

NOT ADOPTED

No. 8551

RESOLUTION CONCERNING LIBERATION THEOLOGY

The General Assembly did NOT ADOPT this resolution because of over-simplification of liberation theology, misrepresentation of world ministries, and its calling into question Christian commitment of others.

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RESOLUTION CONCERNING LIBERATION THEOLOGY

WHEREAS, liberation theology attributes much of the poverty and oppression in the contemporary world to Western imperialism and capitalism; and

WHEREAS, liberationists believe that to achieve a more just society, there must be radical changes in political and economic structures along Marxist lines; and, moreover, that violence may be justifiable and necessary in bringing about such changes; and

WHEREAS, liberation theologians interpret the kingdom of God in terms of a temporal sociopolitical utopia and present Jesus Christ as "the Subversive of Nazareth," a kind of political liberator, and hence insist that the church must become a part of the "liberating" process, including its violence; and

WHEREAS, liberation theology is being propagated in such organizations as the Protestant Development Committee (Comite Evangelico Pro-Ayuda al Desarrollo) (CEPAD) in Nicaragua; the United Protestant Church of Ecuador (Iglesia Evangelica Unida del Ecuador) in Quito; and the Latin American Protestant Commission on Christian Education (Comision Evangelica Latino Americana de Educacion Cristiana) (CELADEC) in Lima, Peru; all of which receive support from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985, call upon its agencies to desist from further funding of programs which promote violent revolution in the name of the church, and to disavow any theology which speaks only to the material needs of humankind and minimizes the gospel which proclaims the abundant and eternal life offered in Jesus Christ, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) reaffirm its commitment to minister in Christ's name to the needs of the poor and oppressed, including constructive efforts to eradicate the root causes of poverty and injustice.

Hampton Christian Church
Hampton, Virginia

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly NOT ADOPT Resolution No. 8551 for the following reasons:

1. The resolution oversimplifies the diverse positions of "liberation theologians."
2. The resolution misrepresents the ministry of the organizations listed by asserting that the church supports violent revolution through their work.
3. The General Assembly does not customarily recommend acceptance or disapproval of a particular theological position which calls into question the Christian commitment of those who do not agree.

(Debate time 12 minutes)