

MINUTES**THIRTY SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION
HELD IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

The General Assembly was convened on Thursday, June 19, 1997 at 7 p.m. by Moderator Denise Taft Davidoff at the Civic Plaza, Phoenix, Arizona. A banner parade and worship service began the Assembly.

The Assembly adopted, by two-thirds vote, Rules of Procedure for the conduct of the meeting.

Greetings were received in person from the Rev. Raymond Manker; Phyllis Daniel, Pacific Southwest Trustee; John McCain, Senator from Arizona; Nancy Loughrey, President of the Pacific Southwest; Diane Olson, Chair of the General Assembly Planning Committee; Ellen Campbell, Director of the Canadian Unitarian Council; and the Rev. Yukitaka Yamamoto, President of the International Association for Religious Freedom.

A list of the congregations entered into membership in the Unitarian Universalist Association during the past year was read: Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia; Unitarian Universalist Westside Congregation of Albuquerque, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Granite Peak Unitarian Universalist Church, Prescott, Arizona; Unitarian Universalist Meeting South Berkshire, Great Barrington, Massachusetts; Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Oxford, Mississippi; Sugarloaf Congregation of Unitarian Universalists, Germantown, Maryland; Unitarian Universalist Church of Southeast Arizona, Sierra Vista, Arizona; Cache Valley Unitarian Universalists, Logan, Utah; and Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Hendricks County, Danville, Texas.

On the basis of an initial report by the Secretary of the Association, a quorum was declared present from the time the meeting was called to order.

The Assembly received written reports or, in some cases, oral, from the President, the Moderator, the Executive Vice President, the Treasurer, the Financial Advisor, the Secretary, the Chair of the Finance Committee, the Planning Committee, the Commission on Appraisal, the Commission on Social Witness, the Nominating Committee, the Journey Toward Wholeness Oversight Committee, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office, the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, and the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

President Buehrens and Trustees, Dr. Elisabeth McGregor and the Rev. Wayne Arnason presented the annual Award for Distinguished Service to the Cause of Unitarian Universalism to the Rev. Dr. Jack Mendelsohn.

ACTION ON C-BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**VOTE FOR DISTRICT PRESIDENTS**

The Assembly considered for final approval and adoption a proposal to amend Section C-4.7 of the Bylaws, which would have added district presidents to the list of those eligible to vote at General Assembly. The proposal was defeated as a result of its not receiving the required two-thirds vote for adoption.

VOTE ON DETERMINING MEMBERSHIP OF FEDERATED CHURCHES

The Assembly voted on an amendment to Bylaw Section C-4.8 which would have the effect of allowing federated churches to determine membership by members who identify as Unitarian Universalists. The effect of the vote is to place this Bylaw amendment proposal on the Final Agenda of the 1998 General Assembly for final adoption which will require a two-thirds vote. The new text is as follows:

Section C-4.8 Delegates.

(a) The number of members of a certified member society which is a federated church shall be determined for purposes of this section either (i) by dividing the number of members of a federated church by the number of denominations included in the federation, or, at the option of the federated church, (ii) by reporting the actual number of members who identify themselves as Unitarian Universalists.

ACTION ON RULE AMENDMENTS**VOTE ON SETTING CONTINGENCIES AS PART OF EXPENSES**

By a vote of two-thirds or more the Assembly gave final approval to a change in the Rules which sets the UUA budget category for contingencies at 3% of the total of unrestricted expenses.

Section 10.1. Annual Budget.

Rule G-10.1.2. Expense Categories.

- (a) Expense estimates in budgets presented by the Board shall be broken down by major categories or functions in such manner as the Board shall determine.
- (b) The Current Fiscal Year budget shall contain a separate expense category provision for contingencies, the amount of which shall be a minimum of 3% of the total of all unrestricted expense categories, exclusive of the provision for contingencies.

