and garment rolled in blood (bloodstained, GNB)
will be burned as fuel for the fire.*

*For to us, a Child is born, to us a Son is given;
and the government will be upon his shoulder;
and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (RSV).*

This, the birth of Jesus, is the event which is above every event. This is the event that gives Christians hope and courage to pursue their calling to establish peace based on justice.

As members of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, let us constantly seek to be faithful to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Today, more than ever, let us remind ourselves that it is our sacred responsibility to pursue peace in a land stained with the blood of our very own sisters and brothers.

Let us reaffirm the positions we have taken in the past, particularly on the following issues:

1. We **uphold** the value and dignity of human life. Any willful, deliberate and indiscriminate act that threatens and destroys life should be condemned because it is against the will of God.
2. We strongly **reject** militarization in any form, whether *coup d' etat*, military **junta** and foreign military intervention because all these are threats to our democratic way of life and national sovereignty.
3. We **call** upon the Aquino government to tackle the basic problems of poverty, landlessness, graft, and corruption, business monopolies, foreign control of politics and economy, concentration of wealth and power in the hands of few, and general lack of public services. Why? Because these are factors that cause widespread social unrest and discontent.

In the light of these reaffirmations we now state clearly our position on the December 1 *coup* attempt. We vehemently condemn such naked grab for power and the destruction it had wrought on lives and properties; the dislocation it had brought to the economy and social life; and the disdainful disregard it exhibited for the rule of law.

Now with a great sense of urgency and pastoral concern, we call upon you to —

1. continue a lifestyle of prayerfulness. **Pray** unceasingly for peace and for peaceful solution of conflicts obtaining in our land: adopt a lifestyle of simplicity, avoiding all lavish celebrations of whatever kind.
2. continually assess and **reflect** on the situation in your respective communities and in our nation; then initiate appropriate actions that contribute to peace.
3. open and **offer** our local churches as sanctuaries or places of refuge *for* all people in all circumstances of need.
4. broaden and **strengthen** our ecumenical and interfaith links with churches, organizations or movements pursuing the cause of peace.

Advent reminds us of God's intervention in the human predicament which gives us hope and the vision of a new day.

It also confronts us with the same question that John's disciples asked of Jesus, *are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another one?* to which Jesus answered:

*the blind received their sight and the lame walk,
lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear
the dead are raised up
and the poor have the good news preached to them*

Matthew 11:4-6

We have made the choice to follow Jesus and the path he had taken. This choice is not without struggle and pain, not without condemnation and tears, and not without risks and sacrifice. But the love of God has given us the power to understand and the courage to claim that new day no matter what it costs.

God's blessings be upon us all as we work towards the 'advent of peace in our land. **Shalom!**

Your fellow servants in Christ,

THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

The Rev. Juan A. Marigza

Bishop, Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

The Rev. Patrocinio A. Apura

Bishop, Visayas Jurisdiction

The Rev. Gabriel A. Carol

Bishop, Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

The Rev. Lorenzo C. Genotiva

Bishop, Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Erne R. Camba

General Secretary

STATEMENT ON CADENCE

Council of Bishops

December 1989

CADENCE, or the *Church and Defense Consultative Conference*, was organized on 18 February 1988 at the initiative of the AFP ostensibly for providing liaison, providing a point of contact, and to encourage dialogue which could lead to reconciliation among those that deal with the military establishment and all other sectors of society (Sec. Fidel V. Ramos, 22 July 88).

As a separate organization, CADENCE has its own constitution. According to it, membership in CADENCE comes from two basic groups, the Military Panel and the Church Panel. The National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) through the General Secretary, was supposed to represent the Protestant Churches in the Church Panel. Two committees, the *Committee on Human Development* and the *Committee on Public Information*, were created under the conference, and with the Secretariat based at the AFP Headquarters where one representative for each panel sits. Similar CADENCE bodies were to be organized at the regional and local levels.

In one of its organizational meetings, the General Secretary of the NCCP refused to sign the Constitution.

We are now called to comment on this organization because of queries coming from church judicatories, officers and members on the propriety of joining this organization, its implications on the relationship of the church and the civilian government, and its effect on the programs and policies of the Church.

It is our considered opinion that membership with CADENCE, either directly or through the NCCP, is not advisable for the following reasons:

First, it is clear that under our present constitutional order, the church deals in temporal affairs with one government, operating under the principle of civilian supremacy over the military. Therefore, we would rather be involved and participate in the National Ecumenical Committee (NECOM) set up by the President. The fundamental law contains the basic principles and rules that govern the respective roles and functions of the organs of government and as well as the limits to their powers in dealing with individuals and groups in society. Clearly, a separate and distinct organization or conference to be composed of some groups together with a segment of the defense establishment will only serve to confuse the line of authority.

