

have to make in both church and society.

The report was ACCEPTED by the Council

XIX. WORLD METHODISM AND WORLD ISSUES STUDY

Dr. Mance Jackson co-author with Dr. Earl Brewer of the world-wide study book, "Wesleyan Transformations," brought the report. When the Council last met in Nairobi the study was not yet complete. Dr. Jackson, in this final report, outlined the process that had been used to gather information. He thanked all who had responded from across the world. Copies of the study report were distributed to Council Members.

XX. UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

Dr. Daniel Arichea of Hong Kong was invited to bring greetings from the United Bible Societies which is an umbrella organization organized in 18 countries from which delegates had traveled to the Conference.

XXI. EPWORTH OLD RECTORY REPORT

Dr. Kenneth G. Greet, speaking for the Epworth Trustees, recounted the history of the Old Rectory. Built in 1709 by Samuel Wesley, the Old Rectory is currently owned by the World Methodist Council and is supported by Friends of the Old Rectory. Dr. Greet reported that Mrs. Rachel Cochran, one of the international trustees, has been instrumental in establishing the American Friends of the Old Rectory as a new source of support and also referred to Mrs. Alice Lockmiller's generous assistance with recent renovations. He appealed to Council Members to become Friends of Epworth Old Rectory, noting that because of the war and recession in recent months the number of visitors has dropped.

The Chairperson thanked Dr. Greet for his report.

XXII. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairperson opened the floor for Council Members to speak regarding other matters.

The concern was voiced that youth of the United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion are not adequately represented on the new Executive Committee. Dr. English responded on behalf of the Nominating Committee pointing out that the nomination of Executive members is brought by the member churches. (Subsequently adjustments were made in the youth representation of the churches in question.)

A question was raised regarding increased giving to enable committees to function more effectively. Mr. Harper indicated that standing committees and the Oxford Institute now receive funding from the Council.

Dr. Mance Jackson thanked the Council for the follow-up in South Africa and

Dr. William K. Quick thanked the General Secretary for his voice in the public press on the Palestinian issue.

After announcements the meeting was adjourned.

World Methodist Council SINGAPORE

JULY 29, 1991

The 500-member World Methodist Council was called to order by Bishop Imathiu at 2:30 p.m. in the Stamford Ballroom.

XXIII. YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Tom Sundar, Chair of the Youth Committee, was invited to bring the Youth Committee report. He told of the very successful International Christian Youth Conference jointly sponsored by the WMC Youth and World Evangelism Committees held in Oaxtepec, Mexico in 1989 with 500 young people from 40 countries participating. He also reported on the Social and International Affairs/Youth Consultation held prior to the Sixteenth World Methodist Conference with the theme, "Stewards in God's Creation."

Because of the success of this joint meeting, Mr. Sundar moved that the World Methodist Council authorize one, and if funding is available, two, Social and International Affairs and Youth Committee joint consultations during the next five years. This was VOTED and approved.

Sundar was commended for his work in leading the WMC Youth Committee for the past five years.

XXIV. SOCIAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Chairperson, Bishop Imathiu, told the Council the Executive Committee had met at length concerning the expulsion of the Christian Conference of Asia from Singapore, that this was an extremely sensitive matter, and that the press report announcing what the Executive would be bringing to the Council had heightened the tension on this issue and created some difficulties for our hosts. He then called on Dr. Norman E. Dewire, Chairperson of the Social and International Affairs Committee for his report.

Dr. Dewire explained that the SIAC Committee this quinquennium had two Vice-Chairpersons, Bishop M. Stanley Mogoba of South Africa and Dr. Alan Woodley, from New Zealand. Dr. Dewire said he regretted Alan Woodley had been prohibited from attending the Council by his church.

