

No. 8557

RESOLUTION CONCERNING NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

Background Information

The following resolution comes from the adult Sunday morning Foreign Policy Study Group of a congregation concerned with the increasing dependence of the United States and Russia on a policy of nuclear deterrence (mutually assured destruction). We are aware of the Nuclear Weapons Free Movement, and that a large number of cities, nations and territories— e.g. South America, New Zealand, Iceland, Denmark, New York City, etc. — have declared their territories to be nuclear weapons free. We have become convinced that such symbolically powerful actions must be taken by a variety of local institutions— churches, communities, universities— to communicate a policy of noncooperation with present programs which deepen U.S. and U.S.S.R. dependence upon deterrence. It is our hope that such local resistance also will spread gradually outward and involve cities, states, countries, and continents, finally rendering it impossible for the super powers to build, transport, or employ nuclear weapons.

Our theological motivations stem primarily from our understanding of God's attitudes toward the created order. We believe that God values and cherishes both nature and human culture as products of God's creative activity, that God has called humans to be creative stewards in cultivating this creation, and that the redemption we seek is also a fulfillment, enrichment, and completion of the created order itself. We believe that the deep need we sense within ourselves to make this world secure for future generations comes from God's call to us to be stewards of a good creation.

WHEREAS, we believe that the presence of nuclear weapons threatens the very existence of life;

WHEREAS, we believe that God does not intend for human beings to possess instruments capable of destroying the biological basis for all of life;

WHEREAS, we believe that the use of a small percentage of the earth's nuclear weapons could make the planet uninhabitable;

WHEREAS, we believe that the first use of nuclear weapons is immoral and that the policy of the threat of their use tends to escalate the arms race;

WHEREAS, we believe that the nuclear weapons program unjustifiably drains available resources away from essential human needs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985, challenge the denomination to become nuclear weapons free, and recommend:

- to all Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) general administrative units that within their properties there should be no applied research on nuclear weapons, no transportation, no testing or storage of such weapons;
- to all regional units, all local congregations and all related organizations and educational institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that within the bounds of their property there be no applied research on nuclear weapons, no transportation, no testing or storage of such weapons;
- that all of these manifestations of the church join a movement to initiate Nuclear Weapons Free Zones on other property, the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone thereby being extended in an ever-widening circle;
- that the above units work for a foreign policy that does not depend upon the possession of nuclear weapons;
- that all these units, including local congregations, display on their property the Nuclear Weapons Free symbol;
- that all these units manage investments creatively in order to discourage the manufacture, testing, storage or transportation of nuclear weapons;
- to all congregations that they reflect prayerfully on the meaning of this resolution in their worship life and their educational programs;
- to all manifestations of the church that they support the work of individuals and groups who are working to promote nuclear disarmament.