Second, in addition to superfluity, there is also the problem of autonomy. From the organizational table it is immediately apparent that while the Church Panel is represented by individuals who can and should be authorized to speak and vote by their respective churches, the Defense Panel is composed of several individuals who are all administratively under the supervision and control of the Defense Secretary and/or the Chief of Staff. They have no voice and vote apart from and independent of the head of the department or chief of the AFP. In fact, they have no position on any issue at all except the official pronouncement of the defense establishment. In this situation, genuine dialogue cannot take place.

Third, there is the problem of experience. During the martial law years, CADENCE was known as the *Church-Military Liaison* (CMC). From the experience of those who have attended its meeting, CMC was more monologue than dialogue, with the military representatives dominating the meetings and trying to persuade the participants of the validity of the positions and programs of the military. The whole exercise appeared more as an organized effort to make the church representatives an ally in, or, if not, to neutralize the critical stance taken by the church on the counter-insurgency program. It is not difficult to imagine, as in fact it had already been made to appear, that the churches' participation in CADENCE is seen as a tacit approval and *imprimatur* on military activities.

Fourth, and finally, the principle of the separation of the Church and State recognizes the great danger posed to a democratic society by domination and authoritarianism. History has so taught us to avoid promoting a church-dominated state or a state-dominated church in the guise of *cooperation for national-building* or for the purpose of promoting *harmonious relationship* between the church and defense establishment, thereby reducing faith imperatives into the limited relationships have caused the destruction of peoples and communities. The Church's *conflicting* interests must be harmonized in order to promote *good relationships and the welfare of the country and people*. When the Church does raise its voice against the abuses in the military, it does so not so much as to compel the defense community or the government itself to cooperate with the church but more to remind Christians who are in these institutions of their duties and ethical responsibilities as faithful servants of the Lord.

Atty. Emilio C. Capulong, Jr.

Chairperson, General Assembly

Bishop Erme R. Camba

General Secretary

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura

Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva

Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol

Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Juan A. Marigza

Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Approved by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines Executive Committee in Session 19-21 September 1989.

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON THE PHILIPPINE EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS

First Youth Congress

Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship

27-30 December 1989

We, the participants of the First Youth Congress of the Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship herein assembled, do collectively take this stand, considering that:

1. the external debt of the country has grown and continues to grow beyond our capacity to pay;
2. the burden of debt payment will rest upon our shoulders as well as those of our children and our children's children;
3. such enormous debt has not directly benefited nor raised the quality of life of the Filipino people;

4. servicing of such debt eats up a large percentage of the national budget, thus depriving the Filipino people of the basic services due them.

We, therefore, respectfully but strongly ask the President of the Republic of the Philippines and Congress to take appropriate steps to ease the burden of debt servicing through:

1. **repeal** of P.D. 1177 or in the alternative, its amendment to the effect that the debt payment must not exceed 10% of the national budget;
2. **negotiations** with the creditor agencies for better and less onerous terms in the servicing of our foreign debt;
3. a **demand** from our creditor commercial banks for a 30% debt reduction as has already been availed of by other *highly indebted countries*.

We also **call** on all Christian churches to come up with a strong and united stand in support of measures to ease up the burden of this repressive foreign debt which is not only a socio-economic and political problem but also a moral issue.

We, furthermore, **enjoin** all the youth of the land to join hands and make their voices heard on this crucial issue that will directly affect our future.

Let copies of this resolution be served upon the President of the Republic of the Philippines, the officers concerned of both houses of Congress, as well as the leaders of the local churches and the different youth organizations for their appropriate action.

Signed by the participants of the Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship Youth Congress this 30th day of December, nineteen hundred and eighty nine.

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON THE WORSENING STATE OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ITS EFFECT ON THE LIVES OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

First Youth Congress

Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship

27-30 December 1989

We, the participants of the First Youth Congress of the Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship herein assembled, are aware of the worsening state of the environment and the continued destruction of our natural resources.

We, therefore, call the attention of the government agencies concerned for stricter enforcement of the laws on:

1. pollution
2. illegal logging
3. illegal fishing and
4. garbage collection and disposal

We also demand the abolition of the Metro-Manila Commission and for the restoration of the responsibilities for garbage disposal and other basic services to the local governments concerned.

We also encourage heightened public awareness of the ecological issues through:

1. information dissemination campaign;
2. inclusion of ecology and other related courses in the curricula from the grade school up to the tertiary level;
3. boycott of products containing ecologically harmful chemicals like cyanide, DDT, CFC, etc.

And we, as Christian young people, should start with ourselves and **lead by example** in the continued vigilance for the enforcement of the laws designed to protect our environmental resources and maintain a wholesome environment that enhances our quality of life.

Signed by the participants of the Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship Youth Congress this 30th day of December, nineteen hundred and eighty-nine.

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON THE PREVAILING MORAL CRISIS IN PHILIPPINE SOCIETY

*First Youth Congress
Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship
27-30 December 1989*

We realize the pervasive influence of media in the life of the youth of the land.

