

MINUTES

Thirteenth General Assembly of Unitarian Universalist Association

Held at the Americana Hotel, New York, New York

The General Assembly was convened by the Moderator at 9:30 a.m. on June 26, 1974. Based on a preliminary report of the credentials committee the Moderator declared a quorum was present. The meeting adopted rules of procedures which provided for Perfecting Groups to replace the Mini-Assemblies used in previous years.

The General Assembly heard reports by the President, the Moderator, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Financial Advisor, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Chairperson of the Commission on Appraisal, the Vice President of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Chairperson of the Beacon Press Board.

BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

The General Assembly took final affirmative action to amend Section C-2.2. of the By-Laws for the purpose of replacing words and phrases which involve gender discrimination, so that as amended it will read as follows:

Section C-2.2. Principles.

- (b) *Cherish and spread the universal truths taught by the great prophets and teachers of humanity in every age and tradition, immemorially summarized in the Judeo-Christian heritage as love to God and love to humankind.*
- (c) *Affirm, defend, and promote the supreme worth and dignity of every human personality, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships.*

A proposal to amend the bylaws to provide for Biennial General Assemblies was amended to provide Biennial Assemblies only until the end of the fiscal year June 30, 1980. For the proposal as amended 403 votes were cast in favor of and 362 votes were cast against the amendment but a two-thirds affirmative vote was required and the proposal was therefore defeated.

There was a proposal to amend the bylaws and rules of the Association to provide for two kinds of General Assemblies, a business assembly to be held in odd-numbered years and a program assembly to be held in even-numbered years. The Moderator's ruling to admit this item to the Agenda was overruled by the Assembly and this item was dropped.

Section 14.2 (d) of the bylaws was amended to permit Districts to propose bylaw amendments by the necessary two-thirds majority, so that as amended it will read as follows:

Section 14.2. Submission of Proposed Amendment.

- (d) *a District by official action at a duly called District meeting at which a quorum is present, such proposed amendment to be received by the Planning Committee not less than 110 days before the next regular General Assembly.*

Rule G-4.15.2. of the General Assembly was amended to prevent a general resolution appearing on the final agenda from being amended so as to become a business resolution, so that as amended it will read as follows:

Rule G-4.15.2. Business and General Resolutions. Resolutions placed upon the tentative and final agenda for each regular General Assembly by the General Assembly Planning Committee shall include business and general resolutions. A business resolution involves directly the business or administrative affairs of the Association or calls for action by the Association. A general resolution only recommends study, records an opinion, or requests that action be taken by persons or organizations not controlled by the Association. A general resolution appearing on the final agenda may not be amended so as to become a business resolution.

Sections 8.1 (c), 8.11 and 10.8 were amended by the necessary two-thirds majority to eliminate provisions in the bylaws making it mandatory for the Association to have an Executive Vice President, so that as amended they will read as follows:

Section 8.1. Officers Enumerated.

- (c) *Appointed Salaried Officers. The appointed salaried officers of the Association shall include a Treasurer, and may include one or more vice presidents, assistant treasurers, and such other officers as the Board of Trustees may determine.*

Section 8.11. Executive Vice President.

In the event an Executive Vice President should be appointed, the Board of Trustees shall describe his or her duties.

Section 10.8. Contracts and Securities.

The President, Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer may sign and attest deeds, mortgages, contracts, and other documents to which the Association is a party.

Section 4.12 (a) of the bylaws was amended by the necessary two-thirds majority to add to the items of business that are required to be inserted in each final agenda all reports and other matters required by the bylaws to be submitted to the General Assembly, so that as amended it will read as follows:

Section 4.12. Final Agenda for Regular General Assemblies.

The Planning Committee shall prepare a final agenda for each General Assembly which shall include:

- (a) *all reports and other matters required by these Bylaws to be submitted to the General Assembly and all proposed amendments to bylaws appearing on the tentative agenda.*

The meeting postponed indefinitely a proposal to amend Section C-14.1 of the bylaws to provide for a referendum procedure under which certain bylaw amendments would be referred to member societies after the adjournment of a General Assembly.

BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS

Because the General Assembly did not vote for Biennial General Assemblies, no action was taken on a proposal to establish Multi-District meetings in even-numbered years between Biennial sessions.

