

continued

## **No. 8530**

### **RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PLEDGE OF RESISTANCE TO PREVENT THE INVASION OF CENTRAL AMERICA**

#### **ADOPTED by the General Assembly**

WHEREAS, the United States foreign policy toward the countries of Central America seems to emphasize military action over diplomacy and negotiation; and,

WHEREAS, such a policy runs the risk of escalating current military involvement (\$220 million in direct military assistance since 1980 and many millions more in indirect military programs) even to the point of full-scale military invasion; and,

WHEREAS, the country of El Salvador, with United States assistance, has doubled the size of its armed forces in the last two years and increased strategies of aerial bombing of villages using napalm causing mainly civilian casualties; and,

WHEREAS, more than 50,000 Salvadorans have died in the last five years at the hands of their own government supported by the United States; and,

WHEREAS, in the neighboring country of Nicaragua the United States has provided military assistance to counter revolutionaries who seek to overthrow the elected government of that country, leading to the deaths of additional thousands, for example:

- 49 health workers murdered, 13 wounded, 18 kidnapped;
- 89 teachers murdered, 118 kidnapped;
- 3,500 children and teenagers killed; and,

WHEREAS, the United States also has sponsored economic pressures and sanctions which have caused devastating economic losses to Nicaragua; and,

WHEREAS, hundreds of journalists, religious workers, and church sponsored observers from the United States have visited Nicaragua in recent years reporting that United States military policy is causing increased suffering and death; and,

WHEREAS, recognizing the traumatic situation in Central America, representatives of Protestant, Roman Catholic, Evangelical, Black, and historic peace churches meeting at Kirkridge Retreat Center in 1983, drafted a statement entitled "A Pledge of Resistance to Prevent the Invasion of Central America" which states:

#### **THE PLEDGE OF RESISTANCE**

##### **Legal Protest Pledge**

If the United States invades, bombs, sends combat troops, or otherwise significantly escalates its intervention in Central America, I pledge to join with others to engage in acts of legal protest as conscience leads me, including such actions as participating in demonstrations, vigils, leaflettings, and appeals to Congress and the White House. I also pledge to demonstrate my support for those who engage in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience in order to prevent or halt further death and destruction in Central America.

##### **Civil Disobedience Pledge**

If the United States invades, bombs, sends combat troops, or otherwise significantly escalates its intervention in Central America, I pledge to join with others to engage in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience as conscience leads me at Congressional field offices, the White House, or other pre-designated U.S. federal facilities, including federal buildings, military installations, offices of the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department, and other appropriate places. I pledge to engage in nonviolent civil disobedience in order to prevent or halt the death and destruction which such U.S. military action causes the people of Central America.

and,

WHEREAS, the Disciples Peace Fellowship, through action of its Executive Committee, has endorsed the "Pledge of Resistance" statement along with Church Women United, the American Friends Service Committee, The Episcopal Peace Fellowship, The Methodist Federation of Social Action, Fellowship of Reconciliation, New Call to Peacemaking, SANE, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, Sojourners, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Pax Christi, and others; and,

WHEREAS, over 50,000 persons have signed the Pledge of Resistance in the hope and belief that the very existence of such a pledge would help to deter the United States government from invading or escalating the war in Central America; and,

WHEREAS, such an expression of the unwillingness of tens of thousands of United States citizens to support greater war policies by their government will bring the issue before the American people, and encourage the Congress to take appropriate action to stop the killing and destruction,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985, urge every member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to study the two forms of the Pledge of Resistance, the Legal Protest Pledge and the Civil Disobedience Pledge; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly encourage each Disciple to determine whether either pledge is appropriate to her/his conscience and circumstance and, if so, sign that pledge; and that signed pledges be sent to the Disciples Peace Fellowship, P.O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206.