



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 52, Folder 8, World Council of Churches - 6th Assembly
[Vancouver, B.C.], July-August 1983.

STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST

1. The increasingly dangerous situation in the Middle East threatens the peace of the whole world and places heavy demands on all those striving for justice and freedom.

The Middle East is a region of special interest as the birthplace of three monotheistic religions. The churches in the area have their roots from apostolic times. Their continued presence and active participation in the life of the whole area, despite suffering at various periods, is a remarkable witness to the faith. They are facing new challenges and attempting to respond through new forms of witness. While only the churches of the Middle East can determine the nature and forms of their witness, it behoves all churches to strengthen their presence and support their ministry, especially the ministry of reconciliation and witness for peace. Historical factors and certain theological interpretations have often confused Christians outside in evaluating the religious and political developments in the Middle East.

2. Recent developments in the region have further pushed back prospects for peace. The agony of the Lebanese war is not yet over. The integrity and independence of Lebanon are in greater danger than ever. The Israeli settlement policy on the West Bank has resulted in a de facto annexation giving final touches to a discriminatory policy of development of peoples that flagrantly violates the basic rights of the Palestinian people. There are fears of relocation of the inhabitants on the West Bank and their expulsion. A large number of Palestinians are under detention in the prisons in the West Bank and in camps in Lebanon. There is escalation of tension in the occupied territories. The consensus among the Arab nations appears to have been lost. External and internal pressures have caused serious rift within the Palestinian movement. In many situations there are increasing violations of human rights, especially of minorities and religious fanaticism is a base of many communities. The Iran-Iraqi war continues to claim an increasing toll of lives and complicates inter-Arab relations. Tension is increasing in relation to Cyprus :

3. THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

(i) We reaffirm the principles previously enunciated by the WCC as the basis on which a peaceful settlement can be reached. The UN Security Council Resolution 242 and all other relevant

UN resolutions need to be revised and implemented taking into account changes that have occurred since 1967 and that such revisions should express the following principles in a manner that would ensure:

- a) the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied in 1967;
- b) the right of all states, including Israel and Arab states, to live in peace with secure and recognised boundaries;
- c) the implementation of the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state.

(ii) We reaffirm that the Middle East conflict cannot be resolved through the use of force but only through peaceful means. Negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East should include all those parties most intimately involved: the state of Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and neighbouring Arab states. The interests of the world at large are best represented through the United Nations and the USA and the USSR have a special responsibility in this matter.

(iii) Churches should undertake the following with a view to facilitate processes towards negotiations:

- a) to build greater awareness among the churches about the urgency and justice of the Palestinian cause. In this connection active support should be extended to the UN International Conference on the Question of Palestine to be held at the end of August 1983 in Geneva. The churches should bring to bear their influence on states to participate in it;
- b) to encourage the dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis with a view to furthering mutual understanding and enabling recognition;
- c) to remind Christians in the Western world to recognise that their guilt over the fate of Jews in their countries may have influenced their views of the conflict in the Middle East and has often led to uncritical support of the policies of the state of Israel, thereby ignoring the plight of the Palestinian people and their rights. In this context we welcome the more open and critical stance adopted by Christian churches in the traditional Jewish-Christian dialogue, but we also urge the broadening of the dialogue to include larger segments of both Christian and Jewish communities;

- d) to support movements within Israel, which are working for peace and reconciliation.

4. LEBANON

The ecumenical community shares the agony of the peoples in Lebanon who have been tragically suffering over the last nine years and who have been carrying too large a burden of the problems of the region.

- (i) We reiterate that the recovery of Lebanese territorial integrity and sovereignty is a key to peace and justice in the region and that for this to be realised all foreign forces must be withdrawn from Lebanese territory.
- (ii) We appeal to the ecumenical community :
 - a) to support the efforts of the Lebanese government to reassert the effective exercise of its sovereignty over all Lebanese territory and to support full independence and unity of the Lebanese people;
 - b) to assist the churches within Lebanon in their attempts with leaders of the religious communities for reconciliation with a view to achieving harmony and unity among all communities in the country;
 - c) to continue to support generously the Middle East Council of Churches and the churches in Lebanon in their humanitarian and social programmes of relief for all in Lebanon;
 - d) to collaborate with the churches in the area in their contribution to the promotion of justice, dignity, freedom and human rights for all in Lebanon.

5. JERUSALEM

- (i) We reaffirm that "Jerusalem is a Holy City for three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The tendency to minimise Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided" (WCC Vth Assembly, Nairobi 1975). The WCC should implement the proposal of the WCC Central Committee (August 1980) that dialogue be initiated with Jews and Muslims so that members of the three religions can understand each other's deep religious attachment to Jerusalem and so that together they can contribute towards political processes that would lead to a mutually acceptable agreement for sharing the city. The churches should give priority to this while continuing efforts to secure a general

settlement of the Middle East conflicts. The special legislation known as the Status Quo of the Holy Places must be safeguarded and confirmed in any agreement concerning Jerusalem.

(ii) a) We call the attention of the churches to the need for:

- actions which will ensure a continuing indigenous Christian presence and witness in Jerusalem;
- wider ecumenical awareness of the plight of the indigenous Muslim and Christian communities suffering from the repressive actions of the occupying power in East Jerusalem and other occupied territories.

b) We call upon all churches to express their common concern that although Israeli law guarantees free access for members of all religious traditions rooted in Jerusalem to their holy places, the state of war between Israel and Arab states, the political reality created by the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and continuing occupation of the West Bank means that Arab Muslims and Christians continue to experience serious difficulties and are often prevented from visiting the Holy City.

6. We uphold the churches in the Middle East in our intercessions as they respond to the new challenges in the difficult circumstances through their witness in the service of Christ. We assure them of the solidarity of the community of faith around the world as we have gathered together here in the name of Jesus Christ, the Life of the World. We pray for the healing of the wounds in the nations of that region.

We stand together with other religious communities in a spirit of servanthood seeking to be faithful in our common calling to be peace-makers and reconcilers and to bring hope for all.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
SECRETARIAT FOR CATHOLIC-JEWISH RELATIONS

1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W. O WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 O 202-659-6857

September 16, 1983

Rev. David Simpson
Office on Christian-Jewish Relations
National Council of Churches
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115

Dear David:

I am pleased to comply with your request for my reactions to the recent WCC statement on the Middle East as adopted by the fall assembly in Vancouver. These are, of course, my own personal reflections as a consultant to your committee and not to be taken in any way as an official response on the part of the U.S. Catholic Conference which I serve.

At the outset, I must admit to a certain disappointment in the statement. Despite its laudable call for reconciliation, the document as a whole has the appearance of supporting the cause of one party in the conflict, to the detriment of both the historical record and the necessity for compromise and flexibility on both sides of the many complex issues it raises.

Paragraph "C" of section 3,iii, I believe, both illustrates and underlies the dilemma. Here is the document's sole reference to antisemitism as a factor influencing Christian understanding of and attitudes toward the peoples of the Middle East. Incredibly, it is a denial of the validity of that factor arguing instead that Christian "guilt" over the Holocaust is excessive and that it must be denied or repressed in favor of what amounts to "uncritical support" for the "Palestinian people and their rights."

While I am strongly in favor of increased Christian understanding of and support for the very real needs of the Palestinians, I cannot help but be saddened by the forced-choice, either-or approach that is presumed in this paragraph. Christians, I would affirm, have not yet come to grips adequately with the full dimensions of their own tragic legacy of hatred toward and oppression of the Jewish people. Anti-Jewish theological and social themes, it has been shown time and again, are embedded in every aspect of Church life and teaching. Until we have fully analyzed and counteracted this vile, most ancient sin of Christian tradition, I believe, we cannot honestly say that we have even measured our historic guilt, much less be in a position to deny its palpably continuing reality within the Christian community. The WCC task-force, as I recall, found what for it was surprising evidence of blatant antisemitism in the Middle East. How much less surprised should we be to acknowledge that this evil is still very much in our own midst? It appears more than a bit self-serving to attempt to deny the obvious in such a context. What we as Christians need to recognize

then, may well be how our un-Christian lack of a sense of guilt over the Holocaust is influencing our views of the Middle East conflict.

Likewise, I sense in this paragraph an implicit argument that those Christians who support Israel only do so out of a sense of reparations for the Holocaust and that the State of Israel is thus an unfair imposition of a "Western" problem upon the Middle East. Both ideas, to the extent they operate here, are so reductionist as to be essentially false. Christian support for the existence of the State of Israel has multiple causes ranging from the theological to the moral-practical, most often in combination as is usually the case with human motivation. So this statement stands as a gratuitous slur on the integrity of many serious-minded Christians. Regarding the second supposition, one has only to recall that the majority of Jews in Israel are refugees, not from the European Holocaust but from Arab and Muslim countries from which they were forced to flee after centuries of habitation. Understanding of the present situation is not well served by ignoring this key fact of Middle Eastern reality.

Though perhaps it is a matter of style only, some sections struck me as being rather vague, with almost off-hand references disposing of large and complicated issues. Paragraph 2 comes to mind here, as does paragraph 5, ii. Regarding the latter, the implications of Jewish persecution ("oppression") of Christians is particularly troublesome, especially in view of the document's refusal to acknowledge the very real persecutions of Jews by Christians over almost two millenia. And the lack of any sort of documentation for the allegations, or balance in terms of Muslim treatment of other religious groups, for example in Iran, leaves the statement vulnerable to objections from more than one side. I know of no official Israeli policies, for example, which inhibit Christian or Muslim access to the holy sites of Jerusalem as is here asserted. Freedom of worship for Jews and Christians in Saudi Arabia (to name but one example), is, however, seriously and officially circumscribed even today. Surely the framers of the document must see the need for respectful and honest dialogue with Muslims on these issues of religious freedom as well?

Regarding the political (as opposed to the above interreligious) aspects of the statement, I should perhaps be more circumspect, since they lie less within my own area of competence than the above. But I may register my surprise as the virtual abandonment of resolution 242 through the modifications suggested in paragraph 3. In this, the document differs distinctly from the positions taken by our own Conference in 1973 and again in 1978 voicing support for 242 as a basis for negotiations. To presume already an end-point for the negotiations is, perhaps, to risk precluding them from the start.