A resolution was adopted urging the Board of Trustees to draft bylaw changes to provide for referenda in member societies on bylaw amendments which have received a majority vote but have failed to receive a two-thirds majority vote, such bylaw changes to be distributed to member societies in sufficient time for submission to the 1975 General Assembly. On this resolution 270 voted in the affirmative and 246 voted in the negative. As amended, it will read as follows:

Be it resolved: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges the Board of Trustees to draft Bylaw changes to provide the legal authorization for a referendum of member societies on Bylaw amendments passed by at least a majority but less than 2/3 vote on the vote for final adoption; said proposed Bylaw change to be distributed to the member societies in sufficient time that it may be submitted for the next General Assembly.

A proposed resolution was amended and adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, it has been one of the strongest traditions of our Unitarian Universalist religious movement to honor freedom of the press, and

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalist World is described in the 1974 Directory of the UUA as "intended to strengthen communication between individual UU's, member societies, and the Association . . . and to present a positive representation of Unitarian Universalism including diversity and balance,"

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED; that to insure and implement the concepts honored above, freedom of the press and diversity and balance, the 1974 General Assembly urges the Board of Trustees to reaffirm a policy of encouraging the Editor and staff of the UU World to seek and report criticisms, alternative opinions, and background information concerning current UUA matters.

The following award presentations were made:

MELCHER BOOK AWARD – Professor Robert Jewett

AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE CAUSE OF LIBERAL RELIGION – Monroe Husbands

ANGUSH H. MACLEAN AWARD – Reverend Margaret Odell

HOLMES-WEATHERLY AWARD – Reverend Donald Lothrop

CLARENCE R. SKINNER AWARD – Reverend Patrick Green

Honorable mention – Reverend David O. Rankin

OTHER BUSINESS

Under the item in the final agenda calling for action on reports of the officers and committees the following resolution concerning an office of gay concerns was adopted by a vote of 376 in the affirmative and 311 in the negative:

Whereas the General Assembly 1973 voted as a business resolution to urge the UUA Board of Trustees to create at the denomina-

tional headquarters an Office of Gay Concerns; and

Whereas money was not available for the Office and the full benefit of the experience, talent, and status of the UUA to seek sources of funding outside the then denominational budget was urged by the General Assembly in its resolution; and

Whereas a \$600,000 grant of which \$300,000 is in unrestricted program funds has since come to the denomination above the basic budget approved by the 1973 General Assembly and yet the Office has not been included in the items approved for funding from that grant, therefore

Be it resolved that the UUA Board be urged to include in the Grants Section of the 1974-75 UUA Budget an item for \$38,500 to establish the Office of Gay Concerns, such funds to take precedence over two items presently listed in the Grants Section: \$24,000 from the Research Program and \$14,500 from the Publicity and Television/Radio item; and further

Resolved that such Office be established in accordance with the proposal developed by the UUA Board and Administration in consultation with the UUA Gay Caucus' Advisory Committee and as revised by the UUA Board at its meeting on June 24, 1974.

The text of the General Resolutions as passed together with the text of an additional General Resolution admitted for consideration and action as permitted under the Bylaws and passed are attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

The final report of the Credentials Committee was as follows: 932 delegates (672 lay and 193 ministerial), 19 Directors of Religious Education, 12 Associate Members, 25 Board of Trustees members and 11 Church of the Larger Fellowship, representing 337 churches and fellowships, 43 States, 6 Provinces and 1 foreign country.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn J. Vaughan, *Recording Secretary*

The changes in the Bylaws and Rules which were made have been integrated into the Bylaws and Rules in their final form and printed in the 1975 Directory of the Association.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

SUPPORT OF UNITED FARM WORKERS' BOYCOTTS

WHEREAS, the 1972 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association adopted a resolution asking member churches, fellowships, and constituencies to refrain from purchasing, serving, and eating iceberg (head) lettuce unless it is clearly marked with the Black Eagle label of the United Farm Workers Union, and

WHEREAS, table grape growers and many wineries are now without contracts with the United Farm Workers Union for their migrant and seasonal field hands,

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association in the United States and Canada urges members societies and members of societies to refrain from purchasing, serving and eating table grapes as well as iceberg (head) lettuce, unless these products are clearly marked with the Black Eagle label of the United Farm Workers Union, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That member societies and members of societies purchase only those continental wines certified by the UU Migrant Minister, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly urges a free secret plebiscite of the Gallo workers, both employed and unemployed, and that the Gallo wineries, the

Teamsters, and the United Farm Workers accept impartial arbitration, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly calls upon the Congress to pass legislation providing that migrant and other farm workers are assured of the right to organize collectively and the right to select representatives by secret ballot, on the same basis as other workers.