We are aware of the proliferation of the following:

1. pornographic materials, i.e., comics, tabloids, movies, video tapes, etc.,
2. widespread and unwarranted use of sex and sexual symbol in advertising and in promoting certain products;
3. the irresponsible and sensational reporting of immoral activities and lifestyles of celebrities and other well-known personalities;

We recognize the harmful effects of overexposure to this kind of moral decadence through the media over the lives of our youth.

We as members of a Christian youth organizations of Ellinwood Malate Church enjoin all the young people of the land to:

1. condemn such immoral practices;
2. boycott the products of companies utilizing sex and sexual symbols in selling or promoting their products;
3. Call on mass media to police their own ranks and avoid sensationalizing the immoral lifestyles of celebrities and well-known personalities.

We also urge the youth of the land to reinforce their moral fiber and strengthen their family and Christian values to enable them to resist the lure and influence of a sexually-saturated mass media.

Signed by all the participants of the Ellinwood Christian Youth Fellowship Youth Congress this 30th day of December, 1989.

POSITION STATEMENT ON THE LATEST COUP ATTEMPT AND THE DECLARATION OF STATE OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

*National City United Church
December 27-30, 1989*

We, the members of the National City United Church, state the following position regarding the latest ***coup*** attempt and the declaration of a state of national emergency by President Corazon C. Aquino.

We ***support*** the President's decision to declare a state of national emergency provided that safeguards are instituted against abuse of authority and curtailment of basic human rights.

We ***abhor*** the use of force and violence to overthrow a duly constituted government.

We ***urge*** the government to address the causes of discontent among the various sectors in society, institute necessary reforms, as well as act judicially in dealing with people responsible for this coup.

We ***call*** on all Filipinos to share in the responsibility of rebuilding this nation.

Therefore, we encourage individuals and families to adopt:

- ***a lifestyle of vigilance***
 - keep constantly informed about social issues
 - support movements and causes consistent with democratic principles
 - give useful feedback to government decision makers
- ***a lifestyle of simplicity***
 - avoid panic buying and panic bank withdrawal
 - adjust spending habits to be sensitive to the suffering the majority

We call on all Christian churches, families and individuals to enter into a process of continuing re-examination and to reflect on their calling as agents of justice, peace and righteousness in our society.

Finally, we believe that God has given us a historic opportunity to show the world that we can restore this nation to wholeness. We recognize the enormity of the problems facing our country today. But we affirm that with God's help we can be equal to this challenge.

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN FOR INTERNAL REFUGEES

Executive Committee

23 February 1990

The phenomenon of internal refugees in the Philippines has been the focus of global ecumenical attention. The forcible displacement of families has increased at an alarming rate in recent years. This is expected to rise as structural policies, decisions and actions prove to be devastating and disastrous to the interest of the people more than natural calamities.

We trace the roots of our history of displacement to economic and political interests that render Filipinos expendable to the goals for export-oriented agricultural development, counter-insurgency and consequently, the intensified internal war between the military and other armed groups.

We cannot ignore the effects of forcible evacuation and dislocation of families from their homes and farmlands. Hunger, diseases, humiliation and despair are some of the consequences of human greed committed against the people. These are tearing families apart. Most affected are the children who comprise the majority of internal refugees. Many of the children have died; others have become emotionally shattered and must bear this trauma for the rest of their lives.

The situation of internal refugees is a concern of the whole Church. It is contrary to the will of God and is opposed to God's intention for a life of dignity, abundance and peace. As children of God, individuals and families have the right to live in peace — with hope, without fear. This is the message of the Gospel: ***...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.***

We, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, therefore, express our deep concern for the situation of internal refugees, — our own people, our sisters and brothers, our children — in our own land. They cannot be captives; they cannot be oppressed. They must be set at liberty.

Therefore, we call upon the government:

- to unilaterally and unconditionally ***stop*** its intensified military operations against insurgency which cannot be resolved by military power and might;
- to ***engage*** the so-called insurgents in a series of dialogues and negotiations for peace with justice;
- to ***provide*** shelter for internal refugees with adequate facilities and supplies.

We call upon all armed groups: CPP-NPA-NDF, MNLF, MILF, RAM and others:

- to ***stop*** all armed operations against the government in order to avoid further bloodshed;
- to ***come*** unconditionally to the negotiating table for ***a series*** of dialogues for peace.

We call upon all civilians and church people

- to **be** peacemakers — to pray for and counsel warring groups to cease fighting;
- **establish** sanctuaries of peace and justice for internal refugees;
- to **set up** programs for immediate aid and long-term rehabilitation of internal refugees;
- to **call upon** legislators to pursue vigorously legislative measures that would ensure justice and peace.
- to **resist** and denounce all forms of militarization.

Done on the 23rd day of February, 1990 at the Conference Room of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines.

**The General Assembly
The Executive Committee
United Church of Christ in the Philippines**

Bishop Juan A. Marigza

Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura

Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol

Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva

Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Erme R. Camba

General Secretary

Atty. Emilio C. Capulong, Jr.

Chair, General Assembly

A DECLARATION AGAINST VIOLENCE

Executive Committee

23 February 1990

... Because the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence ...

Ezekiel 7:23

We are greatly disturbed and alarmed by the escalating cases of violence in our country. Senseless killings of church people and other civilians, and of police and military personnel are indicative of this worsening situation in which we live.

We believe, however, that the upsurge of crimes and violent acts are symptomatic of graver and more basic problems such as those of **widespread poverty, exploitation and oppression**. Such a situation has deadened the moral and spiritual nerve of our people.

Greatly contributing to the state of violence are the **total war policy** of our government in dealing with the insurgency problem and the **interventionist policy** of the United States government in the affairs of the Philippines. Moreover, **economic dominance** in collaboration with the local and national big business enterprises contribute to the upsurge of violence in our midst.

Since the total war policy of our government was implemented with the support of the U.S. senseless killings, massacres, and disappearances of persons have markedly increased. Several of those who carry firearms have become emboldened to use arms indiscriminately. Indeed, many violent acts have been attributed to armed

civilian groups which enjoy the support of the military establishment. Such actions of the very people entrusted with the task of peace-keeping have pushed many civilians to take the option of armed struggle. Indeed, outright killing or **salvaging** has become the rule and due process has become a myth.

The rise of politically and economically related and motivated crimes is very alarming. Those who are supposed to establish peace and order, and to protect the life and property of our people, have often been found to be the perpetrators of horrible killings and massacres of the hapless and helpless civilian population. Added to these are the criminal and terroristic activities of outlawed elements of our society. Indeed, the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence.

Ezekiel 7:23

What has our Christian faith to say to all these?

- Our faith affirms that **persons are created in the image of God**. There is no distinction. All persons have equal worth in the sight of God.
- We affirm as Christians that **life is a divine gift**; therefore, it has to be regarded with dignity and sanctity. No one is to be a judge, jury and executioner of any one's life. That is a divine prerogative.
- We affirm as Christians that wholehearted **trust and reliance in God** is much better than alliances with and reliance on powerful nations.
- We affirm as Christians that **shalom or holistic peace is God's will for his people**. **Shalom** means wholeness, well-being, growth, harmony, security, equality and not just absence of conflicts and war. Genuine peace happens when the roots of conflict and violence are removed; when a just social structure is built; and, when human rights and dignity are held sacred.

The time has come for all of us to act.

Let us pray for the fulfillment of God's promise:

I will make your overseers peace and taskmasters righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in your land; devastation or destruction within your borders

Isaiah 60:17-18

We call on our leaders in the government to:

- **Abolish** the Citizens Armed Force Geographical Units (CAFGUs) and other para-military units; as mandated by the Constitution.
- **Serve** notice for the non-continuance of the United States military bases beyond 1991.
- **Pursue** aggressively and purposively independent foreign and national policies.
- **Institute** measures and enact laws that address to the basic socio-economic needs based on the common cries and demands of the less fortunate members of society.

We call on all parties involved in the strife: AFP, NPA, MNLF, MILF, RAM and other armed groups:

- **Stop** all strafings, bombings and ambushes which destroy life and property, and drive thousands away from their homes, farms and means of livelihood, thus aggravating poverty causing deaths to both children and adults;
- **Respect** the rights of civilians and other non-combatants; and stop immediately all violent and terroristic acts; black listing, name calling, and labelling people as the enemy, because all these contribute to the atmosphere of fear, despair and destruct in one another;
- **Call** for a ceasefire. Return to the negotiating table to deal with a comprehensive settlement of this terrible and costly conflict by seriously dealing with the root causes of insurgency and other crimes against life and property.

We call on all manufacturers of weapons and instruments of war to:

- **Stop** making weapons and instruments of war and stop making war as a business industry.

- Instead, **produce** equipment that support and enhance life. Let the prophecy of Isaiah be fulfilled through you ... and *they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks* (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 3:4).

We call on all Christian homes and institutions to:

- **Liberate** themselves from all forms of structures, systems and expression that propagate militarism and enhance the development of military culture.

We call on all Christians and peoples of various faiths and persuasion to:

- **Be** true instruments of peace, doing only all acts that make for peace;
- **Be** ever vigilant to defend firmly but peacefully the rights of the least fortunate members of society;
- **Promote** what is just and denounce what is unjust.

Moreover, let us all **be steadfast and immovable in our faith, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain** (I Cor. 15:58).

Done on the 23rd of February, 1990 at the Conference Room of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines.

**The General Assembly
The Executive Committee
United Church of Christ in the Philippines**

Bishop Juan A. Marigza
Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Patrocinio A. Apura
Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol
Southern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva
Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Ernie R. Camba
General Secretary

Atty. Emilio C. Capulong, Jr.
Chair, General Assembly

A DECLARATION OF UCCP CHURCHES AS SANCTUARIES AND ZONES OF PEACE

Executive Committee

23 February 1990

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), committed to peace and justice, is strongly advocating for the establishment of a society where peace prevails. Following up and strengthening its previous statements **Peace Making: Our Ministry** (August 21, 1986) and its **Pastoral Letter and Advent Message** (December, 1989), the United Church of Christ in the Philippines through its Council of Bishops and the Executive Committee in session on February 21-23, 1990 declares as sanctuaries and zones of peace all its church buildings, parsonages and lands, hospitals and schools, and other church-owned institutions and their premises.

As sanctuaries, these places and premises are **open to all people** — regardless of color and creed, sex and status, and of political and religious affiliation — at all times in all circumstances of need. We welcome those needing sanctuary to use these places for protection, study, reflection, retreat, prayers and meditation, or simply for rest and quiet.

As zones of peace, these church places and premises are to be used for activities that build community and contribute to a deeper understanding of and commitment to peace and justice.

- No arms, except those of employed security guards, and weapons of war should be brought to nor stored in these church places and premises.
- No individuals nor groups should be allowed to use these places and premises as camps and assembly points for planning and launching of any kind of armed struggle and conflict.

We call upon

- All armed groups and sectors to **respect** and honor this church declaration for the sake of peace and justice for all.
- All our church people, ecumenical partners and church groups to **support** and abide by this church declaration, and to see to it that it is faithfully obeyed at all times for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Done on the 23rd day of February 1990 at the National Office Conference Room of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines.

**The General Assembly
Executive Committee
United Church of Christ in the Philippines**

Bishop Juan A. Marigza
Northern Luzon Jurisdiction

Bishop Gabriel A. Garol
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Visayas Jurisdiction

Bishop Lorenzo C. Genotiva
Mindanao Jurisdiction

Bishop Erme R. Camba
General Secretary

Atty. Emilio C. Capulong, Jr.
Chair, General Assembly Executive Committee

**RESOLUTION URGING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL
DECLARATION OF A NUCLEAR-FREE PHILIPPINES AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL
THE MILITARY BASES AND FACILITIES IN THE COUNTRY**

**General Assembly
21-26 May 1990**

WHEREAS, our Lord Jesus Christ came not "to steal, kill and destroy, but to give life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10);

WHEREAS, the UCCP always affirms her faith in Jesus Christ as Lord of life as expressed in the quadrennial theme: The Church for the Life of the World: CALLED TO BE STEWARD OF GOD'S CREATION.

WHEREAS, in accord with the Filipino people's desire and efforts to ensure a safe and peaceful world, they overwhelmingly ratified in 1987 the Philippine Constitution which provides in Section 8, Article II that:

The Philippines, consistent with national interests adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory.:

WHEREAS, we now live under the darkening shadows of a threatening nuclear war that can bring about destructive effects not only to the human family but the whole planet Earth exemplified by the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Bikini Atoll, 3 Mile Island and Chernobyl;

WHEREAS, the Philippines, although an independent country, continues to be dominated and dictated upon by the U.S. as concretely manifested and symbolized by the presence of its military bases and facilities;

- WHEREAS,** these military bases can capably store nuclear weapons and armaments and become more threatening because of the "neither deny nor confirm" policy of the U.S.;
- WHEREAS,** the continued presence of the military bases and facilities places the Philippines in very imminent danger of nuclear attack by other foreign superpowers;
- WHEREAS,** the presence of military bases and facilities gives unlimited opportunity for the U.S. to meddle, both overtly and covertly, in the affairs of the Filipino people;
- WHEREAS,** the presence of these installations caused the exploitation of Filipino women and minors that degraded their personhood and created various health and social problems;
- WHEREAS,** the rampant incidents and abuses committed by U.S. servicemen against Filipinos, such as: Filipinos shot like wild pigs or served as prey to K-9 dogs; and adding insult to injury regard, their hosts as thieves and robbers, which Filipinos cannot afford to ignore;
- WHEREAS,** the claim that Filipino beneficiaries will be affected by dismantling the U.S. bases can be resolved by transforming the whole bases areas into productive agricultural lands, industrial centers and commercial complexes, which will give enough employment and provide the necessary livelihood to millions of Filipinos;
- WHEREAS,** we affirm that God, our refuge and strength, helps us in resisting foreign domination and control; and that we believe in the capability of the Filipino people to defend themselves from foreign aggression, whether U.S. or any other nation, such as the USSR and China;
- WHEREAS,** the Church in mission proclaims hope to her constituents amidst fear of threats and dangers to their safety, health and well-being;
- WHEREAS,** the developments in Eastern Europe, which affectively dismantled the Cold War Era and the increasing inability of the United States to comply with its aid commitments have made the presence of the U.S. military bases even more undesirable.
- WHEREAS,** in view of the proximity of September, 1991, when the Bases Agreement expires, church-related groups and people's organizations with increasing urgency intensify their education and organizing tasks, their efforts for mobilize the greatest number of people, and wage a more determined effort to implement the nuclear-weapons free provision of the Constitution and the withdrawal of the U.S. bases and facilities in the country;
- WHEREAS,** we strongly commend, endorse and support the Statement of the Council of Bishops of the UCCP in denouncing foreign intervention and the ill effects, which the military bases engender in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the country;
- NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Fourth Quadrennial General Assembly of the UCCP urge the implementation of the Constitutional Provision of a nuclear free Philippines and the withdrawal of all U.S. military bases and facilities in the country;
- BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER,** that the General Assembly conduct and launch a massive and comprehensive education campaign in our local churches regarding the issues and surrounding the presence of the military bases, threats of nuclear annihilation and related issues, as our solid proclamation of our mission to defend life and creation.
- APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the Fourth Quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines this 26th day of May, 1990.

A RESOLUTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

General Assembly

21-26 May 1990

The General Assembly of the UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES (UCCP) under its theme for the forthcoming quadrennium 1990-1994. *The Church for the Life of the World: Called to be Stewards of God's Creation met in Cebu.* City on May 21-26, 1990 and studied the environmental destruction taking place around us.

WHEREAS, our beloved Philippines is threatened by the increasing degradation and destruction of our physical environment (land, water, air). We specifically deplore:

- a. the loss of our once verdant forests and mountain ranges through logging, destructive mining practices and unsuitable agricultural methods;
- b. the degradation of our farmlands through siltation, flooding and the deterioration of the water balance;
- c. the pollution of our urban areas and coastal waters through industrial wastes from outdated equipment and processes;
- d. the loss of coral reefs and other fishery resources.

WHEREAS, these degradation and destruction caused untold suffering to our rural and urban population, especially to industrial workers. They also destroyed people's lives and the bases of their livelihood from agriculture and fishing;

WHEREAS, this dramatic situation arises from the absence of a development policy which

- a. puts prime value to human life and social values of the Philippine community over materialistic approaches;
- b. exercises a choice of technologies which ensure sustainable productivity of natural resources;
- c. makes Filipinos as the direct beneficiaries of products and services from the motherland;

WHEREAS, the dramatic population increase of today quickly leads to a depletion or overutilization of our natural resources;

WHEREAS, we deplore the decline in our relationship with nature, that sometimes result in a violent and destructive approach to environmental life around us;

WHEREAS, we have witnessed and suffered the effects of such destruction, which if left unattended, will result in even greater national disaster;

WHEREAS, given this reality as a *Church for the Life of the World and as Stewards of God's Creation*, we are called upon to be vigilant to defend God's creation, if not for us then for our children and their children;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved, that the General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) encourage the entire constituency to:

1. undertake a vigorous campaign educating our people on the root causes of such destruction and suffering;
2. formulate development policies which consider the principles evoked above and giving due consideration to such issues like rational land use, genuine land reform, *forest land reform*, and formulate such plans and programs for all levels of the life of the Church, through a process of research and consultation;
3. support the call for a total logging ban in the country for the next 25 years in order to replenish our rapidly diminishing forest reserves;
4. formulate an action program for the coming quadrennium 1990-1994 with, among others, the following components:
 - a. activities designed to support those government programs, i.e. those of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, judged to be capable of improving and protecting the natural resources;
 - b. a massive tree planting program throughout the country and throughout the quadrennium;

- c. the organization of survey teams to speed up the process of land titling for landless farmers presently undertaken by the DENR and the DAR;
- d. a project to study and change the UCCP's own programs, projects, actions and operations with the aim of making them environmentally sound and sustaining;

APPROVED and ADOPTED by the Fourth Quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines this 26th day of May, 1990, in Cebu City, Philippines.

A Statement of the Preservation of the Integrity of God's Creation

General Assembly

21-26 May 1990

"And God saw everything He has made and behold it was good."

(Genesis 1:31)

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein."

(Psalm 24:1)

We, the Church leaders, officers of and delegates to the Fourth Quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), meeting in plenary session on May 26, 1990 at Cebu City, discussed and made this statement on the preservation of the integrity of creation.

THE BIBLICAL BASIS

The Scriptures remind us of the timeless truth that God, the Sovereign Maker, created the heavens, the earth and all things therein. God declared His creation as very good.

Moreover, God created man and woman in His own image. He entrusted to them the care and protection of all that He has made: land, seas, air, water, birds, beasts, plants and all creeping, living and even inanimate things.

He charged man and woman to till the land and keep it. In other words, God made human beings stewards of His good and beautiful creation.

The Bible tells us that human beings accepted this responsibility when they recognized God as the Lord of their lives and of history.

THE REAL SITUATION

Human beings failed miserably as stewards. Through indifference and neglect or through deliberate, inconsiderate and greedy decisions, they defaced and destroyed the earth to enhance personal profits at the expense of God's good and beautiful creation.