Rev. David Simpson
September 16, 1983
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Finally, may I presume that "uncritical support" for the various stances of the churches in the Middle East was not intended, despite the rhetoric of paragraph 6? It would seem to me that the duty of loving criticism among Christians should, according to the testimony of St. Paul, always be a vital factor in our relations with one another. It is, in fact, in that spirit of Christian fellowship that I offer these brief remarks. Thanking you for the opportunity, I remain

Yours in Shalom,


Eugene J. Fisher

EJF:lm



NCC OFFICE OF CHRISTIAN JEWISH RELATIONS

Revised 1983 Budget

EXPENSES

7/13/83
REVISION

Staff Salary (Secretary)	\$10,000.	\$10,000.
Director	27,000.	27,000
Program Associate	-0-	10,000
Other Consultants	-0-	2,000
Salary Related Costs	9,340.	9,340.
Rent	5,550.	5,550.
Equipment	200.	600.
Office Supplies	600.	600.
Telephone/Telegraph	3,600.	3,600.
Postage/Shipping	1,500.	1,500.
Duplicating Services	1,080.	2,000.
Publication Services	1,150.	2,000.
Staff Travel	3,140.	6,000.
Non-staff Travel	3,000.	3,000.
Meetings and Programs	3,000.	4,970.
Miscellaneous	800.	800.
Common Services	10,000.	10,000.
Deficit Repayment	8,000.	8,000.
Borrowing Fee	2,000.	2,000.
NAES Membership	40.	40.
	<u>\$90,000.</u>	<u>\$109,000.</u>

INCOME

Denominations	35,000.	40,000.
Local Churches and Councils	8,000.	5,000.
Individuals	2,000.	3,000.
Related Organizations	5,000.	5,000.
Foundations	40,000.	56,000.
	<u>\$90,000.</u>	<u>\$109,000.</u>

(over)

CHRISTIAN JEWISH RELATIONS

Income Analysis

<u>Member Churches</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983 to date</u>	<u>1983 expected</u>
American Baptist (Ecum Off)	\$ 3,000.	\$ 1,750.	\$ 3,000.
Christian Churches (Disciples)	500.	-0-	500.
LCA (Div. World Mission)	3,500.	2,000.	4,000.
PCUS	750.	-0-	750.
Episcopal	4,590.		4,590.
RCA	1,875	375.	1,875.
RCA (Local Church)	1,000.		1,000.
UCC (Div. World Mission)	2,500.		2,500.
UCC (Bd of Homeland Ministries)	3,000.		3,000.
UM (regular UM)	100.		100.
UM (Ecumenical/Interreligious)	5,000.		5,000.
UPUSA	6,705.	2,500.	6,705.
Southern Baptist	600.		600.
Brethren		500.	500.
Friends		50.	50.
Westminster Presby Society		500.	500.
	<u>\$33,120.</u>	<u>\$ 7,675.</u>	<u>\$34,670.</u>
German Church			2,000.
			<u>\$36,670.</u>

31 August 1983

International Jewish Committee
on
Interreligious Consultations

Geneva, September 7, 1983

To All members of IJCIC

From Jean Halpérin

Sixth World Assembly of Churches, Vancouver
July/August 1983

We are now in a position to share with you the report received from Rabbi Jordan Pearlson on the 6th World Assembly of Churches held by the WCC at Vancouver in July/August 1983.

"When representatives of a half billion Christians gathered at Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, a cluster of fifteen "invited guests" from non-Christian faiths were among them. Within this distinguished group of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs and leaders of indigenous religions were two rabbis, veteran members of the International Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC): Rabbi Dr. Jordan Pearlson, representing the World Jewish Congress, and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee. In addition, the World Council of Churches added to the "invited guests" a select group of "observers" including among others, Prof. Zvi Werblowski of Hebrew University, Jerusalem (a valued and experienced member of IJCIC).

At the last WCC Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1975, a lone Jewish representative had been invited to come and observe. At Vancouver, for the first time, rabbis were there to observe and participate. On Tuesday afternoon, July 26, 1983, Rabbi Pearlson, together with fellow "invited guest," Hindu scholar Dr. Anant Anand Rambachan of Leeds University, addressed a packed session of delegates, guests, observers and visitors. Later that afternoon, Rabbi Tanenbaum, along with Buddhist, Sikh and Muslim "guests" addressed the plenum. His brief presentation, a moving and powerful plea for the sanctity of every life, was especially well received. Through such devices, the WCC quite deliberately set a tone of welcome and respect for all of the non-Christian guests - a pattern which was to remain constant.

Dialogue has come a long way from Nairobi. During the interim years, IJCIC and WCC have been at the frontiers of interreligious exploration. The cumulative effects of their meetings with other faith communities and with each other were clearly felt. At Vancouver, as is often the case in dialogue, the presence of the familiar outsider helped elevate and refine the self-definition of the hosts.

Because of earlier consultations, the IJCIC people were not dealing with strangers. Gatherings such as the WCC's Preparatory Consultation on the Island of Mauritius (considered by many to be the most successful of interfaith encounters) gave visitors and hosts at Vancouver prestructured linkages of friendship and trust. Formal negotiations meticulously and skillfully guided by Dr. Gerhart Riegner and Prof. Jean Halpérin of WJC's Geneva office, provided the Jewish representatives at Vancouver with clear and established guidelines within which to make their presence useful. During the Assembly, a well-timed cable from Dr. Riegner to the WCC reaffirmed agreed procedures.

Each of the IJCIC representatives brought unique resources to the Assembly. Rabbi Tanenbaum's broad acquaintance with American and European delegates, his recognized efforts on behalf of refugee groups in Southeast Asia, helped him make significant impact before he was unfortunately called home because of illness in his family. Prof. Werblowski's international reputation as an expert in comparative religious studies and his detailed knowledge of Middle Eastern affairs all contributed to his role as listener, teacher and negotiator. Rabbi Pearlson, a participant in the Mauritius Conference, brought personal friendships with Christian and non-Christian world leaders as well as many personal contacts in the Canadian churches and media. He was able at crucial moments to draw upon trusted local, national and international associates in dialogue. The text of his commentary broadcast from Vancouver over the Canadian broadcasting corporation's national network, has been widely reprinted in church journals.

The Jewish representatives were treated with the utmost cordiality and hospitality. Their presentations were well attended and their comments and opinions often deliberately sought. There was not the slightest incident or expression of resentment at the augmented non-Christian presence. Longstanding allies in the fight against antisemitism were there in abundance - clerics of the stature of moderator Archbishop Edward Scott, Anglican Primate of Canada; Archbishop Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox Church, and Prof. Krister Stendahl of Harvard Divinity School.

During the days leading up to the presentation of a less-than-satisfactory resolution on the Middle East, the detailed responses of the IJCIC representatives were given serious consideration. Some significant changes did take place, others did not. At the Plenum, the majority of the commentators from the floor spoke against the imbalance of the final text. In its final form the Middle East resolution, while clearly remaining short of what we would have liked, reflected no substantial change of stance compared with long established policy. All considered the impact of IJCIC's representatives in this matter is to be viewed positively. It should also be stressed that the Vancouver Assembly has been characterized by the prominence given throughout to religious and ecumenical concerns thereby relativizing to a large extent the positions adopted on strictly political issues. The Jewish guests felt genuinely encouraged by the many opportunities for better mutual understanding provided by personal contacts and conversations with a vast number of participants from all over the world."

In a separate report, Prof. Werblowsky confirmed that senior staff members of WCC, particularly John Taylor and Allan Brockway, have been extremely helpful.

Great efforts were made by the IJCIC representatives to monitor the discussions which finally led to the adoption of the Middle East resolution.

By comparing the initial draft and the final version as adopted, you will see to what extent and on which points the comments made by our representatives have been heeded.

It must in any case be stressed that, judging from what we saw and heard in the media of the Western world, the Middle East resolution received very little or no coverage at all. The following comments by Prof. Werblowsky will be of interest to you:

"On arrival in Vancouver it immediately became apparent that the WCC top brass would not be interested in exacerbating the M.E. issue. At this day and hour they had other priorities (the WCC as the spearhead of the struggle for nuclear disarmament, human rights, women, liturgical unity etc.). As regards liberation movements they had to mend their image after the damaging CBS programme "Sixty Minutes" and the equally damaging READERS DIGEST report. In this respect the many right-wing fundamentalist protestors, tracts and picketers (from Ian Paisley to McIntire) did them more good than harm.

The composition of the Drafting Committee was very negative (from our point of view) and its chairman, an American Presbyterian, a well-known man. We realised of course that although exacerbating the M.E. issue was not the WCC's interest, there would be very heavy pressure from the M.E. churches and their allies and that there would inevitably be some "trade-offs". At first I was given to understand that the D.R. would be on the lines of the Geneva (May '83) text of the M.E. Churches Consultation. When we received the first draft it turned out to be much worse. The rest of the story is known to you: the first draft, our comments on it (presented orally to the Chairman of the Drafting Committee in the presence of Koshi and John Taylor, but which I also wrote down for own records), the final Draft which - though adopting one or two of our emendations was equally obnoxious (though we were given to understand informally that most of our comments had been taken into account) - and then the final document as voted by the Plenary which incorporates some more of our demands. The document is of course far from what we would have liked, but considering the alternative possibilities it might have been much worse. In spite of all the innuendos, there is no outright condemnation of Israel and even a very gracious and very Christian acceptance of the fact of our existence. Whether the fact that the final version of the D.R. was made available only a few minutes before coming up for discussion in the Plenary was due to macchiavellian planning (e.g. to prevent us from lobbying and mobilising supporters) or simply to overwork at the Secretariat 's typing pool I cannot say. I would guess the latter -

because otherwise one of my contacts would have seen to it that a copy gets into my hands. We must not forget that for the M.E. Churches the mere recognition of our existence is such an enormous compromise that in return every "chazirey" is permitted!

Throughout the Assembly, in all our contacts, we made a point of insisting that we were deliberately reacting in a very low key because we wanted to keep doors open for future dialogue rather than slamming them shut, and to allow for healing rather than aggravate wounds etc.

Otherwise plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. Potter's opening address was remarkable for the way in which he emphasised the Jewish/Biblical heritage of the Church. He several times (beyond the call of necessity or duty) used the term Torah instead of "Old Testament".

I myself avoided contact with Gabby Habib, leaving this to Pearlson. As regards some of the other things I did, and the contacts I had - these are mainly of relevance to the local Jerusalem scene (Greek and Armenian Patriarchates) and hence I need not detail them in this report. You may, however, be amused to know that the "Syrian Orthodox" prelates (not only the one from Beyrouth but also the one from Aleppo) were demonstratively friendly, greeting me with shalom and responding to my sahpeyn with le-hayyim.