He then outlined work of the Social and International Affairs Committee beginning

report had been printed (see Appendix). Reporting on the pre-Conference Evangelism Convocation, he said "...the lectures were profoundly thoughtful; the presentations and planning were rooted in the Wesleyan tradition of knowledge and vital piety; and that there was keen awareness in the group that evangelism around the world has to be done in the context of the specific situation." Regional secretaries from Latin America, Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Eastern Europe made presentations. The Convocation affirmed that anything less than indigenous evangelism and anything that fails to address the whole of life and the whole of creation is incomplete and out of character with the call of Christ and the Wesleyan spirit. The convocation closed with a spontaneous five-hour prayer and fasting period.

Attention was called to the International Christian Youth Conferences planned in cooperation with the WMC Youth Committee and the World Methodist Evangelism Institute which is a joint venture of the Council and Emory University. Dr. George Morris, director of the Institute, was not present due to a family illness. Dr. James Laney, president of Emory University was recognized. It was noted that nineteen regional seminars and four international seminars had been conducted in almost every section of the world over the past eight years.

Dr. Dunnam reported two International Christian Youth Conferences had been held since the Nairobi Conference. 1,300 young people attended the ICYC in Australia and over 600 youth attended the ICYC in Oaxtepec, Mexico.

Dr. Dunnam said the four youth conferences since 1980 had resulted in over 100 young people giving themselves to ordained ministry, with hundreds of others making commitments to other Christian vocations.

A video report on World Evangelism and the World Methodist Evangelism Institute followed (see Appendix for text).

Dr. Dunnam then introduced Dr. H. Eddie Fox, installed as Director of World Evangelism in 1989. Through video presentation on the large screen, the Conference saw and heard from some of the regional secretaries of World Evangelism.

Dr. Fox then brought a major address on World Evangelism (see page 91).

Dr. Dunnam led the Conference in a liturgical response to the address. Bishop Imathiu thanked the Evangelism Committee for its report and asked support from the delegates for the World Evangelism program.

VI. SPECIAL GREETING FROM THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Following a short mid-morning break, Bishop Imathiu called the Conference to order welcoming to the platform Bishop Vinton R. Anderson, who earlier in the year at the WCC Assembly in Canberra Australia, was elected as one of the Presidents of the World Council of Churches. Bishop Anderson brought the greeting from the World Council of Churches, first speaking about his association with the World Methodist Council over the past 30 years; that during this period he had attended all but one of the world Conferences. He told of a traumatic experience of collapse and emergency open heart surgery on the way home from the Honolulu Conference in 1992, saying he was speaking first of all as a Methodist who had been deeply involved in the life of the Council.

He then spoke in his representative capacity on behalf of the World Council of

Churches. Bishop Anderson expressed his regret that there was not a full delegation present from the World Council of Churches, noting this delegation was not in Singapore because of the desire to express solidarity in protesting the action of the Singapore Government in the expulsion of the Christian Conference of Asia. He brought good wishes from Dr. Emilio Castro and the World Council of Churches to the Conference, praying God's blessing on the deliberations of the Council. The Bishop concluded, "May your presence here encourage the ministries of the churches in Singapore for freedom, for democracy and for the gospel of Jesus Christ."

VII. SOCIAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/ YOUTH CONSULTATION

Dr. Norman E. Dewire, Chairperson of the Social and International Affairs Committee was invited to introduce the report. Dr. Dewire noted that the SIAC report would reflect what happened at the Social and International Affairs/Youth Consultation prior to the beginning of the Council and Conference. He remarked the SIAC committee over the past five years had kept in mind "...that the content of the good news to the poor has to do with the reign of God: that the Gospel message becomes good news when the poor are liberated in a world marked by injustice, violence and the degradation of the environment."

Dr. Dewire reported on the SIAC Committee's participation in the planning of the "Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation" world convocation held in March, 1990 in Seoul, Korea. That convocation had helped focus the idea that we "live between the flood and the rainbow... between the threat to life and God's promise of a new earth and a new heaven."

Mr. Tom Sundar, Chairperson of the Council Youth Committee, brought the report on the pre-Conference consultation attended by 165 persons and held July 20-22 in Singapore, with the theme "Stewards in God's Creation." The report was given in the form of a dialogue between the SIAC and Youth Committees, the joint sponsors.