ACTION ON BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS

The Assembly adopted, by a vote of two-thirds or more, the following business resolutions:

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person; and

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; and

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists believe in the importance of religious community; and

WHEREAS people with physical, psychiatric, and developmental disabilities are becoming more involved in all areas and levels of the Unitarian Universalist Association; and

WHEREAS people with disabilities to see, hear, or maneuver around allotted space are often excluded from full participation in and leadership of our worship services and other activities because of the inaccessibility of our buildings;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association undertakes an aggressive plan to address accessibility within the Association for people with disabilities by:

1. Establishing written policies and practices, providing staff training, and creating an accessibility manual for the Unitarian Universalist Association, allowing the Association to serve as a model of physical and attitudinal accessibility for its member congregations;
2. Encouraging congregations and districts to become more accessible by providing a variety of resources, including information on the Internet; and
3. Assuring that a Board-appointed standing committee, supporting congregations in their efforts to become more accessible, address matters of disability concerns and report annually to the General Assembly on these issues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Unitarian Universalist Association acts as an advocate for the human and civil rights of people with disabilities both within its own association and globally.

TOWARD AN ANTI-RACIST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

WHEREAS the 1996 General Assembly resolved that all congregations, districts, organizations, and professional and lay leaders participate in a reflection-action process throughout the 1996-97 church year using the Congregational Reflection and Action Process Guide and the Anti-Racism Assessment; and

WHEREAS our Unitarian Universalist principles call us to affirm and promote “justice, equity, and compassion in human relations” and “the goal of world community”; and

WHEREAS our history as Unitarian Universalists includes evidence of both great commitment and individual achievement in the struggle for racial justice as well as the failure of our Unitarian Universalist institutions to respond fully to the call for justice; and

WHEREAS racism and its effects, including economic injustice, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action; and

WHEREAS because of the impact of racism on all people, and the interconnection among oppressions, we realize we need to make an institutional commitment to end racism; and

WHEREAS the social, economic, and ecological health of our planet is imperiled by the deepening divisions in our world caused by inequitable and unjust distribution of power and resources; and

WHEREAS we are called yet again by our commitment to faith in action to pursue this anti-racist, multi-cultural initiative in the spirit of justice, compassion, and community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly urges Unitarian Universalists to examine carefully their own conscious and unconscious racism as participants in a racist society, and the effect that racism has on all our lives, regardless of color.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association, its congregations, and community organizations to develop an ongoing process for the comprehensive institutionalization of anti-racism and multi-culturalism, understanding that whether or not a group becomes multi-racial, there is always the opportunity to become anti-racist. Early steps toward anti-racism might include using curricula such as Journey Toward Wholeness for all age groups, forming racial justice committees, and conducting anti-racism workshops.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly urges all Unitarian Universalist leaders, including ministers, religious educators, leaders of associate and affiliate organizations, governing boards, Unitarian Universalist Association staff, theological schools, and future General Assemblies to engage in ongoing anti-racism training, to examine basic assumptions, structures, and functions, and, in response to what is learned, to develop action plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Unitarian Universalists are encouraged to enter into relationships of sustained engagement with all people of color with a goal of opening up authentic dialogue that may include, but is not limited to, race and racism. Such dialogue should also include how to appropriately honor and affirm the cultural traditions of all people of color.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly requests that the UUA Board of Trustees establish a committee to monitor and assess our transformation as an anti-racist, multi-cultural institution, and that the Board of Trustees shall report annually to the General Assembly specifically on the programs and resources dedicated to assisting our congregations in carrying out the objectives of this resolution.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that in order to transform the racist institutions of our world, the General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association and all its parts to establish relationships with other international and interfaith organizations that are working to dismantle racism.

ACTION ON SECOND-YEAR RESOLUTIONS

The following three General Resolutions were adopted by the Assembly by a vote of two-thirds or more:

EARTH, AIR, WATER, AND FIRE

BECAUSE the seven principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association connect the values of democracy, personal growth, and social justice to a recognition of the interdependent web of all existence; and

WHEREAS safe air to breathe, safe water to drink, and a sustainable environment are essential for life; and

WHEREAS government support for environmental protection and energy conservation programs is inadequate;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Unitarian Universalist Association urges its member congregations, affiliate organizations, and individual Unitarian Universalists to increase their efforts to:

1. Protect threatened and endangered species and their habitats;
2. Advocate for clean air, both indoors and outdoors, and clean water;
3. Promote the protection of public lands and water resources, and the responsible stewardship of private lands;
4. Support and practice energy and water conservation and the use of renewable sources of energy;
5. Use and advocate the use of public transportation and other environmentally sound alternatives;
6. Reduce the waste of resources in our homes, congregations, and communities by recycling, using recycled products, and reducing consumption;
7. Educate ourselves and our congregations on the need for these efforts and how best to undertake them; and
8. Increase government support for environmental protection and energy conservation programs.