The G.A. received wide coverage in the local Canadian and especially Vancouver media, being a local event of considerable significance. But the WCC must have been pained at the lack of interest exhibited by the rest of the world. I don't know about the European press, but the American East Coast Press (by which I mean not only the N.Y. TIMES but also the Boston newspapers and others) didn't bother to report at all regularly and at length. Only the close of the Assembly and the final document were deemed worthy of a report in the N.Y. TIMES. Perhaps the WCC welcomes such opportunities for exercising the Christian virtues of humility."

Many round-up reports published in a variety of European and North American newspapers emphasized that the Vancouver Assembly had a greater impact in terms of worship and interfaith dialogue than in the realm of strictly political issues.

You will remember that considerable attention had been given on our side to the pamphlet issued by the Commission of Churches on international affairs under the title "Human Rights Violations in the West Bank - in their own words". After careful and detailed discussions with Dr. G. Wigoder, both at Geneva and at Stockholm, a final version of a rebuttal issued on behalf of IJCIC was prepared in time to be officially handed to the Deputy Secretary General of WCC Konrad Raiser at Vancouver. A copy of our rebuttal is attached for your information.

The following additional personal impressions conveyed by Rabbi Pearlson will also be of interest to you:

✓ "As the documents now in your hands will indicate, we were successful in keeping out an invitation to the Soviet Union to enter into the negotiation process. We were successful in softening the code-word reference paralleling the West Bank to South Africa. (We failed to fully expunge the South African imagery but I did manage to take Archbishop Tutu of South Africa aside and get his agreement that any attempt to draw an exact parallel between the West Bank and South Africa was nonsense.)

The following specific points are worthy of mention:

✓ A significant part of my time was spent making personal contacts, building personal friendships with American Blacks. The American Black presence is becoming more assertive in WCC circles. These Blacks bring with them a Black-Jewish agenda. Some American Blacks have now moved on to the Central Committee. They have spoken articulately on the floor of the Plenum and are a presence to be taken seriously. I drank and sang with them as an inter-black world caucus took shape spontaneously. I would urge that the North American section open further negotiations with them and that the specific representatives to the WCC be carefully cultivated. For the most part I have found them fair, open and friendly but quite frank about their evolving Jewish-Black confrontation.

✓ There was expressed on the floor of the Plenum the expected resistance to Dialogue - but it was a minority position. It is my belief that the staff will continue to implement dialogue. The Interfaith program has become very important to them - a marvellous show-piece. I deliberately gave them full marks for this.

✓ A new development is the buttressing of the Hebraic mode of prophetic action with the use of Biblical texts in Hebrew. You will notice that the message from the Sixth Assembly, which I have enclosed, has the Assembly song which was sung frequently in Hebrew. This is not the only case of the incorporation of openly Hebraic modes into Christian worship. We (Jean and I) on Mauritius met a Chinese Catholic nun who sang the Sh'ma Yisrael for us in Hebrew in a lovely melody which is now being used at Catholic retreats. This incorporation of overtly Jewish forms into Christian practice is something to be carefully watched. It would seem to be a double horned dilemma emphasizing "Jewish roots" on one side but expropriating the Seder and other Jewish practices as part of "the greater Christian heritage."

✓ We were assured by Rubeiz that the PLO had been convinced to cancel its two scheduled rallies on the UBC Campus at the time of the Assembly. One was cancelled but a second was held on the eve of the discussion of the resolution on the Middle East by the Plenum. Suspecting an attempt to mobilize floor support, I monitored this meeting. The PLO

representative addressed the 150 people in attendance (after showing a poorly prepared propaganda film on the bombing of Beirut). He began with the following: "Since the Catholic Church and the Pope have seen fit to formally recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization, the very least that we can expect from the World Council of Churches is recognition on a similar level." I repeated this quote to Archbishop Rossano (with whom I had several friendly meetings during the Assembly) with the suggestion that he convey the fact of its use to the Secretary of State of the Vatican simply as a matter of record. He agreed.

Potter's off-the-cuff statement at the final press conference to the effect that "Jews can take care of themselves. We must look to those who are incapable of taking care of themselves" has been widely quoted. In reality, his remark is a somewhat less than correct summary of their position as expressed in the Assembly's political resolutions. In those matters dealing with the Soviet Union (as in the Afghanistan resolution) their stance was weak and muted. In those areas where they did not have a constituency to be protected, they felt free to bludgeon, to posture prophetic stances. They did so in the South African resolution and in the general tone of the Israeli resolution, and in several critiques of the United States' policy. (I have come to the conclusion that the WCC is very similar to the multi-national corporations they like to demonize.)

Marc and I were introduced to the Anglican Archbishop of Botswana - in full regalia of purple shirt, pectoral cross and collar - very black and very much the Archbishop. He held out his hand and greeted us in perfect Yiddish. Not only Yiddish, but my father's Lithuanian accent. When we recovered, he explained to us that he had grown up in South Africa as the son of a small merchant who had dealt with Jewish immigrant merchants. He had a good ear for language and soon mastered basic Yiddish. From that point on each time we met, at his insistence, the conversation was primarily in Yiddish."

We all knew in advance that the task of the IJCIC representatives at Vancouver would not be an easy one. They certainly deserve our appreciation for what they did, in the way they did.

encl.

THE MIDDLE EAST

- Initial Draft -

1. The increasingly dangerous situation in the Middle East threatens the whole world and places heavy demands on all those striving for justice and freedom.

The Middle East is a region of special interest as the birthplace of three monotheistic religions. The churches in the area have their roots from apostolic times. Their continued presence and active participation in the life of the whole area, despite suffering at various periods, is a remarkable witness to the faith. They are facing new challenges and attempting to respond through new forms of witness. While only the churches of the Middle East can determine the nature and forms of their witness, it behoves all churches to strengthen their presence and support their ministry, especially the ministry of reconciliation and witness for peace. Historical factors and certain theological interpretations have often hindered Christians outside in evaluating the religious and political developments in the Middle East.

2. Recent developments in the region have further pushed back prospects for peace. The agony of the Lebanese war is not yet over. The integrity and independence of Lebanon are in greater danger than ever. There are rumours of a new war. The Israeli settlement policy on the West Bank has resulted in a de-facto annexation giving final touches to a policy of separate development of peoples that flagrantly violates the basic rights of the Palestinian people. There are fears of relocation of the inhabitants on the West Bank and their expulsion. A large number of Palestinians are under detention in the prisons in the West Bank and in camps in Lebanon. There is escalation of tension in the occupied territories. The consensus among the Arab nations appears to have been lost. External pressures have caused serious rifts within the Palestinian movement. The Iran-Iraqi war continues to claim an increasing toll of lives and complicates inter-Arab relations. Tension is increasing in relation to Cyprus. The annexation of East Jerusalem has put serious limitations on access to the Holy City, especially for Arab Muslims and Christians. There is greater involvement of the USA and the USSR in the region today.

1. We reaffirm the principles previously enunciated by the WCC as the basis on which a peaceful settlement can be reached. The UN resolution 242 needs to be revised to take into account changes that have occurred since 1967 and that such alterations should express the following principles:
 - a) Withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied in 1967 as well as from Lebanon;
 - b) the right of all states, including Israel and Arab states, to live in peace with secure and recognised boundaries;
 - c) the implementation of the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state.
11. We reaffirm that the Middle East conflict cannot be resolved through the use of force but only through peaceful means. Negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East should include all those parties most intimately involved: Israel, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, neighbouring Arab states, the USSR and USA. The interests of the world at large are best represented through the United Nations.
111. Churches should undertake the following with a view to facilitating processes towards negotiations:
 - a) build greater awareness among the churches about the urgency of the Palestinian issue. In this connection active support should be extended to the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine to be held at the end of August 1983 and all states be urged to participate in it;
 - b) broaden and develop the dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis with a view to enabling mutual recognition;
 - c) for Christians in the western world to recognise that their guilt over the fate of Jews in their countries may have influenced their views of the conflict in the Middle East. This has often led to uncritical support of the state of Israel, thereby ignoring the plight of the Palestinian people and replacing one wrong by another. In this context we welcome the open and critical stance adopted by Christian churches in the traditional Jewish-Christian dialogue and the search for additional partners in dialogue among the Jewish communities.

(1) We reiterate that the recovery of Lebanese territorial integrity and sovereignty is a key to peace and justice in the region and that for this to be realized all foreign forces must be withdrawn from Lebanese territory.

(11) We appeal to the ecumenical community:

- a) to support the efforts of the Lebanese government to reassert the effective exercise of its sovereignty over all Lebanese territory;
- b) to assist the churches within Lebanon in their attempts for reconciliation with a view to achieving harmony and unity among all communities in the country;
- c) to continue to support generously the Middle East Council of Churches and the churches in the area in their humanitarian programmes of relief;
- d) to collaborate with the churches in the area in ensuring justice and human rights inside Lebanon, including the right, security and well-being of Palestinian and other non-Lebanese under Lebanese law.

5. Jerusalem

(1) We reaffirm that "Jerusalem is a Holy City for three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The tendency to minimize Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided" (Vth Assembly Nairobi 1975). The WCC and the MECC should implement the proposal of the WCC Central Committee (August 1980) that dialogue be initiated with Jews and Muslims so that members of the three religions can understand each other's deep religious attachment to Jerusalem and so that together they can explore means of turning their common concern into proposals for shared control of the city. The churches should give priority to this while continuing efforts to secure a general settlement of the Middle East conflict.

(11) a) We call the attention of the churches to the need for:

- actions which will ensure a continuing indigenous Christian presence and witness in Jerusalem;
- wider ecumenical awareness of the plight of the indigenous Muslim and Christian communities in East Jerusalem and other occupied territories.

b) We call upon all churches to express their common concern that although Israeli law guarantees free access for members of all religious traditions rooted in Jerusalem to their holy places, the political reality created by the continuing Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank means that Arab Muslims and Christians continue to experience serious difficulties in and are often prevented from visiting the Holy City.

6. We uphold the churches in the Middle East in our intercessions as they respond to the new challenges in the difficult circumstances through their witness in the service of Christ. We assure them of the solidarity of the community of faith around the world as we have gathered together here in the name of Jesus Christ - the Life of the World. We pray for the healing of the wounds in the nations of that region.

We stand together with other religious communities in a spirit of servanthood seeking to be faithful in our common calling to be peace-makers and reconcilers and to bring hope for all.

30 July 1983

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTION

Final ver.

Card Document
P 9

1. The increasingly dangerous situation in the Middle East threatens the peace of the whole world and places heavy demands on all those striving for justice and freedom.

The Middle East is a region of special interest as the birthplace of three monotheistic religions. The churches in the area have their roots from apostolic times. Their continued presence and active participation in the life of the whole area, despite suffering at various periods, is a remarkable witness to the faith. They are facing new challenges and attempting to respond through new forms of witness. While only the churches of the Middle East can determine the nature and forms of their witness, it behoves all churches to strengthen their presence and support their ministry, especially the ministry of reconciliation and witness for peace. Historical factors and certain theological interpretations have often confused Christians outside in evaluating the religious and political developments in the Middle East.

2. Recent developments in the region have further pushed back prospects for peace. The agony of the Lebanese war is not yet over. The integrity and independence of Lebanon are in greater danger than ever. The Israeli settlement policy on the West Bank has resulted in a defacto annexation giving final touches to a discriminatory policy of development of peoples that flagrantly violates the basic rights of the Palestinian people. There are fears of relocation of the inhabitants on the West Bank and their expulsion. A large number of Palestinians are under detention in the prisons in the West Bank and in camps in Lebanon. There is escalation of tension in the occupied territories. The consensus among the Arab nations appears to have been lost. External and intense pressures have caused serious rift within the Palestinian movement. In many situations there are increasing violations of human rights, especially of minorities and religious fanaticism is a base of many communities. The Iran-Iraqi war continues to claim an increasing toll of lives and complicates inter-Arab relations. Tension is increasing in relation to Cyprus.

3. The Israeli Palestinian conflict:

i) We reaffirm the principles previously enunciated by the WCC as the basis on which a peaceful settlement can be reached. The U.S. resolution 242 and all other relevant U.N. resolutions need to be revised and implemented

cont'd/...

taking into account changes that have occurred since 1967 and that such revisions should express the following principles in a manner that would ensure:

- a) the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied in 1967;
- b) the right of all states, including Israel and Arab states, to live in peace with secure and recognised boundaries.
- c) the implementation of the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state.

ii) We reaffirm that the Middle East conflict cannot be resolved through the use of force but only through peaceful means. Negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East should include all those parties most intimately involved; the State of Israel, the Palestinian Liberation Organization and neighbouring Arab states. The interests of the world at large are best represented through the United Nations and the USA and the USSR have a special responsibility in this matter.

iii) Churches should undertake the following with a view to facilitating processes towards negotiations: -

a) to build greater awareness among the churches about the urgency and justice of the Palestinian cause. In this connection active support should be extended to the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine to be held at the end of August 1983 in Geneva. The churches should bring to bear their influence on states to participate in it;

b) to encourage the dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis with a view to furthering mutual understanding and enabling recognition;

c) to remind Christians in the Western world to recognize that their guilt over the fate of Jews in their countries may have influenced their views of the conflict in the Middle East and has often led to uncritical support of the policies of the State of Israel, thereby ignoring the plight of the Palestinian people and their rights.

In this context we welcome the more open and critical stance adopted by Christian churches in the traditional Jewish-Christian dialogue, but we also urge the broadening of the dialogue to include larger segments of both Christian and Jewish communities;

cont'd/...

Conference
Document P10

- d) to support movements within Israel, which are working for peace and reconciliation. K

4. Lebanon

The ecumenical community shares the agony of the people of Lebanon who have been tragically suffering over the past nine years and have been carrying too large a burden of the problems of the region.

- i) We reiterate that the recovery of Lebanese territorial integrity and sovereignty is a key to peace and justice in the region and that for this to be realised all foreign forces must be withdrawn from Lebanese territory.
- ii) We appeal to the ecumenical community:
- a) to support the efforts of the Lebanese government to reassert the effective exercise of its sovereignty over all Lebanese territory and to support for the full independence and unity of the Lebanese people.
- b) to assist the churches within Lebanon in their attempts for reconciliation with a view to achieving harmony and unity among all communities in the country;
- c) to continue to support generously the Middle East Council of Churches and the churches in Lebanon in their humanitarian and social programmes of relief for all in Lebanon;
- d) to collaborate with the churches in the area in their contribution to the promotion of justice, dignity, freedom and human rights for all in Lebanon.

Conference
document p.11

5. Jerusalem

- i) We reaffirm that "Jerusalem is a Holy City for three monotheistic religions; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The tendency to minimise Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided (Vth Assembly, Nairobi 1975). The WCC should implement the proposal of the WCC Central Committee (August 1980) that dialogue be initiated with Jews and Muslims so that members of the three religions can understand each other's deep religious attachment to Jerusalem and so that together they can contribute towards political processes that would lead to a mutually acceptable agreement for sharing the city. The churches should give priority to this while continuing efforts to secure a general settlement of Middle East conflict. The special legislation known as the "status quo of the Holy places" must be safeguarded and confirmed in any agreement concerning Jerusalem..

cont'd/...

- ii) a) We call the attention of the churches to the need for:
- actions which will ensure a continuing indigenous Christian presence and witness in Jerusalem;
 - * - wider ecumenical awareness of the plight of the indigenous Muslim and Christian communities suffering from the repressive actions of the occupying power in East Jerusalem and other occupied territories.
- b) We call upon all churches to express their common concern that although Israeli law guarantees free access for members of all religious traditions rooted in Jerusalem to their holy places, the state of war between Israel and Arab States, the political reality created by the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and continuing occupation of the West Bank means that Arab Muslims Christians continue to experience serious difficulties and are often prevented from visiting the Holy City.

6. We uphold the churches in the Middle East in our intercession as they respond to the new challenges in the difficult circumstances through their witness in the service of Christ. We assure them of the solidarity of the community of faith around the world as we have gathered together here in the name of Jesus Christ, the Life of the World. We pray for the healing of the wounds in the nations of that region.

We stand together with our other religious communities in a spirit of servanthood seeking to be faithful in our common calling to be peace-makers and reconcilers and to bring hope for all.

* A Vasilios amendment would have replaced the underlined with: "communities suffering from the prevailing tensions," Shaadah's objections led to the defeat of the amendment.

- a) Vasilios is Patriarch of Jerusalem (Greek Orthodox)
- b) Shaadah is a Ramallah resident who was privately active in presenting Palestinian issues against Israel.

THE OTHER SIDE

A REPLY TO THE BOOKLET "HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE WEST BANK",
ISSUED BY THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS.



INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

1983

INTRODUCTION

Jewish public opinion, and particularly those organization engaged in a constructive dialogue with the Christian Churches, have been shocked and dismayed by the overt bias displayed in recent publications of the World Council of Churches' Commission on International Affairs dealing with Middle Eastern issues. Many of the statements, attitudes and conclusions are one-sided and unfair, and contradict the avowed profession of a great religious body devoted to the ideals of truth and reconciliation.

We have thought it necessary to comment on the CCIA background papers because we believe that many within the WCC family do not subscribe to the contents of these pamphlets - or at least are open to learning that events in the Middle East have other explanations.

For all those interested in the search for truth and in the cause for peace and justice in the Middle East, the following reactions to the booklet should be of concern.

LEBANON

The Director's Introduction condemns Israel's "bloody invasion and occupation", says that there are growing indications that Israel intends to stay in Lebanon and states categorically that Israel is not interested in peace. Let the facts speak for themselves.

Lebanon was bloodied and occupied for seven harrowing years by the PLO terrorists and some 30,000 Syrian troops, before the Israel Defense Forces entered in June 1982. Chaos and anarchy had long since replaced the authority of the Lebanese Government. The cost in human suffering was horrendous. During that period - before Israel's entry - nearly 100,000 persons were killed, more that twice that number wounded and hundreds of thousands made homeless by the wanton destruction and havoc. Many of the casualties were incurred in cold-blooded massacres, such as that in the Lebanese town of Damur, mainly inhabited by Christians, which was left in ruins, and thousands of its inhabitants killed or forced to flee when it was overrun by the PLO in 1976.

During that same period, southern Lebanon was used as a base, both for terrorist incursions and for open military attacks by the PLO against Israel, and in particular its northern region, Galilee. The primary purpose of the entry of the Israel Defense Force into Lebanon was to remove the menacing PLO presence and its military infrastructure from southern Lebanon, and thereby to relieve Israel from the ongoing threat emanating from that presence. In this, it succeeded. It also removed what had been a constant source of torment, death and destruction directed not only against Israel but also against the local Lebanese population.

Israel has never coveted an inch of Lebanese territory - as is clear from its actions and from countless statements to this effect by its leadership. Hostile speculations and propaganda to the effect that Israel desired to remain indefinitely in Lebanon have been adopted by the author as a statement of fact. The truth is that the consistent declarations of the Israel Government have been authenticated by Israel's signature on an agreement with Lebanon (May 17, 1983) in which Israel undertakes to withdraw its forces from that country within 8 to 12 weeks, as part of a general withdrawal of external forces from Lebanon, which also includes Syrian and PLO forces. At present, the tragic situation in Lebanon is being perpetuated by the refusal of the Syrian Government to withdraw its troops, as requested by the Lebanese Government.

As for the Israelis "not being interested in any peace plan", that is a patent untruth. Israel's tradition of seeking peace goes back a long time, as is evident in every step of the way along the road of Israeli history. For 35 years now, it has been Israel which has pursued peace - consistently and on countless occasions - and it has been the Arab states and the PLO which have rejected peace and made war.

In 1977, finally one Arab country - Egypt - agreed to make peace with Israel, and on March 26, 1979 the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty was signed, based on the Camp David Agreements of 1978 - the first and only Middle East peace plan to get off the ground. Israel's genuine interest in this plan has been evidenced not only by its signing of the 1979 treaty, but also by its fruitful implementation of the treaty (and of the Camp David blueprint of which it is a part), which involved considerable sacrifice.

WEST BANK (JUDEA AND SAMARIA)

From 1948, when Jordan attacked and seized the West Bank until 1967, when Jordan again attacked Israel, this time using the region as a base, these territories were illegally occupied by Jordan. This seizure never received international recognition (except by Britain and Pakistan), even by the other Arab states. Israel, in June 1967, fighting in its own defense, repelled the Jordanian invaders and, in the course of its counter-attack, took possession of these areas - which also happened to be part of the heartland of the historical Land of Israel.

The basic problem down the years has not been Israel's presence in these areas but the Arab states' obdurate refusal to come to terms with Israel's most elementary national rights and, on that basis, to make peace. During the 20 years in which Jordan occupied the region, Israel on numerous occasions offered to make peace with its neighbors on the basis of the existing armistice lines - in other words, with Jordan remaining in possession of the region. These peace offers were invariably turned down by the Arab states which persisted in their attitude of non-recognition and open hostility, erupting in undisguised attempts to eradicate Israel by military force.

To this day, Israel is prepared to enter into negotiations with Jordan and with Syria, aiming at agreements which will finally put an end to the decades-long conflict, but for this to take place there must be corresponding readiness on the other side as well. Such agreements already exist with Egypt and Lebanon - with the first, a full fledged peace treaty; with the second, an agreement terminating the state of war, making a start at regulating relations and determining the security measures necessary to prevent a relapse into the situation which preceded last summer's war.

The highly strategic nature of the West Bank must always be taken into account. Israel, with its narrow coastal strip (only 10-15 miles across), is extremely vulnerable to attacks from Judea and Samaria by the armed forces of the Arab states, the PLO and perhaps other hostile powers that are still not reconciled to Israel's very right to exist. In particular, Israel is concerned lest the area come under the control of the

PLO, which is on record as having as its central objective the elimination of the State of Israel and its replacement by a PLO-run "Palestine." Israel, for its part, has repeatedly expressed willingness to reach an agreement based on the rights of the Palestinian people, and has signed a declaration to this effect in the framework of the Camp David Peace Treaty.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Much of the WCC booklet is devoted to criticizing violations of human rights in the Region, but it fails as much as to mention Israel's determination that its military and civil organs abide by the provisions of international law (notably the Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949). Immediately after the 1967 war, the Israeli Attorney-General announced that all the norms and principles of natural justice observed as a matter of course in Israel would also be implemented in the territories administered by Israel, even where these had not found expression in international law. The Supreme Court of Israel, sitting as a High Court of Justice, has assumed jurisdiction over the military commanders in the administered territories although, according to the strict letter of the law, the Israel High Court of Justice does not have jurisdiction beyond the territory of Israel. By virtue of this decision, the Israel court may order any military commander or official in the administered areas to perform any act which by law he is obliged to do, or abstain from doing what by law he ought not to do. This means, in effect, that whenever the rights of an individual are infringed, effective redress by the court will be available.

If cases alleged to amount to an excess of power have not been referred to the High Court, this is not because the High Court's jurisdiction lacks effectiveness or because the population lack confidence in the Israel judiciary. It is because of the terror employed by certain Palestinian groups against those daring to have recourse to the Israeli courts, and because of the propaganda value of alleged misuse of power which is not judicially probed, as distinguished from allegations which judicial inquiry might prove without foundation.

The Israel legal authorities rely on international law as well as on precedents in British Mandatory and Jordanian law. These permit

occupying powers to take preventive action to stop sabotage, sedition and terrorist activities. The types of action attacked in the booklet are all endorsed by international law, in such circumstances.

In cases where that authority has been exceeded, the injured parties can have recourse to the High Court. A notable instance was a case where land near Nablus was requisitioned in order to establish an Israeli settlement. International law clearly distinguishes between the right to use public land and private land. In this case, the petitioners claiming ownership of the land brought the matter to the Court which ruled that the requisition of the land had been politically motivated, and ordered the removal of the settlers, their effects and constructions, and the restoration of the land to its Arab owners. Since that judgment, the Israel authorities have refrained from requisitioning private land for the establishment of settlements.

The various issues raised in the booklets are fully considered in the publication "The Rule of Law in the Areas Administered by Israel" published by the Israel National Section of the International Commission of Jurists (Tel Aviv, 1981). In his introduction, Haim H. Cohn, Member of the International Commission of Jurists and former Deputy President of Israel's Supreme Court, writes: "I must admit that I myself am far from happy and complacent about certain aspects of the military administration. Not everybody in Israel subscribes to the prevailing military concepts of security requirements, but so long as the army has the responsibility for maintaining security, and so long as the Administered Areas are exposed, from within and from without, to terrorist influence and attacks, these concepts must prevail."

Most of the cases cited in the booklet are ascribed, not to official bodies of the State of Israel or to the Military Government, but to private individuals, Jewish or Arab. Many of the alleged violations have never been reported to the authorities and have therefore not been investigated. They are now utilized as political propaganda without the possibility of determining their accuracy.

The State of Israel's Administered Areas, like any other region in the world, are not immune to lawbreakers. The solution in these cases is to report such violations to the authorities; an entire juridical system has been established in the Region for this very purpose.

The booklet deals with five categories of policy:

1. Land and Settlements: Here one must distinguish between public land and private land. Israel has acted according to the Hague regulations which allow an occupying power the right to take possession of public property and a duty to safeguard it. The Israeli Government has laid down procedure to ensure that any land so taken possession of is beyond question public land.

As noted above, the rights of private ownership have been respected and are legally protected. Following international law, private property can only be used under circumstances which would be recognized under local law i.e., for public purposes, such as road construction and widening, erection of public buildings, etc. In such cases, full compensation is paid to the owners. Moreover, the Israel authorities have laid down that such property can only be used when it is beyond village and town boundaries.

The case of Sabri Gharib, for example, has been the subject of a number of legal processes, four of them reaching the Supreme Court. Some of these cases are still pending but in those where decisions have been given it has been ruled (a) that the complainant's house had been built illegally; and (b) that lands in question were not in fact the property of the complainant. He has further been charged with encroachment on the property of others. The other cases cited in this section have been the subject of no complaints to the authorities and so no details are known of them.

2. Village Leagues: The booklet does not allow for the possibility that there may be another viewpoint concerning the Leagues. It brands them as "quislings" and "collaborators" without even weighing the possibility that they might constitute a genuine Palestinian Arabs' movement. They were not set up by the Israel authorities who only gave a positive answer to the request of the villages and village councils to organize

for the benefit of their inhabitants. It should be noted that politically these Village Leagues are opposed to the continuance of the Israel presence in the Region and they advocate the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Membership in the Leagues is voluntary and no coercion has been applied by the Israel authorities to make the inhabitants join.

The Village Leagues are seeking to improve conditions in their villages and enhance their economic development, which had been neglected by the Jordanian regime and by the Palestinian leaders in favor of the development of the cities. The authors mention Gamil el Habib, head of the Ramallah Village League, but fail to mention that he assumed office after the previous head, his father, had been murdered, together with his brother, by the PLO. His "crime" was that he held that the PLO does not represent the Palestinian Arabs.

The attack on the Orthodox Club described in the booklet was carried out by local Arabs. The police have completed their inquiries and three men from the Bethlehem area are being charged for the acts described. The events at Bethlehem University have also been investigated but the police inquiries have been hampered by the inability of the complainants to identify the attackers.

The other cases listed are unknown to the authorities, partly because the names of the complainants are withheld. Any properly-made complaint is investigated.

3. House Demolitions and Sealing Up: Following the Hague regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention, every attempt is made to strike a balance between security considerations of the military government and humanitarian considerations. Nobody likes to take measures of this kind, although the possibility of such action is acknowledged by international law. Thus, the international law expert, Jean S. Pictet, explaining the Geneva Convention in a publication of the International Red Cross (Geneva, 1958) lays down that "The occupying force may undertake the total or partial destruction of certain private or public property in the occupied territory when imperative military requirements so demand." Military requirements are of two kinds:

(1) to destroy the physical base for military action;

- (2) to serve as a deterrent against terrorist activity, which is of special importance in a country where capital punishment is not used against terrorists.

The booklet itself is contradictory in its allegations, giving the ridiculous figures of 16,212 houses destroyed on p.6 and then a total of 1,265 on p. 30. In fact the number of houses demolished or sealed up is small; for example, for the four years, 1977-1980, twenty-eight houses were demolished and seventeen sealed up.

Furthermore, every effort is made to avoid demolition, especially if neighboring houses might be affected or residents of the house having no connection with terrorists might be affected. Instead, a section of the house is sealed up which also makes it possible to revoke the measure at some future date.

4. Universities: The booklet is similarly one-sided in its discussion of the situation in the West Bank universities. Activities by students and sometimes by staff of these universities in support of organizations seen by Israel as seditious and supporting terror, have provoked reluctant counter-measures.

But the authors of the booklet fail to mention that, in June, 1967, there was not a single institute of higher education in the region. It is only under Israeli rule that universities have been established there

and the Israeli administration has made possible the establishment of four universities in addition to a large number of other institutes of higher learning which today have over 11,000 students. As a result of this development, residents of the region no longer have to leave for other countries to receive higher education, while a great number of students from other Arab countries pursue their studies in the region.

Much is made of the requirement that non-residents wishing to teach or study at these universities need a work permit, which involves an undertaking not to help or support any organization which Israel sees as seditious or terror-oriented. In fact, work permits and entry visas in many lands, East and West, are regulated by similar provisions.

It should be stressed that the closings of Bir Zeit University have never been for academic reasons but because of disturbances of the public order by the students, with no attempts at restraint by the university authorities. In some cases, the students blocked public thoroughfares, day after day, with their stone-throwing. When a closing order was challenged in the Supreme Court, it was upheld.

5. Town Arrest: The reference is to restriction orders according to which a person is not allowed to leave his town without a permit from a military commander. This too is recognized by international law as a valid preventative measure. Such orders (which do not involve any detention whatever) are infrequently applied and only when the military authorities are convinced that public order may be endangered. The person affected has the right to bring his case before an Appeals Committee.

The above remarks have been made to show that there is a different perspective from the one presented in the CCIA background papers. The reader will draw his own conclusions, but the bias of the background papers do not enable the reader to obtain a complete picture and only makes more difficult any attempt to find just and peaceful solutions to the delicate intricacies of the Middle East conflicts.

Draft

The Reverend Dr. Philip Potter
General Secretary
The World Council of Churches

Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Dr. Potter,

The Liaison Committee of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) has had an opportunity to meet since the close of the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver.

At the outset, IJCIC's leadership wishes to express to you and ~~thex~~ your WCC associates its appreciation of your thoughtfulness in inviting two official "guests" from IJCIC ~~andx~~ - Rabbi Jordan Perelson and Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum - and one "visitor" in the person of Prof. Zvi Werblowsky - to take part in the Vancouver Assembly. Each of our representatives has spoken warmly of the courtesies and personal friendship extended to them by the WCC staff and many of the delegates.

During our recent IJCIC meeting, our representatives have had an opportunity to study carefully the text of "The WCC Middle East Resolution" and they have asked me to communicate to you their reactions.