Through their lust to possess and to amass for themselves the wealth and bounty of the earth, mixed with total abandon and disregard for the welfare of creation, human beings committed disastrous acts, such as:

- a. In the mining industry, for example the Benguet Open Pit Mining, thoughtless of consequences, intensified the adverse and destructive effects on the rivers, forests, mountains and on the people and living creatures near the mining site. Likewise, other mining companies operating in other parts of the country contributed to the grave pollution and destruction of the environment.
- b. The logging industry resorted to and abetted the indiscriminate and illegal cutting of trees. These caused the rapid disappearance of our forests and denudation of our mountains. When the rains came, rivers swelled

into floods that inundated farms and towns. When dry season came, the rivers, lakes, streams and springs dried up. Rain or shine, people suffered.

- c. Industrialized farming encouraged the use of inorganic fertilizers and commercial pesticides by both big and small farmers. This caused adverse side-effects on the fertility of the land and on the health of the people.
- d. The presence and active operation of about one thousand (1,000) foreign multinational corporations throughout the land make them as the principal cause of the acute pollution of many of our rivers, lakes, seas, air, population centers and environs. They also serve as concrete vestiges of foreign domination and control of our economy and sovereignty.
- e. The general pollution of our environment may cause the destruction of the ozone layer, a covering that protects the earth from intense heat or ultra violet rays from the sun. Exacerbate this with the destruction of forests to pave the way for the greenhouse effect — the warning of global temperature to such an extent that earthly life may not be able to bear it.

THE CALL

The UCCP General Assembly has set forth the following challenges and calls to:

1. Every Farmer/Individual

- a. To use organize fertilizers and pesticides in farming and gardening, in order to preserve the fertility of the land and to avoid side effects harmful to people's health.
- b. To adopt SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology) method in farming, an appropriate way to cultivate mountains and hills that prevents soil erosion and promotes land fertility.
- c. To challenge individual Christians to live and practice seriously his/her stewardship of God's creation and to combat all forces that desecrate God's earth.

2. Local Churches and Communities

- a. To strongly support the proposal to enforce a policy on total logging ban for twenty-five years.
- b. To support the government's plant-a-tree program by starting a small scale but systematic reforestation project beginning with land owned by the local church or by church members.
- c. To conduct a massive education program, in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental agencies concerning stewardship of God's creation. The program will avail of all study materials produced by the NCCP and UCCP for use by the church constituency, as well as by the community, at large.

3. The Government: Local and National

- a. To give serious and immediate attention to the problem of pollution and the destruction of forests and trees by investing more money and resources for the restoration, development, preservation, and protection of our natural resources;
- b. To institute a policy on total logging ban for at least twenty-five (25) years in order to foster a faster restoration of denuded and eroded mountains and hills.

DONE and APPROVED by the Fourth Quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) on May 26th, 1990 at Cebu City, Philippines.

A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE OPERATION AND LEGALIZATION OF SMALL TOWN LOTTERY (STL), JUETENG, AND OTHER GAMBLING ACTIVITIES

General Assembly

21-28 May 1990

WHEREAS, the practice of small town lottery (STL), jueteng and other forms of gambling are very rampant in almost every town;

WHEREAS, (STL) is a legalized version of jueteng — a numbers game, which is a form of gambling;

WHEREAS, STL has no qualifications nor strict guidelines on who can participate or who can bet, even as it has attracted many citizens of the community, including minors and children;

WHEREAS, observation and scientific research have proven that any form of gambling could corrupt the citizenry, especially children and minors;

WHEREAS, the government encourages the STL whose practices foster the corruption of our people's moral values with the panacea of money they expect to win;

WHEREAS, the morality of families have been adversely affected, even resulting to broken homes;

WHEREAS, STL, like other forms of gambling, does not help solve the moral and economic problems which beset our country. It deviates people's attention to solve the real causes of poverty, insurgency and injustice, etc. STL only offers the common folk some false hopes as means of escape from their abject situation and dire need. No one becomes rich from gambling. Rather, it makes people poorer and more miserable;

WHEREAS, even President Corazon C. Aquino acknowledges that the roots of insurgency lodge in the economic condition of the people and the social structures that oppress them (1986 UP Commencement Address);

BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to condemn STL and other gambling activities in the country;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that we call on the government to address itself to seek creative solutions to the roots of our problems instead of legalizing STL and other forms of gambling, in addition to the unleashing of the sword of total war as means of these ends. We also call on all Christian Churches to unite and wake war on all forms of gambling, which corrupt morals and distort Christian values;

RESOLVED FINALLY, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Executive Department, the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Department of National Defense, and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), as well as to all local churches of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Fourth General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines on this 26th day of May, 1990 in Cebu City.