TOXIC THREATS TO CHILDREN

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part; and

WHEREAS a team of scientists and doctors appointed by the National Academy of Sciences issued a report entitled “Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children” in which they said that children are at risk of overexposure to agricultural pesticides and other toxins;

WHEREAS pesticides banned in the United States are freely sold to foreign customers, thus endangering both foreign populations and United States consumers of imported produce;

WHEREAS lead poisoning has been declared “the most serious environmental threat to the health of American children” by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and statistics available in 1996 show that nine percent of all children under six years of age in the United States are lead poisoned;

WHEREAS a significant number of scientific studies demonstrate that environmental pollutants are implicated in disruptions of the nervous, endocrine, and immune systems of a variety of animals and may pose a threat to children and adults, with children the more vulnerable;

WHEREAS toxins in the environment disproportionately damage poor children; and

WHEREAS “since 1950, 70,000 new chemical compounds have been invented and dispersed into our environment . . . [although] only a fraction of these have been tested for human toxicity; we are by default conducting a massive clinical toxicological trial and our children and their children are the experimental animals” (Needleman and Landrigan, *Raising Children Toxic Free*);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Unitarian Universalist Association urges Unitarian Universalist congregations and individual Unitarian Universalists to:

1. Inform themselves and their communities regarding these issues;
2. Work with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and other groups working to reduce toxic threats;
3. Reduce their “toxic load” by making more careful choices of foods, building materials, and other products in their homes and congregations;
4. Work cooperatively to develop shareholder resolutions which expand corporate adherence to the CERES (Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economics) Principles, a corporate environmental code; and
5. Encourage more independent objective research on the effects of toxins and the development of safer alternatives.

WORKING FOR A JUST ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists covenant to affirm and promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; and

WHEREAS current global economic, social, and political developments have brought about greater concentration of wealth and economic power in the hands of major corporations and wealthy individuals while resulting in a lower standard of living and growing lack of opportunity for many people;

WHEREAS in the United States there is increasing disparity between the wealthiest ten percent and the remainder of the population;

WHEREAS democracy is at risk as wealthy individuals and corporations continue to dominate the United States political process;

WHEREAS many corporations benefit from preferential treatment in the form of grants, subsidies, and tax deductions, frequently referred to as “corporate welfare,” while increasingly neglecting their moral obligation to the welfare of their employees, communities, and the global ecosystem;

WHEREAS government funding for social programs is declining while spending for penal institutions is escalating;

WHEREAS access to legal recourse has been reduced and restricted at the same time that public assistance is being administered through state block grants with the likelihood that such funds will be reduced or diverted to other uses;

WHEREAS we now see massive numbers of people who are homeless, children who are impoverished, people working for below poverty-level pay, environmental degradation, lack of adequate health care, and erosion of workers’ rights; and

WHEREAS the poor, immigrants, racial minorities, unemployed, and aged are unjustly blamed for the perceived decline in the quality of life of upper and middle income groups;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Unitarian Universalist Association urges its member congregations and individual Unitarian Universalists in the United States to work in cooperation with Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community, other public-spirited organizations, and individuals in support of a more just economic community, and toward that objective to implement practices in our own congregations which are congruent with the intent of this resolution, and to work specifically in favor of mechanisms such as:

1. A true single minimum wage, applicable to all workers, that provides an adequate standard of living;
2. A full employment policy, utilizing public works, if necessary, to supplement employment levels achieved by private enterprise;
3. Government restrictions and consumer boycotts, where appropriate, on the import of goods produced under substandard conditions, forced labor, child labor, very low wages, or conditions that contribute to environment degradation;
4. A more equitable federal tax system, including more progressive income tax rates, with fewer preferential provisions for high income corporations and individuals, greater earned income credits for low wage earners, and fair exemptions for middle income taxpayers;
5. More effective limits on the concentration of ownership of major businesses, particularly in the fields of banking, insurance, utilities, communications, pharmaceuticals, and health organizations, accompanied by effective price controls where no substantial competition exists;

6. A universal health plan, covering the basic needs of all individuals, with adequate freedom of choice, and with a “single payer” system to reduce administrative costs and inequities in treatment;
7. Reform of labor legislation and employment standards to provide greater protection for workers, including the right to organize and bargain collectively, protection from unsafe working conditions, and protection from unjust dismissal;
8. Reform of labor legislation and employment standards to provide greater protection for workers, including “workfare” recipients and prison inmates;
9. Periodic review, renewal, or, if necessary, revocation of corporate charters, depending on assessment of performance consistent with the public interest;
10. Fair access to fully funded legal aid for the poor; and
11. Equitable funding of public education, without regard to local economic conditions.

Study/Action Issue

The Study/Action Issue entitled “Building Religious Tolerance Through Interfaith Cooperation” received the highest number of votes of all Study/Action Issues proposed and, on a run-off, a majority of votes of the Assembly, to be referred for study pursuant to Bylaw 4.12.

BUILDING RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE THROUGH INTERFAITH COOPERATION

Issue: The constitutions of both Canada and the United States guarantee religious freedom. Both countries are among the most religiously diverse nations on the planet. Both are also nations with histories replete with religious intolerance, bigotry, and violent attacks against religious minorities. How can Unitarian Universalists work with other faith communities to protect the civil rights of religious minorities?

Background and Reasons for Study: In the United States and Canada, religious discrimination has been reported in housing, education, employment, and government services. New immigrants, many of whom are also religious minorities, often face religious ignorance and intolerance. Members of new religious movements confront human rights violations. The sacred sites of Native Americans and First Nations peoples continue to be destroyed. Religious leaders and places of worship have been attacked. The current socio-political climate in the United States is increasingly focusing on limiting and even denying benefits and privileges afforded most citizens to immigrants and persons of color. As believers in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, we need to affirm our support as individuals and in congregations for the rights of religious minorities.

Possible Study Questions: What can Unitarian Universalists do to overcome religious intolerance and discrimination in Canada and the United States? How should we respond to denials of civil rights and to violent attacks against religious minorities and their places of worship? What can be done to protect the sacred sites of Native Americans and First Nations peoples? What protections are provided to religious minorities in the United States by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act? How can North Americans from different faith traditions work together to build a multifaith and multicultural society that honors the worth and dignity of every person?

Possible Actions: Honor and become acquainted with the varied and rich religious beliefs, practices, and experiences of religious minorities within our communities and acquaint them with our own religious heritage. Advocate for the preservation of sacred sites. Join a work party to help rebuild a desecrated place of worship. Work in partnership with other religious groups to witness and advocate for religious tolerance and respect for all religious groups.

Related General Resolution: Justice for Indigenous Peoples, 1993.

Actions of Immediate Witness

The Assembly adopted by two-thirds or more the following six Actions of Immediate Witness:

SUPPORT FOR NON-DISCRIMINATORY CORPORATE AND OTHER BUSINESS POLICIES

In light of a recent vote by the Southern Baptist Convention to boycott the Disney Corporation because of Disney's policy of recognizing and respecting all people regardless of race, national origin, sex, age, or sexual orientation, the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association reaffirms a tenet of its faith--"the inherent worth and dignity of every person"--and commends Disney's and all other corporations' policies that do not discriminate against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association to notify Disney of its support for customer and employment policies that respect gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association and all Unitarian Universalists to encourage corporate managers to institute such customer and employee affirming policies by intentionally and explicitly patronizing businesses with policies that acknowledge a respect for the diversity of the human community.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE SAN CARLOS APACHE REGARDING MT. GRAHAM

The University of Arizona, in conjunction with Ohio State University, the Max Planck Institute of Germany, and the Arcetri Observatory of Florence, Italy, is building the third of a series of telescopes on the summit of Mt. Graham, Arizona, as a foundation for an advanced observatory. On April 15, 1997, the Apache Survival Coalition's attorney asked the Ninth US Circuit Court of Appeals to order an injunction to stop construction of telescopes until the Forest Service conducts a study, in consultation with the tribe, on the cultural and religious significance of the telescope site, as required by the National Historic Preservation Act. Our support of this appeal is based on the following:

The religious importance of Mt. Graham--*Dzil Nchaa Si An* (dzeel nchaa see aan), "Big Seated Mountain," is the Apache name for Mt. Graham in southeastern Arizona. It is the most sacred ground of the San Carlos Apache people, a federally recognized tribe. Violation of the mountain is devastating to the San Carlos Apache people. The mountain is an integral part of their spirituality and healing arts, involving the special herbs, waters, and life of the mountain, all of which are necessary for the performance of certain traditional Apache ceremonies. Also, Mt. Graham is the site of a substantial number of Apache burials. In nine years, there has been no consultation between University of Arizona officials and traditional Apache leaders regarding Mt. Graham, although the San Carlos Apache Council has signed eight telescope opposition declarations and cultural officials from the White Mountain, Mescalero, and Jicarilla Apaches have also signed strenuous protests. As repeatedly stated by the San Carlos Tribal Council, "Any modification of the present form of this mountain constitutes a display of profound disrespect for a cherished feature of our original homeland as well as a serious violation of our traditional religious beliefs."

The ecological importance of Mt. Graham--This is a unique ecosystem, part of the Madrean Archipelago of twelve "sky" islands. Like an island rising from the ocean, *Dzil Nchaa Si An* rises in a sea of desert grassland. In addition, it contains more life zones than any other single mountain in North America, sustaining over 20 plants and animals found nowhere else in the world and the southernmost spruce/fir forest. The roads and clear-cuts for the observatory will destroy 27% of the best habitat of the endangered Mt. Graham Red Squirrel, once thought to be extinct. The massive human disturbance from astronomy and road construction, maintenance, and user traffic will further degrade the sustainability of the mountain's various ecosystems.

The poor quality of the site for telescope work--The long overdue scientific studies of the University of Arizona, not completed until five years after they had acquired their 1988 environmental exemption from Congress, showed that they chose a site which they described as having "unacceptable" or "unusable" visibility due to its flat topography and dense forestation. These 1993 studies showed that the University of Arizona chose the poorest of all five sites on Mt. Graham.

The poor quality of the University of Arizona's tactics in this matter--Eleven professors and 34 graduate students at the University of Arizona have passed a resolution decrying their own University's ethics in this matter. All other North American universities (over 24), except for Ohio State University, have abandoned this project because superior science could be conducted elsewhere, or because of the project's ethical and human rights problems. Millions of taxpayer dollars have been used to lobby Congress to evade United States cultural, religious, and environmental laws.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon the University of Arizona, Ohio State University, the Max Planck Institute of Germany and the Arcetri Observatory of Italy, to desist from further construction on Mt. Graham unless and until ethical issues are resolved;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon the Executive Staff and the Board of Trustees of the Association to join with the Apache in requesting the cessation of new telescope construction on Mt. Graham and the removal of all existing telescopes from Mt. Graham, and in opposing any new or proposed construction or development to take place on Mt. Graham; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon individual Unitarian Universalists to educate themselves about the issues facing their own local First Nations and Native American neighbors, since sacred sites needing protection exist everywhere.

OPPOSE THE SO-CALLED "RELIGIOUS FREEDOM" AMENDMENT TO THE US CONSTITUTION

WHEREAS US Representative Ernest Istook of Oklahoma, along with 116 co-sponsors, introduced the following proposed amendment to the US Constitution in the House of Representatives on May 8, 1997:

To secure the people's right to acknowledge God according to the dictates of conscience: The people's right to pray and to recognize their religious beliefs, heritage, or traditions on public property, including schools, shall not be infringed. The Government shall not require any person to join in prayer or other religious activity, initiate or designate school prayers, discriminate against religion, or deny equal access to a benefit on account of religion.

WHEREAS this amendment would overturn decades of judicial decisions interpreting the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment as prohibiting state-sponsored school prayer, religious displays on government property, or other religious activities or expression under government auspices; and

WHEREAS the effect of this amendment would be endorsement of a particular religious perspective in and by schools and other public institutions with resultant disparagement of other religious views and intimidation of school children and others of a differing religious outlook; and

WHEREAS the amendment is intended to authorize large scale diversion of public funds to sectarian schools and other institutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association encourages its US member societies and individual Unitarian Universalists to work with the Unitarian Universalist Association's Washington Office to oppose this proposed constitutional amendment and urge representatives in the Congress to oppose its approval by the House and Senate and subsequent referral to the States.

EXEMPT FOOD, MEDICINE, AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES FROM THE UNITED STATES EMBARGO AGAINST CUBA

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part; and

WHEREAS a team of specialists appointed by the American Association for World Health issued a report entitled "The Impact of the United States Embargo on Health and Nutrition in Cuba" and concluded that the health care and nutrition of the Cuban population is endangered by the embargo; and

WHEREAS during a medical mission that occurred in May, 1997, conditions were witnessed to be much worse than those revealed in the above-mentioned report; for example, the people of Cuba are being held prisoner as their rations of food and medicine are steadily lowered to inhumane levels; unsanitary conditions abound; and the absence or shortage of medical treatments and medicines was observed to cause many unnecessary deaths;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls on Unitarian Universalists in the United States to work together in their congregations and with other congregations and organizations to:

1. Inform themselves and their communities regarding the serious condition of the Cuban people;
2. Support political action to end that part of the United States embargo which pertains to food, medicine, and medical supplies; and
3. Focus carefully on supplying relief to the Cuban people.

ACTIONS OF CONSCIENCE TO END SWEATSHOP ABUSES

Over the next eight months (through the holidays), we will have the opportunity to unite all the current campaigns pressing for greater corporate accountability for human rights. On Saturday, October 4, 1997, a Day of Conscience to End Sweatshop Abuses will be co-sponsored by the National Labor Committee, the People of Faith Network, the United Methodist Church Women's Division, and the Union of Needle Trade Industrial & Textile Employees (UNITE). There will be vigils, actions, street theater, and community education to call attention to the plight of sweatshop workers in the United States and abroad. The Day of Conscience to End Sweatshop Abuses is part of a larger campaign to push the newly-created Presidential Task Force on Sweatshops toward developing an accord requiring companies to: (1) pay their workers a living wage; and (2) allow independent monitoring of their working conditions. With the Presidential Task Force in place, a coalition of interfaith and diverse grassroots and union groups can exert an influence which can actually help to improve the lives of poor working people. During the crucial holiday season, concerned consumers can support the companies which have signed the accord and withhold support from those which have not.

The 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls on Unitarian Universalists in congregations and in coalitions with other denominations, grassroots community, and workers' advocacy organizations to:

1. Urge the Presidential Task Force on Sweatshops to develop an accord whereby companies commit to a living wage for their workers and to independent monitoring of working conditions;
2. Participate in the Day of Conscience to End Sweatshop Abuses on October 4, 1997; and
3. Participate in the Holiday Season of Conscience by using our economic power to support companies willing to pay and treat workers fairly and to withdraw our support from those companies which are not willing to do so.

BANNING LANDMINES-SAVING LIVES

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists are people of conscience who believe in peace, liberty, social justice, and the democratic process for the achievement of these goals; and

WHEREAS there are estimated to be 110 million anti-personnel landmines in the ground in 68 countries (few of which are at war), and approximately 30,000 men, women, and children are killed or maimed by such mines every year;

WHEREAS, at 1997 rates of funding and mine clearance, it will take 1,100 years to remove existing mines;

WHEREAS landmines also a) have disastrous economic costs, preventing the return of the land to agricultural production, b) impose prohibitive medical costs on the world's poorest economies, and c) preclude the development of infrastructure and industry which a developing nation requires to be integrated into the world community;

WHEREAS at least 30 United States companies have not yet responded to an appeal to forego any further production of component landmine parts;

WHEREAS a few nations have prevented the United Nations Committee on Disarmament from producing a global ban on landmines, while in the same time period more than 800 non-governmental organizations as diverse as the International Red Cross, the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, and Church World Service have formed the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and rallied at least 111 governments worldwide to endorse a complete landmines ban treaty;

WHEREAS, on June 10, 1997, Sen. Patrick Leahy, Sen. Chuck Hagel, and 55 bipartisan co-sponsors introduced S. 896, the Landmines Elimination Act of 1997, which would ban new deployments of anti-personnel landmines by the United States beginning in the year 2000;

WHEREAS, owing to the leadership of Canadian Minister of External Affairs Lloyd Axworthy, more than 120 nations will meet in Ottawa, Canada, in December 1997, to sign an international treaty to coordinate global efforts to eradicate landmines and a complete ban now seems within reach; and

WHEREAS the Canadian initiative has been supported in a letter to President Clinton by Rep. Lane Evans, Rep. Ray Lahood, and 162 other members of Congress, but the United States has not yet agreed to participate in the Ottawa conference;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls on member congregations and individual Unitarian Universalists in the United States to urge President Clinton and the United States government to play an active leadership role at the Ottawa Conference to Ban Landmines to secure a global ban on the production, use, export, and storage of anti-personnel landmines and the allocation of significant resources to mine clearance operations and victim assistance;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges the Association to:

1. Affirm its support for S. 896, the Landmine Elimination Act of 1997, and corresponding anti-landmine legislation in the US House of Representatives;
2. In keeping with our present interfaith cooperation 12 initiative, support our own Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office as it joins with other socially conscious religious people in strengthening grassroots support for the Ottawa process;
3. Contribute to international demining efforts by pairing interested Unitarian Universalist groups in the United States and Canada with groups in mine-affected zones in developing nations;
4. Use its existing publications to publicize the availability of United Nations Association USA information packet on anti-personnel landmines and recommend its use on United Nations Sunday or another event between September and December, 1997, as a specific resource for carrying out this resolution; and
5. Identify the firms currently engaged in the manufacture, sale, or distribution of landmines so that persons may take the appropriate actions they deem necessary to inform those firms of their disapproval.

Credentials Committee Report

The final credentials report of the Secretary of the Association was as follows:

Accredited and attending the 36th General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association were 1106 member delegates, 392 ministerial delegates, 6 associate member organization delegates, 25 members of the Board of Trustees (not included as registered delegates from congregations), 13 delegates from the Church of the Larger Fellowship, for a total of 1507 delegates representing 536 societies, 48 states, the District of Columbia, France, and 7 Canadian provinces. Total registration for the assembly was 3091, including 223 youth.

Other Business

Attached as an appendix hereto (Attachment A) is the report of the Secretary containing the results of the election held pursuant to Bylaw Sections 5.2, 6.4, 8.3, and 11.10.

A closing worship service was held during which past officials of the Association were honored and newly-elected officials were installed.

The Assembly then voted to adjourn *sine die*.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kathleen Montgomery
Recording Secretary

ATTACHMENT A**1997 ELECTION RESULTS
(* = Elected)****PRESIDENT**

*Rev. John A. Buehrens 613

MODERATOR

*Denise Taft Davidoff 635

FINANCIAL ADVISOR

*Lawrence R. Ladd 580

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*Rev. Wayne Arnason 621

*Dr. William Jones 613

COMMISSION ON APPRAISAL

*Janis Elliot 536

*Rev. Roberta Finkelstein 525

*Charles B. Redd 499

Joseph B. Samples, Jr. 241

PLANNING COMMITTEE

*Diane Olson 603

*Kathy Daneman 592

*Bob Martin 591

*Reid Swanson 588

COMMISSION ON SOCIAL WITNESS

*Rev. Richard Nugent 604

*Paul Clarke Vancouver 589

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

(6-year term)

*Rev. Barbara Wells 605

*Rev. Lindi Ramsden 600

*Julio Noboa 598

(4-year term)

*Laura Spencer 603

*Marty Robinson 593

BOARD OF REVIEW

(8-year term)

*Rev. L. Annie Foerster 599

*Howard D. McMahan 586

(2-year term)

*Rev. Suzanne Meyer 603