The consultation addressed the urgent question of the survival of humankind, of "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation." From the youth point of view, the presenters spoke of growing awareness on the part of young people around the world that Christian consciousness and witness must apply to social and economic structures and political and cultural realities that defeat justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

A letter from Latin American youth leaders to the WMC Youth Committee was cited as the impetus in the consultation that led to the joint consultation with SIAC. The theme, "Stewards in God's Creation" emerged from the planners' wish to focus upon Christian responsibility towards the creation. Sub-themes of the Consultation included: "Justice and Economy," "Militarization and Security," "Life and Environment," "Pluralism and Witness."

Mr. Sundar outlined the schedule of the consultation, the speakers, the Bible studies, indicating that resolutions had been developed to be presented to the World Methodist Council.

Dr. Dewire spoke of the interconnection of "Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation," quoting from Bishop Dale White's address to the Consultation: "...the economy is related to the hunger-making systems; peace is related to the war-making

systems; and environment is related to the desert-making systems." Ms. Alka Edwards, Youth Committee member from India, and Bishop Stanley Mogoba from South Africa, spoke about the theological basis and Biblical imperatives underlying the Consultation. Ms. Edwards listed the issues considered: justice, economy, militarization, pluralism, witness, life, environment. Bishop Mogoba brought the Bible studies helping the group to see the Biblical message related to the issues. Themes emerging from the studies were: that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" that humankind has an exalted position in God's plan of creation, not as ruler, but as steward with social responsibility and accountability rather than mindless domination.

It was affirmed that humans can mold and shape the environment in ways no other living creatures can; that we have the potential to destroy the world in nuclear war; that our activities can affect the upper reaches of the upper atmosphere or pollute the deepest ocean. We can leave the land rich in species, or barren desert.

In the studies, one problem cited concerned self-understanding of the role of man in the creative order, which arose from our interpretation of Genesis 1, which speaks of man having dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature. Genesis 2 makes no mention of man's dominion over the rest of creation. It emphasizes companionship, stewardship and relationship of Adam with God, with created beings, with Eve. It became clear that the dominant theme is not man's dominion over nature, but God's total Lordship over the entire cosmos. The earth is not ours to abuse and destroy, not ours to poison and plunder, not ours to live in and abandon, but God's to care for and cherish.

Bishop M. S. Mogoba continued the report relating how the consultation examined humankind's obsession with war and militarism. He cited the prophet Micah saying that those who ignore the law of God and despise justice, distort what is right and build nations on bloodshed and corruption, courting disaster.

When the word of God is ignored situations like the Gulf War arise. A nuclear apocalypse can be brought about by sin and wickedness and through accidents like Chernobyl. A vision of Armageddon replaces the vision of the hope for life, freedom and justice. It was agreed in the Consultation that war has no place in a Christian world or in a so-called civilized age; the Church should make a clear choice for peace; young people should refuse to die for old slogans, and conscription should be challenged.

The consultation also examined possibilities for new economic order in the world which will bring about a just sharing of resources.

Concerning pluralism in our world, the Consultation viewed ethnicity, tribalism, racism, nationalism as the alarming evils of our day. Intolerance was seen to contradict the plan of God. Pluralistic nations discover that racial diversity is part of God's plan and repentance and costly reconciliation are needed for survival. Racism, hatred, fear, violence, vengeance spell disaster. Our Christian faith has a unique contribution to make to the world, love and reconciliation. Bishop Mogoba implored the audience to "be reconciled to God".

Ms. Cathy Bird, secretary of the WMC Youth Committee, London, and Rev. Ireneu Cunha, Portugal, were chosen to present the issue of "Justice and the Economy." Ms. Bird reported there was consensus in the Consultation regarding the interrelatedness of a large proportion of the world's problems. Militarization, war, poor housing, education and medical provision, exploitation in the labor force, especially of women and young people, environmental degradation, hunger and poverty were seen to result from

exploitative political and economic systems.