Without a single exception, our member organizations feel that the resolution is unfair, one-sided, and transparently biased. It not only violates your stated purpose of serving "a ministry of reconciliation and witness ~~for~~ for peace," but in fact constitutes an act of disobedience of the Holy Commandment of "Thou shalt not bear false witness."

In the first instance, this is not a resolution dealing seriously with the complexities of the "Middle East." It would have been far more accurate and truthful to identify this as "The WCC Resolutions on the Palestinians and the BLO." Lebanon is dealt with as a secondary consideration. Israel is throughout employed as a scapegoat. To borrow President Reagan's phrase, Israel is treated as "the focus of all evil" in the Middle East. (Christian liberals, socialists, and Marxists were appalled by that apocalyptic image and its cold-war rhetoric; Jews are no less appalled by that analogous use by WCC of the Passion Play scenario of type and anti-type.)

versus

~~Revising the WCC text section by section~~

~~Section 1: While the description of~~

A resolution deserving of the title "Middle East" would have, by any reasonable standards of intellectual integrity, examined the broad range of conflicts that bedevil the Middle East today; among the crucial ones, Syrian-Palestinian-Druze-Shiite-Sunni assaults on the Gemyal government in Lebanon; the Iran-Iraq war; the Syrian massacres of thousands in Homs; the persecution and denial of human rights of Kurda, Copts, Armenians; Iran's oppression of Bahai/s, Christians and Jews; Syria's reduction of its Jewish community to hostages; Khomeini's

Shiite fanatics in the Persian Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia; the intra-Yemeni conflict; the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Libya-Egyptian conflict; the ~~xxxx~~ role of the Moslem Brotherhood throughout the Middle East in persecuting non-Moslems, etc.

We acknowledge that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a major concern, but to single that out in your resolution as the primary issue to the exclusion of these other conflicts specified above is to serve the cause of PLO propaganda, not the the cause of understanding the Middle East in the spirit of "witness for peace."

Section 1 - The opening paragraph on "the Middle East...as the birth place of the three monotheistic religions" and what follows are seemingly appropriate context for the rest of the resolution. But the closing sentence betrays the real intention of the entire statement; namely, to place Western Christians on the defensive in their approach to the Middle East by suggesting "Historical and certain theological interpretations have often confused Christians outside in evaluating the religious and political developments in the Middle East."

The message seems evident: "You Western Christians are confused about the Middle East. We will now tell you the facts and how you must understand everything you need to know about the Middle East."

Section 2 - "The integrity and independence of Lebanon are in greater danger than ever." No cause is specified as the source of that danger. No mention of Syria's designs. No reference to Christian, Moslem, Druze militia. Nothing is said about the PLO internal conflict and the assaults on the Lebanese army. The only specificity provided immediately after the opening sentences has to do with Israel's role... "The Israeli settlement policy...defacto annexation...discriminatory policy...fears of relocation...detention in the prisons...escalation of tension in the occupied territories..."

When it comes to describing the "serious rift within the Palestinian movement," the cause? A vague, abstract reference to "external and internal pressures".

in Israel

When the status of human rights is discussed, four sentences are ~~aprxixf~~ included with Israel specified as the specific cause of all these violations. When human rights in the rest of the Arab Middle East is examined, no names, no finger-pointing, only more vagueness and abstractions, no one is responsible or accountable; viz., "In many situations there are increasing violations of human rights, especially of minorities, and religious fanaticism is a base of many communities. That is scant acknowledgment of the desperate plight of Kurds, Copts, Bahais, Armenians, ~~xxxxxxx~~ Syrian Jews, and other suffering minorities (The Iran-Iraq war is mentioned in one sentence; tension in Cyprus in half a sentence.)

Especially offensive is the calculated, cynical use of the words "defacto annexation giving final touches to a discriminatory policy that flagrantly violates the basic rights of the Palestinian people."

As made clear in the earlier drafts, these are well-known code-words in every discourse about apartheid in South Africa. The smell of

the obscenity "Zionism is racism" hovers over this formulation.



To Chairman of Committee: Van Thompson:

Response to draft resolution of THE MIDDLE EAST on behalf of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation.

The document has been significantly ~~rewritten~~ but changed in the direction of ~~a~~ usefulness and balance/with a few areas of irritation and reservation, of inadequacy and contradiction as yet unresolved.

1 We are reassured that ~~not~~ some of these are typographical errors which will be announced prior to the public reading at the plenary session:

1) Page 9--External and internal pressures

2) page ~~11~~¹², p.i ending :Middle East conflicts.

2. The emendation of the blatantly "South African clause" in the earlier draft has been only slightly softened by the present language: *P. 4 para. 2*

"...giving final touches to a discriminatory policy of development of peoples..."

The implications remain; the implied parallel is neither honest nor helpful.

3. There is a clear contradiction between 3. i) and 3, i), a): one cannot realistically take "into account changes that have occurred since 1967 " and advocate "the withdrawel of Israel troops from all territories occupied in 1967."

4. Section 4) suffers from a serious defect and inbalance.

No document which attempts to deal with Lebanon from ~~the~~

such a stance can afford to omit the key factor of Syrian intransigence as the salient factor preventing the withdrawal of all foreign troops. Israel has agreed to mutual withdrawal; Syria has refused. The de facto annexation of Northern Lebanon is constantly referred to in the Syrian press as liberated territory." The Syrian assertions that Lebanon remains part of "Greater Syria" cannot be taken lightly. ~~The movement of~~ Syrian involvement in the promotion of terror and counter-terror in Lebanon is well documented.

The failure to include any condemnation of the role played by Syria, ~~if~~ we would submit, gives added strength to those who would accuse the W.C.C. of unfortunate patterns of selective indignation in its resolutions.

5. At a time when internal struggles indicate the instabilities of the ~~P.L.O.~~ (P.L.O.), the specific inclusion of ~~this~~ this group as a negotiating nominee (Section 3. ii) is unfortunate.

While ~~xx~~ there are other elements about which we have reservations, we would like to make very clear our thanks for the ~~xxxxx~~ ~~courtesy~~ courtesies extended to us during the Assembly.

Although my two associates have had to leave, one because of family illness and the other because of teaching commitments in Tokyo) I shall be available for any further discussion until early Wednesday afternoon.

On behalf of IJCIC

Rabbi Jordan Pearlson, World Jewish Congress

Comments of IJCIC representatives on M.E. DR

at a meeting with Chairman
of Drafting Committee, Friday 5 Aug.
1963

We wish to thank you, on behalf of IJCIC, for inviting us to express our concerns regarding the M.E. Resolution.

We do not intend to bring an alternative text or to propose amendments. We are aware that ~~we are not equal partners in the drafting process~~ (as we would be e.g., in a U.N. type of setting), but invited guests and visitors. We are also aware of the legitimacy of different opinions as well as of the need of any WCC D.R. to satisfy certain (and at times extremist) member churches who have their understandable commitments, concerns and priorities.

Our intention is not to suggest a D.R. which "we like" --this would be improper and out of place-- but to draw attention to what seem to us glaring omissions, misleading formulations, and innuendos which give the DR a lop-sided and biased character and which will not fail to make the appropriate impression on the world in general and on the Jewish community in particular. We offer our comments with the intention of keeping the door open for the further strengthening of mutual trust rather than allow a situation to develop which would undermine confidence and which would head towards confrontation and in the long run risk to destroy what has been laboriously achieved so far.

TITLE OF DOCUMENT: Is it a PALESTINE or a MIDDLE EAST Document? If you intend the latter, than the focussing on the P. problem (plus a little Lebanon) --with a few "asides" regarding other issues-- is highly misleading, to put it mildly and to say the least. So also is the insinuation that Israel is the central conflict (rather than the convenient central scapegoat) in the M.E. There are Middle East conflicts in the plural, and not in the singular as stated at the end of your Jerusalem paragraph 51 last line. Your DR, strangely enough, makes no reference to events at Homs several years ago, the trampling underfoot of the national rights of the Kurds in brotherly concord by Iraq and Iran (before they were at each other's throats), the persecution of the Bahais, the Syrian Jews who are practically held as hostages, the Armenian question, and so on and so forth. The present text may satisfy propagandistic interests: it does not seem to us to contribute to the credibility of the WCC as the author of a genuine M.E. Resolution.

Many statements in par.2, when read in the overall context, contain puzzling innuendos. Does your statement "There are rumours of a new war" refer to an impending war between Syria and Jordan? or between Libya and its neighbours? I do not have to specify what I mean by "innuendo" in this case.

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The ref. to "external pressures" is the typical and somewhat contemptible gambit of all those who shun responsibility -- rather like the President of Sri Lanka claiming that the recent Sinhalese-Tamili riots were the result of a "foreign plot". In Palestine throughout Qaysis the 19th cent. Qaysis have been fighting Yamanis, to be followed in the 20th by Husaynis v. Nashashibis. The dangerous precariousness of PLO "unity" was a universally known fact. The ref. to East Jerusalem should go into par.5 on Jerusalem.

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the U.N. Resol..... should be implemented, taking into account changes that have occurred since 1967 in a manner that would lead
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Par. 2ii: "..... Israel, ^{the} ~~in~~ Palestinians through their recognised organisations and spokesmen" (for which group in the PLO do you mean at present?). Delete USA and USSR. All sides to the conflict are better served by not canonising the presence of the Super-powers

Par. 2 IIIa omit ref. to an ephemeral event like the Geneva conference in August. There is no place for it in a major WCC policy statement

IIIb "... with a view to furthering mutual understanding and acceptance". (Israel is a sovereign member state of the U.N.. Even ~~xxx~~ if you sympathise with the Basques, you have never spoken of the "mutual recognition" of Spain and the Basques!)

IIIc ".....remind Christians in the Western world.... that their sense of guilt regarding the fate of the Jews during World War II has often led to uncritical support of Israeli policies...". The implication of the expression "State of Israel" (instead of "certain Israeli policies") is an unacceptable political affront.

The parallellisation "one wrong by another" will inevitably be considered by the world Jewish community as an unacceptable and even explosive obscenity. It was not Israel that sent Palestinians to their death, and certainly no 6 million Palestinians were killed in gas chambers.

The plea to look for "additional partners" in the Jewish-Xian dialogue must necessarily be interpreted by the World Jewish Community as a vote of no-confidence in IJCIC. It is as if we were to tell you which churches you must co-opt to the WCC if we want to continue the dialogue! The passage should read:

"..... and the broadening of the dialogue to include ever larger segments of both the Jewish and Christian communities".

Par. 4 iid One is tempted to add at the end of the par. "and the right, security and well-being of Lebanese in those areas occupied by the PLO". My remark may sound facetious: it is meant to illustrate what we mean by the "one-sidedness" of the present DR -- after all, not Israe~~li~~s overran Damur in 1976 killing thousands of Lebanese.

Par.5 Jerusalem:

5i ".....can explore ~~xxxxx~~ ways of arriving at and implementing a mutually acceptable solution". Or does the WCC wish to commit itself formally to one particular (and very dubious!) political option on the spectrum of possible political options that have to be carefully weighed and examined?

The last line should read "Middle East conflicts" in the plural.

Par. 5 iib, after line 3

"..... the political reality created by the continuing state of war with Israel, maintained by the Arab neighbour states and other Arab states, resulting in Arab Muslims and Christians continuing to experience difficulties and disabilities in visiting....."

After all, everybody realises that the crossing of borders between states that are at war (or where one side insists that it is at war) is no straightforward simple affair.

This paragraph does not, of course, answer the question of the thundering silence of the WCC when Jews could not visit their Holy Sites in East Jerusalem, nor the grief of many Israelis because their ~~Arab fellow-citizens~~ Muslim-Arab fellow-citizens cannot make the pilgrimage to Mecca, their "crime" being that they hold an Israeli passport.

If the fact of the "state of war situation" is not clearly spelled out the text is not only unfair but a blatant lie.

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0.5. My presentation of these comments was followed by a few additional remarks from Rabbi Pearson. There was no discussion since we made it clear at the beginning that as guests we had not come to "negotiate" but to share our concerns. The meeting lasted about 20 minutes. Present at the meeting were the Chairman (Thomson) Rabbi John Taylor. Two other members of the Committee who had been invited did not show up.

Remains (7 Aug. 87) has it that and if any suggestions will be accepted at this point of time. letter. Obviously there have been suggestions also from other quarters, there will be some "back of

RJ2W

THE MIDDLE EAST - Initial Draft -

1. The increasingly dangerous situation in the Middle East threatens the whole world and places heavy demands on all those striving for justice and freedom.

The Middle East is a region of special interest as the birthplace of three monotheistic religions. The churches in the area have their roots from apostolic times. Their continued presence and active participation in the life of the whole area, despite suffering at various periods, is a remarkable witness to the faith. They are facing new challenges and attempting to respond through new forms of witness. While only the churches of the Middle East can determine the nature and forms of their witness, it behoves all churches to strengthen their presence and support their ministry, especially the ministry of reconciliation and witness for peace. Historical factors and certain theological interpretations have often hindered Christians outside in evaluating the religious and political developments in the Middle East.

2. Recent developments in the region have further pushed back prospects for peace. The agony of the Lebanese war is not yet over. The integrity and independence of Lebanon are in greater danger than ever. There are rumours of a new war. The Israeli settlement policy on the West Bank has resulted in a de-facto annexation giving final touches to a policy of separate development of peoples that flagrantly violates the basic rights of the Palestinian people. There are fears of relocation of the inhabitants on the West Bank and their expulsion. A large number of Palestinians are under detention in the prisons in the West Bank and in camps in Lebanon. There is escalation of tension in the occupied territories. / The consensus among the Arab nations appears to have been lost. External pressures have caused serious rifts within the Palestinian movement. The Iran-Iraqi war continues to claim an increasing toll of lives and complicates inter-Arab relations. Tension is increasing in relation to Cyprus. The annexation of East Jerusalem has put serious limitations on access to the Holy City, especially for Arab Muslims and Christians. There is greater involvement of the USA and the USSR in the region today.

Syn? PLO? Druze?

by whom?

by whom?

1. We reaffirm the principles previously enunciated by the WCC as the basis on which a peaceful settlement can be reached. The UN resolution 242 needs to be revised to take into account changes that have occurred since 1967 and that such alterations should express the following principles:

- no Syria, etc
- a) Withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied in 1967 as well as from Lebanon;
 - b) the right of all states, including Israel and Arab states, to live in peace with secure and recognised boundaries;
 - c) the implementation of the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state.

11. We reaffirm that the Middle East conflict cannot be resolved through the use of force but only through peaceful means. Negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East should include all those parties most intimately involved: Israel, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, neighbouring Arab states, the USSR and USA. The interests of the world at large are best represented through the United Nations.

111. Churches should undertake the following with a view to facilitating processes towards negotiations:

- a) build greater awareness among the churches about the urgency of the Palestinian issue. In this connection active support should be extended to the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine to be held at the end of August 1983 and all states be urged to participate in it;
- b) broaden and develop the dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis with a view to enabling mutual recognition;
- c) for Christians in the western world to recognise that their guilt over the fate of Jews in their countries may have influenced their views of the conflict in the Middle East. This has often led to uncritical support of the state of Israel, thereby ignoring the plight of the Palestinian people and replacing one wrong by another. In this context we welcome the open and critical stance adopted by Christian churches in the traditional Jewish-Christian dialogue and the search for additional partners in dialogue among the Jewish communities.

(1) We reiterate that the recovery of Lebanese territorial integrity and sovereignty is a key to peace and justice in the region and that for this to be realized all foreign forces must be withdrawn from Lebanese territory.

(11) We appeal to the ecumenical community:

- a) to support the efforts of the Lebanese government to reassert the effective exercise of its sovereignty over all Lebanese territory;
- b) to assist the churches within Lebanon in their attempts for reconciliation with a view to achieving harmony and unity among all communities in the country;
- c) to continue to support generously the Middle East Council of Churches and the churches in the area in their humanitarian programmes of relief;
- d) to collaborate with the churches in the area in ensuring justice and human rights inside Lebanon, including the right, security and well-being of Palestinian and other non-Lebanese under Lebanese law.

5. Jerusalem

(1) We reaffirm that "Jerusalem is a Holy City for three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The tendency to minimize Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided" (Vth Assembly, Nairobi 1975). The WCC and the MECC should implement the proposal of the WCC Central Committee (August 1980) that dialogue be initiated with Jews and Muslims so that members of the three religions can understand each other's deep religious attachment to Jerusalem and so that together they can explore means of turning their common concern into proposals for shared control of the city. The churches should give priority to this while continuing efforts to secure a general settlement of the Middle East conflict.

(11) a) We call the attention of the churches to the need for:

- actions which will ensure a continuing indigenous Christian presence and witness in Jerusalem;
- wider ecumenical awareness of the plight of the indigenous Muslim and Christian communities in East Jerusalem and other occupied territories.

4
b) We call upon all churches to express their common concern that although Israeli law guarantees free access for members of all religious traditions rooted in Jerusalem to their holy places, the political reality created by the continuing Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank means that Arab Muslims and Christians continue to experience serious difficulties in and are often prevented from visiting the Holy City.

6. We uphold the churches in the Middle East in our intercessions as they respond to the new challenges in the difficult circumstances through their witness in the service of Christ. We assure them of the solidarity of the community of faith around the world as we have gathered together here in the name of Jesus Christ - the Life of the World. We pray for the healing of the wounds in the nations of that region.

We stand together with other religious communities in a spirit of servanthood seeking to be faithful in our common calling to be peace-makers and reconcilers and to bring hope for all.

30 July 1983

please forward this copy to Marc Tannenbaum, AJC, N.Y.

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at a meeting with Chairman
of Drafting Committee, Friday S.A.
16.30

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Rumour (7 Aug. 83) has it that most of our suggestions will be accepted at least in part. I am in a better position than have been suggestions also from other quarters, & there will be some "trade-off".

RJ2W

NEWS

FROM THE

COMMITTEE



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE Institute of Human Relations, 165 E. 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022, (212) 751-4000

The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, is the pioneer human-relations agency in the United States. It protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people.

MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations

FOR RELEASE AFTER 8:00 P.M.,
SUNDAY, JULY 24, 1983

VANCOUVER, Canada, July 24...Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, today told an international gathering of Protestant and Orthodox leaders that the world's Christians and Jews must join in a "massive, concerted effort" to restore regard for the value of human life and to counter the "growing callousness to human suffering that despoils every continent on the globe."

As part of this effort, continued Rabbi Tanenbaum, the two religions must work together to help stem violence and inflammatory propaganda, halt the arms race, strengthen the economies of poor nations, and promote understanding and mutual respect among different ethnic and religious groups.

Rabbi Tanenbaum spoke before the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which is meeting here from July 24 through August 10.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is one of the two official representatives of the world Jewish community attending the WCC Assembly. He and Rabbi Jordan Pearlson of Toronto, president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, were designated as guest representatives to the Assembly by the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, a coalition body of major Jewish organizations from all parts of the world.

WCC invited the Jewish guests -- as well as representatives of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, African religions, and other religious groups -- to participate fully in the Assembly's deliberations.

Declaring that "we live in an age of violence and terror" in which the idea that each human being is precious "is being battered from every side," Rabbi Tanenbaum called the devaluation of life "one of the decisive black legacies bequeathed to mankind by Nazi Germany." To learn from the Holocaust and "not be doomed to allow

-more-

NOTE: For a copy of Rabbi Tanenbaum's address, write to Morton Yarmon, American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56th Street, New York, NY 10022.

Howard I. Friedman, President; Theodore Ellenoff, Chairman, Board of Governors; Alfred H. Moses, Chairman, National Executive Council; Robert S. Jacobs, Chairman, Board of Trustees.

Donald Feldstein, Executive Vice President

Washington Office, 2027 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • Europe hq.: 4 Rue de la Bienfaisance, 75006 Paris, France • Israel hq.: 9 Ethiopia St., Jerusalem, 95149, Israel

South America hq.: (temporary office) 165 E. 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022 • Mexico-Central America hq.: Av. Ejercito Nacional 533, Mexico 5, D.F.

CSAE 1707

its repetition," he said, Christians and Jews, together with members of other world religions, must:

"Engage in a massive, concerted effort to establish a 'new humanism' on a global basis that seeks to restore the Biblical value of the infinite worth and preciousness of each human life, which must be appreciated as an end in itself and never as an object of somebody else's program, ideology, or revolution."

"Help engender an attitude of scorn and contempt for those who use violence or advocate the use of violence; and work to deromanticize violence and terrorism."

Seek to curtail "inflammatory propaganda, especially from international forums that have psychological impact on an international scale."

Develop forms of education and communication that would help reduce the "abrasive effects" of differences among peoples.