RESOLUTION URGING THE CREATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE PEASANT PROGRAM

General Assembly
21-26 May 1990

WHEREAS, peasants, whose main source of living comes from farming, comprise the majority population in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, the major problems of the peasantry include:

- a. land ownership
- b. high cost of production and low prices of farm products
- c. high interests of loans from lending institutions and from big businessmen
- d. government policies not responsive to the plight of peasants due to lack of genuine representation in policy-making bodies
- e. unjust sharing and high land rentals

f. weak peasants organizations;

WHEREAS, the government has laws like CARP and programs such as CARP and others which do not benefit farmers;

Some programs have good intentions but graft and corruption derail, mislead and eventually deceive the people, e.g. IRRI and RPEP;

WHEREAS, the Church, in order to fulfill her ministry, has to come up with a comprehensive peasant program that will be responsive to the needs and aspirations of Philippine peasantry;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Fourth Quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines formulate a program for the peasantry and create an office for its implementation;

RESOLVED FURTHER, AS IT IS HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED, that the program for peasantry be disseminated to jurisdictions, conferences and local churches to ensure participatory implementation and responsible action;

APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Fourth quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in session at Bradford Church at Cebu City on May 21-27, 1990.

POSITION PAPER ON THE CREATION OF A UCCP CHAPLAINCY OFFICE

General Assembly

21-26 May 1990

BACKGROUND

1. The United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) holds the distinction as pioneer in various areas of Chaplaincy Ministry.

Among the major Protestant bodies, the UCCP responded ahead of the rest to the call of Military Chaplaincy.

The UCCP also pioneered in urban-industrial, rural and hospital chaplaincies, not to mention campus and prison ministries.

2. Today, the UCCP has the largest number of pastors serving the chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Out of the fourteen chaplains endorsed by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), 10 come from the UCCP, 2 from the United Methodist Church and 2 from the Convention of Philippine Baptists.

3. In addition to the military chaplains, the UCCP has chaplains in schools, hospitals, prisons; and leprosaria. Some of them serve on their own without direct relationship with the UCCP.

DISCUSSION

1. The needs of the times require the services of skilled chaplains in church related institutions, government and non-government agencies. This gets fully maximized through chaplaincy development training and continuing education, mutual improvement and sharing of skills and resources.

2. Chaplains serving outside their Conference/4 often feel abandoned, especially if their respective Moderators fail to invite them to attend their annual conferences.

3. Some Chaplains often feel neglected because nothing exists at the national office that attends to their intellectual, psychological, social, as well as pastoral needs.

4. This obtaining situation indicates the need to establish an office at the UCCP National Offices. To start with, this office shall be placed under the Mission and Evangelism Desk to undertake these concerns:

- To promote strong and deepened identity as UCCP pastors, who stand with integrity and greater solidarity as chaplains deployed by the Church, through fellowship, witness and service in an atmosphere of fraternal camaraderie girded with ministerial esprit de corps.
- To institute chaplaincy development education programs
 - to prepare pastors for deployment to institutions and sectors,
 - to develop their skills in various aspects of chaplaincy, and
 - to update them in theological and pastoral knowledge and trends related to the chaplaincy ministry.

This serves to build up a pool of chaplains that ensures an adequate number of trained and skilled pastors for deployment and assignment.
- To encourage specialization in various disciplines related to the chaplaincy and provide opportunities for graduate and post graduate studies for more effectiveness in the chaplaincy ministry.
- To encourage, energize and enable chaplains to organize their own Association of UCCP Chaplains as their medium for sharing common concerns, mutual strengthening in their ministries, inspire unity, cultivate cooperation, develop esprit de corps and camaraderie, and deepen loyalty to God, church and country.

CONCLUSION

This discussion points to the urgent need for the UCCP to attend to the need for chaplaincy ministries in church related institutions and sectoral groups.

It strongly indicates the need to create a Chaplaincy Office at the UCCP National Offices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To recommend to the CEER of NCCP to designate Bishop Estanislao Q. Abainza to serve as Protestant Bishop to take responsibility for counseling and programming for Evangelical Chaplains in the AFP. This continues the present arrangement of a Bishop from the NCCP to attend to the promotion of programs to build up morale among Protestant Chaplains in the AFP for their effective ministry to men in uniform and for their wholesome and creative relationship with the civilian populace.
2. Create a UCCP Chaplaincy Office as a special ministries section of the Mission and Evangelism Desk.
3. Designate Rev. Narciso Dumlalagan to handle the UCCP Chaplaincy Office per arrangement to be made by the UCCP General Secretary.
4. Appropriate funds for the support of this office including the honorarium of the person in charge of the UCCP Chaplaincy Office. Said funds shall be part of the budget of the Mission and Evangelism Desk.
5. Immediately after the activation of the UCCP Chaplaincy Office, a Chaplains Consultation shall be called to formulate relevant and effective programs and projects for implementation effective in the fiscal year 1990-1991.

FOR THE UCCP ENDORSED CHAPLAINS:

REV. SIMPLICIO B. DANG-AWAN, JR.

Major, CHS (RAF)
Chaplains Representative

ACTION OF THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

APPROVED for ENDORSEMENT by the Mission and Evangelism Administrative Committee in its meeting on July 19, 1990 to the Executive Committee in Session at the UCCP Conference Room on August 6-8, 1990.

BISHOP ESTANISLAO Q. ABAINZA

Chairman
Mission and Evangelism Committee

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