Participants identified factors instrumental to the social injustice and environmental crises which face humanity: the inequitable distribution of global and national reserves; third world countries being forced to repay massive loans on which they can barely meet the interest; the immense power of trans-national corporations. Concern was expressed that the world bank system results in unpayable debts, creating insecurity, poverty, economic and social disaster -- that a new economic order needs to be developed in order to redress the balance. Consultation participants were encouraged to speak out and "name the demons," exposing sources of oppression and injustice, in the attempt to discern the root problem.

The Rev. Ireneu Cunha said the idea of this interrelatedness represents a new approach among Christians. He cited a meeting in 1989 in Switzerland that for the first time Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox considered these same issues from this new point of view. In the 1990 World Council of Churches conference in Seoul, the same issues were addressed with greater emphasis on the integrity of creation. Methodists should rejoice in the fact that the work of the Social and International Affairs Committee has been along the same lines. "We like to quote Wesley, 'The world is my parish.' We must look at the whole world as our home, where we want the spirit of fellowship, of sharing, of peace and harmony to reign. We want all people to become one family under God's rule." Citing the tremendous cost of weapons, Dr. Cunha envisioned the good that could be done if the resources could be used to build hospitals, housing, provide education. He said as a European there was rejoicing as the wall in Germany fell, but he reminded the group not to forget that an invisible wall between the north and the south still stands.

David Bailey of India and Margaret Mburugu, Kenya, presented a summary of "Militarization and Security," saying it was agreed during the Consultation that peace, security, economic and social development are indivisible, and that it was time to do something about it -- to seek security. Humankind's greed for power and money have led to militarization and insecurity. High tech countries assure the flow of resources from poor countries to richer countries, regional imbalances. The group studied the justification for the use of force, the tactics used by the powerful over the weak; the manipulation of the rich over the poor; suppression of the people who struggle; violation of human rights; war results in problems, including manmade famine, in which the sufferers are women, and young people, with men killed, captured, and detained. They mentioned that funds spend on militarization could be used to provide food, clean water. The Consultation felt it was important to document, monitor and evaluate the growth of military strength around the world; to prepare educational materials on the effect of militarism for local congregations; and to develop a strategy for response in the churches, with all these problems requiring the changing of attitudes.

Mr. Ken Barnes of Ghana, addressed the Conference on "Life and Environment." Mr. Barnes reported on environmental issues including: the use of pesticides and insecticides in agriculture, especially in developing countries; recycling and the use of natural fertilizers; and the effect of chemicals that cause harm to life, environment and render the land barren. It was pointed out that every person has the right to food, medical care and housing but that this has not happened, especially in developing countries. On education the committee saw that all must have the right to read, but some people do not have access to it, even at the very basic level. The group noted with pain the exploitation of women and children for economic reasons by way of child labor, child abuse, child

slavery, prostitution, etc. They pointed to environmental exploitation, including the destruction of rain forests due to economic reasons, had resulted in drought, hunger and the destruction of the culture of the people and nations. The practice of multinationals contracting with businessmen and governments of developing countries to dump toxic wastes in their countries was condemned.

Dr. Thom W. W. Fassett, General Secretary of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, continued the report. Through the SIAC and Youth Committees, he said "the tribes and the nations of Methodism joined together to consider the tribes and the nations of God's living creatures and things, and whether they can find relief and care in the arms of the disciples of Jesus Christ." He spoke of reclaiming a theology of creation belonging to the Judeo-Christian tradition, understanding that all creation belongs to God and that people are responsible for the ways they use and abuse it. The church must address the ethics of ecology and the contradictions of development and the elusiveness of terms such as "sustainable development," call for a rejection of wasteful lifestyles, and promote systemic changes in society that will bring about a more environmentally and spiritually just world where the quality of life is improved and preserved for all of creation and where we live in one world, "no more first world, second world, third world, no more fourth world -- but one world, which belongs to and is blessed by God."