FEDERAL CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION REFORM

WHEREAS, the interaction of human and technological forces has become increasingly complex and has resulted in awesome power and vulnerability; and

WHEREAS, there is a need greater than at any other time in our history for objective study of issues and competent decision-making by our elected officials; and

WHEREAS, the corrupting influence of financial power in the political process must be curtailed:

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association supports the enactment of legislation that will, by means of an independent enforcement agency, ensure full disclosure of and limit the size of campaign contributions and expenditures, provide incentives for small individual contributions, provide for partial public financing of federal election campaigns, and limit the length of those campaigns.

DEATH PENALTY

WHEREAS, at this time, even though there has been no execution in the United States for the past seven years, 28 states have already passed legislation seeking to re-establish capital punishment, and

WHEREAS, the act of execution of the death penalty by government sets an example of violence,

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association continues to oppose the death penalty in the United States and Canada, and urges all Unitarian Universalists and their local churches and fellowships to oppose any attempts to restore or continue it in any form.

PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

WHEREAS, real peace in Vietnam is of primary importance and killing and destruction must be ended, and the continued military support of both North and South Vietnam contributes to prolonging the strife,

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges the United States Government to press for full implementation of the Paris Peace Agreement; and in the interests of moving toward a lasting peace, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly further urges that the governments of the United States and Canada take the lead in pressing all governments presently supporting North or South Vietnam to agree to cease all military aid to either side.

REFORM OF COURTS AND PENAL SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the present court and penal systems have failed in their purpose of rehabilitation, have in fact damaged personalities and wholesome human values, and have resulted in a high rate of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, we, who "affirm, defend, and promote the supreme worth of every human personality", wish to give every individual a chance for fulfillment:

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges and supports a massive reform of the various systems of criminal justice which will include but not be limited to:

1. Provisions allowing judges the time and resources necessary to make sound decisions without resort to procedural shortcuts which frequently jeopardize both the rights of the accused and the safety of society, these resources to include authority to order, where feasible, compensation to the victim by those directly responsible.
2. Reducing jail and prison populations through provisions for community-based correctional programs and other alterna-

tives to incarceration. Until such steps are taken a moratorium on the construction of new jails and prisons should be instituted by local, state, provincial and federal authorities.

3. Adoption and implementation by all correctional institutions, authorities and planning bodies, of a prisoners bill of rights for detainees as well as convicted prisoners.
4. Provision of a full range of mental health services, vocational training, basic education, rehabilitation, effective employment programs and other programs to enhance re-entry into the community for the voluntary participation of any persons under the full or partial control of the "criminal justice system." Non-participation in such programs should not be prejudicial.
5. Reform of our criminals statutes to decriminalize all so-called "victimless crimes."
6. Elimination of indeterminate sentences.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the member churches and fellowships and the members of churches and fellowships concern themselves with these problems in their respective states, provinces and communities and take appropriate action.

CENSORSHIP AND OBSCENITY LAWS

WHEREAS, U.S. Supreme Court decisions announced on June 24, 1974 have returned the Supreme Court to a case-by-case determination of what is deemed obscene and have thereby reinstated a process which inevitably results in great uncertainty in that area; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court on June 24 sanctioned the application by federal jurors of their own view of what the average person in the community deems to be obscene, with the result that written and visual material must now be tailored to the standard of the most repressive locality or run the risk of being banned or confiscated; and

WHEREAS, in numerous states during the past three months there have been widespread introduction and consideration of repressive obscenity laws;

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1974 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association:

expresses deep concern at the trend of the recent decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court toward case-by-case determination;

opposes the repressive trend in recent state censorship legislation; and

strongly affirms the right of adults to decide what they should read, hear, and see free from official censorship, as has been recommended by the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography.