

FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

(First Session)

Pursuant to notice duly given the Fifth General Assembly of Unitarian Universalist Association was held in Hollywood-by-the-Sea, Florida at the Diplomat Hotel and was called to order on May 18, 1966, at 9 A.M. by the Moderator, Dr. Joseph L. Fisher.

A devotional service was conducted by Reverend John Papandrew, Minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Miami, Florida.

The Secretary of the Association reported that greetings had been received from Unitarians and Universalists around the world including groups in Hungary, Germany, India, Japan, Czechoslovakia and the Philippines.

The President introduced two distinguished guests, Reverend Dr. Eric Shirvall Price of the British General Assembly and Dr. H. J. Wytéma, President of the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom. Both gentlemen addressed the meeting briefly.

The meeting adopted Rules of Procedure and then heard reports by the President and the Moderator.

Before proceeding with other scheduled reports the Clarence R. Skinner Annual Award was presented by Reverend Fenwick L. Leavitt, Jr. The award is for the sermon of the year judged to be the most effective liberal religious expression in the area of social concern and was given to Reverend William R. Moors for his sermon entitled "The Injustice of Legalized Murder" delivered at the Cedar Lane Unitarian Church at Bethesda, Md.

Following this award reports were presented by the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Vice President of Fund Raising and Development.

By vote of the meeting these reports were received and placed on file.

The First Session of the General Assembly recessed at 12:05 P.M., until May 19, 1966, at 9 A.M.

(Second Session)

The Second Session was called to order at 9:05 A.M. on May 19, 1966. The first order of business was the consideration of the reports received during the First Session.

In response to a question, the Treasurer stated that the policy of the Association to give attention to the employment practices of companies in which the Association had investments, had been followed up with letters of inquiry to every corporation whose securities were held by the Association; that a gratifying number of companies were committed to fair non-discriminatory employment practices; that all replies had been carefully considered by him and then turned over to the Association's Department of Social Responsibility; and that that Department had made no recommendation for further action.

A delegate expressed concern at the cost to delegates of General Assemblies and stated that the ministers in his District were concerned lest some Churches and Fellowships had been in the past and would be in the future unable to send delegates because of the cost and were therefore excluded from participation. The delegate was assured by the Moderator that this problem would be taken into consideration regarding future General Assemblies.

There were no further questions or comments on the reports and no action was taken by the meeting.

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The Committee on Credentials submitted a preliminary report showing that, as of the convening of the Second Session, delegates from 40 states were represented comprising 480 delegates from Churches, 50 from Fellowships, 217 Ministers and 3 Life Members.

The next order of business was to hear and take action on the report of The Committee on Hearings and Confidentiality of Ministerial Files. The Moderator explained the need for considering these two items separately and for bringing forward at appropriate times, relevant proposed By-Law amendments and the report of the Committee on Congregational Polity and Membership Practices. The meeting agreed that this might be done. Printed reports of the two Committees were in the hands of the delegates. The question on "Hearings" involved a proposal that proceedings to remove a Minister from membership in the Ministerial Fellowship of the Association be conducted and decided by a special commission or hearing body instead of continuing the present practice which vests this responsibility in the Association's Ministerial Fellowship Committee. The Committee on Hearings, so-called, which was established by direction of the 1965 General Assembly, reported through its Chairman the recommendation that the Ministerial Fellowship Committee continue to conduct and decide such proceedings for the reasons stated in its printed report. A motion to this effect was carried without debate.

The meeting next turned to the consideration of the matter of Confidentiality of Ministerial Files. This matter is regulated by Article VII, Section 3 of the By-Laws of the Association. The same Committee established as aforesaid recommended changes in the By-Law to provide that a Minister's file should be made available to him under certain specified circumstances. The Ministerial Fellowship Committee recommended that no change be made, but also recommended that if the meeting decided to make any change, the proposal of the Special Committee be modified in certain respects. These two proposed By-Law changes are set forth in the Final Agenda for the 1966 General Assembly, which Final Agenda is on file with the Secretary and may be referred to. In order to get the matter before the meeting the Business Committee moved the adoption of the By-Law amendment proposed by the Special Committee. In the debate which followed a suggestion was made that the whole problem be studied further by the new Director of the Department of the Ministry and that he present his suggestions at the next General Assembly. Whereupon it was voted to table the motion to amend the By-Law.

The meeting turned to the consideration of the report of the Committee on Congregational Polity and Membership Practices. As this report involved proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Association which in turn involved a proposal to amend the By-Laws of the Association governing General Assembly procedures in acting on amendments to the Constitution, the meeting consented to changes in the order of Agenda items permitting the actions hereinafter reported to be taken in appropriate sequence.

As set forth in the Final Agenda it was proposed to establish new procedures for changing the Constitution by amending Article VI, Section 6 of the By-Laws by striking out part of Subsection 2, striking out Subsection 4 and inserting a new Subsection 4. After debate the proposed amendments to Article VI, Section 6 of the By-Laws in the form and text set forth in the Final Agenda were adopted by the required two-thirds vote which also provided that the amendments should take effect immediately.

Pursuant to a vote of the 1965 General Assembly, a proposal was presented to amend Article II of the Constitution by adding a new Section 4 dealing with the subject of the Association's responsibility to promote full participation of all persons without regard to race, color, sex or national origin and without regard to any creedal test. The 1965 proposal was presented in alternate texts, in one of which reference to creedal tests was eliminated.

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In order for the delegates to be able to deal with the creedal test provision in a proposal not also involving race, color, sex or national origin, the Business Committee inserted a proposal to add a Section 5 to Article II of the Constitution.

To bring the matter to the floor, the Business Committee moved that the meeting adopt the amendment to Article II of the Constitution by adding a new Section 4 in the text presented in the Final Agenda as Form I, which text made reference to creedal tests.

At the outset of consideration of the Constitutional amendments the Chairman of the Committee on Congregational Polity and Membership Practices discussed the report of his Committee which had been distributed to the delegates. The report pointed out that a statement of the responsibility "to have full participation with persons without regard to race, color, sex or national origin" and a statement of the responsibility "to have such full participation without any creedal test" presented separate issues, and that the Committee had discovered a diversity of practice among Churches and Fellowships in the procedures of receiving members into congregations. He reminded the meeting that the doctrine of congregational polity is affirmed in Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution, and that congregational polity involves autonomy of congregations and the fellowship of congregations.

After debate, which included consideration of amendments offered by the Chairman of the Special Committee and others, Form I was changed as will hereinafter appear.

The meeting, acting under Step I of the new procedure for amending the Constitution, voted to accept the proposal to amend Article II of the Constitution by adding a new Section 4, as follows:

In accordance with the purposes and objectives of the Unitarian Universalist Association, this Association hereby declares and affirms its special responsibility and the responsibility of its members to promote the full participation of persons, without regard to race, color, sex, or national origin, in the Association, in member churches and fellowships, in associate members, in the ministry and in society.

As required by the Constitution, following the vote of acceptance the proposal in its accepted form was read again to the meeting and the Moderator announced that the proposal in that form would appear on the Final Agenda for the next regular meeting of the General Assembly for action under Step II.

The proposal to add a new Section 5 to Article II of the Constitution (prescribing "creedal tests") was placed before the meeting by the Moderator. The Chairman of the Special Committee on Congregational Polity and Membership Practices moved that action on this proposal be postponed until the 1967 General Assembly, and that the present Special Committee be continued and make a more complete report to the 1967 General Assembly. After debate the motion was carried by a counted vote, 388 voting in the affirmative and 211 voting in the negative.

The Moderator declared that the proposal to add a new Section 5 to Article II of the Constitution would appear on the Agenda for the 1967 General Assembly, and that the 1967 General Assembly under Step I would then deal with the proposal as if it were appearing on a Final Agenda for the first time. The Second Session of the General Assembly recessed at 12:10 P.M., until May 20, 1966, at 9 A.M.

(Third Session)

The Third Session was called to order at 9 A.M. on May 20, 1966.

Two distinguished guests were presented to the meeting, Rabbi Joseph Narrud of Miami and Monsignor O'Donoghue, representing Bishop Carroll of the Catholic Diocese of Miami. Each addressed the meeting.