Dr. Fassett spoke of social policies that allow God's world and environment to be destroyed while we neglect issues associated with the spread of deserts, protection of plants and animal life, reforestation, the need to forge international agreements which recognize all as being equal; holding all life to be God's and therefore sacred; which declares that the church of Christ must be at the very center of the new world order, relying on the transformative dynamics of peace, justice and the integrity of creation."

Ms. Loma Smith, Great Britain, and Mr. Ajai Kunnath, India, spoke on "Pluralism and Witness." Mr. Kunnath observed that pluralism may be defined as a co-existence of different religions and cultures in society. In the Indian context, India is predominately Hindu country, but Islam, Christianity, Buddhism create a significant and diverse mix. "As a Christian in India, we have to find a balancing issue between trying to be part of a majority mainstream, while maintaining our distinct Christian culture."

Ms. Smith addressed the issue of pluralism and witness in Britain where East has come into the West, bringing the diverse religious culture Mr. Kunnath described. More recently migrant workers and political refugees have gravitated toward the cities and industrial towns. She said British leadership, which is known for its class system in politics, and in other institutions including the church, remains white and male-dominated. The church is changing to include women, people of color, and other minority groups, but the issue concerning persons of different cultures and different religions is not so easily and readily tackled.

Mr. Kunnath and Ms. Smith discussed the church's treatment of women, and the issue of sexuality, commenting that the church should include more inclusive language for worship, printed material and in dialogue; that they felt the church should not alienate or discriminate but show love, care and concern toward those who do not show the basic heterosexual tendencies. The unity of the Christian churches was seen as a prerequisite for the Church to be effective in witness. Spiritualism was seen to be more important than materialism. Ms. Smith noted the importance of being sensitive, having clear objectives, and sharing our belief in God, while celebrating the richness of our differences.

Dr. Dewire concluded the overall report saying the Consultation had representatives

present from every part of the world except the Middle East; that it had provided the opportunity for persons to be together across generational lines; and, it had been a learning experience. The Consultation recommended a joint consultation be sponsored by the two committees again in the next quinquennium. The theme "Stewards in God's Creation" reminded the Conference that "enough exists for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed."

The Sixteenth World Methodist Conference Council Presentations to Conference

JULY 29, 1991

The Conference was called to order by Bishop Prince A. Taylor, Jr., Past Chairperson of the World Methodist Council. After the witness by Dr. I. Carlton Faulk (see page 133), brief reports were made by leaders of Council Committees.

Bishop Taylor explained that the committees bring their work first to the Council, and then report to the Conference. (Committee reports appear in the Appendix.)

VIII. FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEE

Mrs. Navamani Peter of India, Chairperson of the Family Life Committee brought the segment of the report concerning "perspectives on families." She told of 2,000 widows, a majority of those abandoned, who came to a holy town in India, they are given one frugal meal a day in return for eight hours of chanting prayers. One said, "My only desire is to have enough to eat. Death would be better than this miserable life."

In another instance in Latin America the husband went to work and hoped to return with the day's earnings to feed the family. One day there was a strike in the factory, he was arrested and never returned home. His family waited and waited and finally went to bed hungry. Plenty of appetite but no food.

In an affluent country, the husband went to the office, said he had to go to the club for the evening, and did not come home to eat. His family sat down to eat, got into an argument, and left the table. Plenty of food but no appetite.

This is the paradox of families today. We must no longer have the illusion that the family, even the Christian family is all right. Families continue to provide the basic life experience of responsibility and values such as loving, caring and sharing. This goal needs to be emphasized and projected.

She then turned to marriage, and the fact that persons do not live happily ever after. The couple is challenged to bring the family to the basic values of the Scriptures. The present structure is a threat to the family's stability. There is a move to change the basic concept and meaning of marriage, revealing the biological principles of marriage such as homosexuality. Consumerism and materialism -- economic goals have altered the family's lifestyle creating stress and resulting in emotional and physical violence. Spouses and children are abused. Divorce and separation leaves a permanent wound in the lives of children.