In the Third Session the first item of business was to complete Item 5 of the Final Agenda having to do with additional amendments to the By-Laws.

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By the required votes Article II, Section 1 of the By-Laws was amended to eliminate the separate fiscal year for the Annual Fund and Article IV, Sections 6 and 7 were amended to enlarge provisions pertaining to Assistant Treasurers of the Association.

The Moderator then called on the Commission on Religion and Race for its report. The Chairman elaborated on the printed report which had been distributed to the delegates.

The meeting voted unanimously that the Commission on Religion and Race be continued, that the Freedom Fund be continued, that the delegates give appropriate weight to the Commission's recommendation that the Consensus on Racial Justice be approved, and commended the Commission for its excellent work.

The Chairman of the Committee on Goals made an interim report and stated his hope that a full report would be ready for the next General Assembly.

The following resolution entitled "Concern for Older Adults" was adopted unanimously.

RESOLVED: that this Assembly recognize the acknowledgment of the Unitarian Universalist Association Board of the responsibility of the church for the well-being of older adults, and that it commend the Board for its appointment of a Committee on Aging; for providing the Committee with some part time staff assistance (in cooperation with the Women's Federation); for publishing the pamphlet "Living All Our Years"; and for encouraging the development of the Jefferson Center and other projects for the elderly; and

FURTHER RESOLVED: that we urge the Unitarian Universalist Association to become increasingly aware of the problems and potentials of older adults both within the church and the community; and to become actively involved, both in meeting problems and developing potentials of older adults; and

AND FURTHER RESOLVED: that the Unitarian Universalist Association increase its efforts to stimulate and assist societies and districts in carrying out meaningful programs for older adults.

The Moderator called upon the Chairman of the Business Committee who reminded the meeting that the 1965 General Assembly recommended that each year the General Assembly select two topics for study by Churches and Fellowships on which action might be taken in the following General Assembly. To implement this proposal the Board of Trustees recommended the following four possible topics.

- (1) A continuing study of China as begun in 1965.
- (2) A study of Remedies for Pollution of Water and Air in North America.
- (3) A study of Improper Use of Narcotics and Drugs, Particularly among Young Adults and Possible Steps to Control Such Use.
- (4) A study of Existing Programs for Training Leaders in our Churches and Fellowships and Expanding and Improving such Programs.

The delegates voted to include two additional topics namely: "Congregational Polity and Membership Practices" and "Viet Nam." A proposal to add, as a topic, the study of "Alternatives to our Current Method of Holding General Assemblies with the Intent to Lower Costs for all Participants" was adopted by a counted vote, 230 voting in favor and 202 voting against. Thereupon a motion for reconsideration was adopted. After considerable further debate a motion to lay the matter on the table was carried by a counted vote, 263 voting in favor and 227 voting against. After some debate on which of the six topics should be sent to the Churches and Fellowships for study, a written Ballot was distributed but could not be counted until after the adjournment of the Third Session.

A resolution appearing in the Final Agenda entitled "UUA-UN Program," calling for higher priority in the work of the Association's United Nations Non-

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ernmental Representative and requesting that said representative in the future be a salary and be given adequate clerical assistance, was by vote indefinitely postponed in view of the President's announcement that the Association had employed a full-time staff person to work at the United Nations. In discussing this resolution and its withdrawal, tribute was paid to Mrs. Elizabeth Swayzee for her outstanding unpaid work as the Association's first United Nations Non-Governmental representative, and in further testimony to Mrs. Swayzee's notable success the delegates rose and applauded her.

A resolution dealing with a change in name of the I.A.R.F. was amended and adopted unanimously in the following form:

RESOLVED: That the 1966 General Assembly go on record in favor of a change in name from "International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom" to one more indicative of its liberal interfaith character.

A resolution calling for interfaith dialogue was amended and then unanimously adopted in the following form:

It is the sense of the 1966 General Assembly that the Unitarian Universalist Association enter into serious dialogue with liberal groups of different religious traditions throughout the world, in order to bring about communication of religious principles on a world level.

We believe that the future of our liberal faith depends upon the acceptance of equality among religious liberals of all historic traditions.

We request that the Department of Overseas and Interfaith Relations of the Unitarian Universalist Association increase its activity in this area as well as continuing its present dialogue with groups in the Christian tradition.

The Third Session of the General Assembly recessed at noon until 2 P.M.

(Fourth Session)

The Fourth Session was called to order at 2 P.M. on May 20, 1966. Upon reconvening, the meeting took up the proposed Unitarian Universalist Statement of Consensus on Racial Justice. Between Sessions of the General Assembly, the version of the Statement of Consensus appearing in the Final Agenda was thoroughly discussed at an informal scheduled meeting of interested delegates. This group, through its drafting committee, made revisions and additions to the Statement and presented to the General Assembly a complete copy of the Statement as thus revised. The General Assembly, acting as a Committee of the Whole considered and debated the revision version and approved further additions and changes. After final approval by the Committee of the Whole, the meeting reconvened in regular session and adopted the Statement without further change.* The vote was not counted, but when those voting "No" were asked to stand, less than twenty-four persons responded.

The Fourth Session of the General Assembly recessed at 3:45 P.M. until May 21, 1966, at 9 A.M.

(Fifth Session)

The Fifth Session was called to order at 9 A.M. on May 21, 1966. The meeting adopted the General Resolutions set forth in an addendum to these Minutes. As required in the By-Laws, a note at the end of each General Resolution shows whether it was adopted unanimously, by more than a two-thirds majority, or by a counted vote, in which latter case the count is recorded.

During the Fifth Session, business transacted other than consideration of General Resolutions was as follows.

* Text of the Statement on Racial Justice on pages 67-71.

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The Business Committee reported that by the ballots cast in the Third Session, the General Assembly had chosen "Remedies for Pollution of Water and Air in North America" and "China" as two topics for study in the ensuing year. The meeting also voted, for this year only, to add as a third topic a study of "Congregational Polity and Membership Practices."

The Fifth Session of the General Assembly recessed at 11:55 A.M., until May 21, 1966, at 2:00 P.M.

(Sixth Session)

The Sixth Session was called to order at 2 P.M. on May 21, 1966. During the Sixth Session, business transacted, other than consideration of General Resolutions was as follows.

The matter of studying the high costs of General Assemblies, tabled during the Third Session, was by vote "taken from the table."

The original motion was amended to read as follows:

WHEREAS, each General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association should be broadly representative of the underlying constituent Churches and Fellowships; and

WHEREAS, each delegation should be broadly representative of the underlying constituent membership of the Church or Fellowship, regardless of economic condition; and

WHEREAS, the current practice of holding General Assemblies in high-cost surroundings undermines the desire to achieve broad representation for the open examination of vital issues;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this Fifth Annual General Assembly direct the Churches and Fellowships to study in detail (1) all facets of how General Assemblies should be held, including the dissemination of prior background information, (2) reasonable cost standards for future General Assemblies to provide for increased participation in denominational meetings for all participants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Fifth Annual General Assembly direct the Board of Trustees to tabulate the results and have the Business Committee prepare an Agenda item for the 1967 General Assembly.

After debate, the meeting voted to postpone action indefinitely. The President assured the meeting that the subject matter would be carefully studied by some competent group and a report made to the Churches and Fellowships.

By vote, the Commission on Appraisal was requested to "report to the 1967 General Assembly on its study proposals concerning (1) Unitarian Universalist Association nominating procedures, and (2) the role of District Organizations within the Unitarian Universalist Movement."

The final report of the Committee on Credentials showed that during the 1966 General Assembly there were represented 5 Provinces in Canada, the Canal Zone and 42 States in the United States; 504 church lay delegates; 55 Fellowship lay delegates; 20 members of the Board of Trustees; 225 Ministers; 4 members from the Church of the Larger Fellowship; 10 delegates from Associate Organizations; and 3 Life Members; a total of 821 delegates. These delegates represented 259 Churches and 37 Fellowships, 10 of which were from Canada and the Canal Zone.

After a benediction by the President, the Fifth General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association adjourned *sine die* on May 21, 1966, at 4:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANK B. FREDERICK
Recording Secretary