"Engage in an urgent and sustained intellectual and educational effort to elaborate a theology and ideology of pluralism that presupposes the right of each religious, racial, and ethnic group to define itself in its own terms and to be accepted unconditionally by its own self-definition."

Aim to make the economies of all nations self-sufficient, stable, and not "in perpetual need of relief support."

Press for international control of the arms race and a "rational reordering of priorities that allows for adequate defense, yet at the same time reallocates some of the billions wasted on arms that should be applied to the crying needs of the hungry, the diseased, and the homeless."

"Raise human consciousness in an effective international effort to halt the irrational proliferation of nuclear weaponry and to bring about serious sustained actions for universal simultaneous disarmament. There is no higher priority for human survival at this moment in human history."

Assure that all nations fulfill their commitments to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; and work toward the establishment of an international penal tribunal -- as called for in the Genocide Convention -- for trying those accused of genocide attempts.

Founded in 1906, the American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. It combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews at home and abroad, and seeks improved human relations for all people everywhere.

* * * * *

'Gift of Life' Studied

Scientists cannot hold back from probing the nature of matter, living cells and the universe itself; that is the fundamental law of science, a nuclear physicist from Scotland reminded the World Council of Churches yesterday.

Yet every scientific advance brings with it new threats as well as possibilities, according to John M. Francis, British government assistant secretary responsible for social services.

Scientists, like others, are beset by doubts and fears about the future when confronted with difficult choices about the direction science is taking us, he said.

"Increasingly scientists, technologists and engineers directly concerned with some of the harder decisions are prepared to open up the debate and acknowledge both the gaps in our present understanding and the need for a wider form of democratic decision-making. They want the public to know about the consequences of the new knowledge, and these choices need to be examined in the political arena.

Such choices should be tackled at local level, he said, so that scientists, planners and politicians could be confronted with the consequences of their proposals for those who would be directly affected.

Francis challenged the churches "to become vigorously involved in this dialogue with members of the scientific community.

"They could remind the decision-makers of the spiritual dimension of their concern for the future.

"We have an immense task before us," he added, "if we are to harness the true power of science and technology to keep the world in peace, to feed the hungry and heal the sick." The task is: "How to hold the cup of life full to the brim — with steady hands."

Francis spoke on "Life a Gift of God", one of the theological themes of the Assembly.

Archbishop John Vikstrom, head of the Lutheran Church of Finland, gave a theological exposition of the sub-theme. God created the world and sustains it, he affirmed. God so loved that he created flowers, nature and human beings.

Today the world is occupied by a "foreign power that is opposed to God and wishes to destroy what God has created," the archbishop said. That, he continued, is why the good in the world can often be achieved only through a struggle with evil. In this situation, God the Creator enters the struggle by creating new life and protecting life with the message of love, justice and truth.

"An incessant struggle" goes on today between freedom and compulsion, kindness and cruelty, pleasure and strife, truth and lies, justice and injustice; constructive

and destructive. All religions know this.

When we fight for God's kingdom, we are united with "the prince of life," he said, "who frees and renews the life of occupied creation."

Rod Robinson, hereditary chief of the Northwest B.C. Nishga Indians, told the Assembly that "Life as a Gift of God" was inseparable from his tribe's struggle for recogni-

tion by the Canadian government of its title to lands. The tribe has owned, occupied and governed these lands since time immemorial, he said.

The Nishga's identity is inseparable from the land, he added. "A Nishga does not exist in fullness ... without a complete melding of his land, language, laws, tribal system and spiritual values." Belief in God has always been the "in-

tegrating force" for this wholistic existence, he said. Ever since missionaries brought the Gospel, Christianity has been the central element of the Nishga society.

The chief urged the WCC to help his tribe persuade the Canadian government to "clearly affirm aboriginal title and rights in the Canadian Constitution." This would give his people a firm basis in law on which to negotiate a just settlement of its land claims, he said.



Interfaith togetherness was demonstrated by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum of USA when he held the 6-month-old daughter of Mrs. Sithembiso Nyoni, a Zimbabwe Christian, as both waited to speak on the Assembly sub-theme: "Life, A Gift of God." Tuesday afternoon.

The Rev. Allan Boesak, South African theologian, arrived outside the Student Union building yesterday in time to hear the Irish fundamentalist, the Rev. Ian Paisley, accuse him of making a "Communist" speech to the sixth Assembly during the opening plenary Monday. Paisley and Dr. Karl McIntire brought about 50 placard-bearing pickets to attack once again the WCC.

Vaccaro To Preach

The Rev. Gabriel Vaccaro, the president of the Association Church of God from Buenos Aires, will be the mid-day preacher in the worship tent today.

The Association Church of God is only 31 years old and is an indigenous Argentine church in the Pentecostal tradition. The church also has a base in Paraguay.

As well as an emphasis on charismatic worship the church also has a number of social related projects including medical and legal advice centres.

5 Faiths Represented

For the first time in its 35-year history, the World Council of Churches invited representatives of five world religions to address its Assembly. They spoke in the plenary on "Life, A Gift of God," bringing affirmations of life from their own sacred writings.

From Islamic teachings, Shayk Yusuf Khan Shakhrov explained in Russian that life is the creation of the Almighty Allah, and is the greatest gift of God. Fourteen centuries ago the Prophet Muhammad called people to be careful of the environment, knowing that life would become impossible if the environment was polluted.

Buddhism affirms the sanctity of all life, said Masuo Nezu, a Japanese. Buddhism's goal is to free all living beings from the

miseries of life, so they may attain the "joy of peace". He quoted a brief passage from the Lotus Sutra.

Shri Shrivatsa Goswami said Hindu scriptures affirmed: "Whatever there is in creation is the Lord." God is truth, consciousness, bliss, he said. "Each of us therefore partakes in this manifestation of God."

Jews and Christians are bound together, said Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, by the affirmation of the value of every human being as a child of God, deserving nurture and respect. Bemoaning that the world does not sustain 12 million refugees, although it spends \$400 billion yearly on nuclear weapons, he pledged "the millions of Jews will join hands with you in the cause of God's human family."



Islam is on the march, says Joost de Blank, Anglican archbishop of Cape Town. And its appeal, he says, is that Christianity is the religion of the white man: "So far, South Africa has no effective answer to that propaganda. Until we treat our fellow men as brothers, whatever the color of their skin ... we have no right to speak."

The Bellingham Forum on the Sixth Assembly

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

April 1983

Dear Friend,



We are pleased to send you this first word of greeting as a participant to The Bellingham Forum on the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. On behalf of the United States Preparations Committee, we welcome you as a participant and wish to ask your assistance in the process of preparation for The Assembly and The Bellingham Forum.

We shall meet on the campus of the Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, from July 24 to July 31. You are asked to arrive on the afternoon of Saturday, July 23 with departures scheduled on the Monday morning of August 1. You will be part of an event which will focus on the theme -- "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World". Worship, Bible study, celebration and seminars on the eight Issues will receive your attention. And of course, you will, as a Full Participant, go to the Sixth Assembly in Vancouver on three separate occasions. In addition, there will be a host of friends from the Sixth Assembly who will also share in the Program of The Bellingham Forum.

A new category of participant has been established to encourage our young people in the churches to come to Bellingham and share this exceptional opportunity-- "Students". They also receive a special Fee, \$50 instead of \$110; however, documents, etc., will not be available. Junior and Senior High School and college students are invited to become involved.

With this letter we are sending you the registration forms which we ask you to fill in and return to The Forum Office in New York within 30 days. We need this information to know you better and to be able to plan for the organization of The Forum and the Assembly. Thank you for your co-operation.

There is still plenty of space available at The Bellingham Forum. However, because of limited space at the Sixth Assembly, we are not able to guarantee access to the events in Vancouver for Guests and family members. Therefore, if you wish to experience all of The Forum, full participation is necessary.

A WCC gathering is a unique event in the life of the churches, especially here on the North American continent. The Bellingham Forum is your way of being part of a widely representative gathering of God's people and a celebration of the unity we share and our commitment to the search for deeper unity. We look forward to your participation. See you in Bellingham!

Cordially yours,

Frederick R. Wilson
Moderator - US Preparations Committee

Florence Coppola
Moderator - The Bellingham Forum Planning
Committee

ISSUES

Out of the many concerns that confront us as we attempt to be obedient to our Gospel calling in the contemporary world, we have selected eight issues that have been prominent on the agenda of the World Council of Churches since the last Assembly. The list is not exhaustive nor exclusive. No one issue is separate in itself; all are inter-related. But each one represents a point of entry which leads to particular emphases in the overall work of the World Council of Churches.

1. Witnessing in a Divided World

Witness is a response to the action of the Holy Spirit, to the living God at work in concrete historical and cultural contexts. In this encounter of the living God with living human situations, the Gospel is heard afresh by the Church. In recent years this has led to new emphases on: living the Gospel among people of other faiths and ideologies; giving an account of our common hope; perceiving God's Kingdom; solidarity with the poor; the community of women and men; the confession of our common faith.

2. Taking Steps towards Unity

The modern ecumenical movement has been inspired by the conviction that visible unity is God's will for the Church. There are now more steps we can take towards this goal. The statement on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry points to one such important step. So too are the steps churches take towards unity in our daily life together — through common witness, service and solidarity, common worship and spirituality.

3. Moving towards Participation

The churches can demonstrate a way of living in true participation as we include more fully in our life and councils women and men, young and old, lay people and clergy, disabled and able. By exploring the wider social implications of participation, the churches could enable people to be more responsible and responsive in the daily struggles for a more just society.

4. Healing and Sharing Life in Community

Too many of us live broken lives — broken families, broken communities, broken nations, broken world. We have much to learn about living together as a human family, about creating a healing community, about sharing our resources with our sisters and brothers, about supporting those who struggle with their alienation and brokenness. The Church of God has a special call to be transformed and to transform. The healing needs to begin with the individual, the congregation and the family, and reach out to the community.

5. Confronting Threats to Peace and Survival

The struggle for peace and survival is crucial today. The main threat is the growth of militarism and the tensions in international relations. The survival of the world depends on many factors, among them the shaping and distorting influence of science and technology on human societies. We must recognize the challenge these developments pose for theological and ethical reflection. Our assumptions about disarmament and peace, about security and survival, need to be examined in order that we may find adequate and appropriate responses.

6. Struggling for Justice and Human Dignity

The struggle for a more just human community is going on everywhere in the world. We are committed to the cause of justice and human dignity. It is a commitment that has called for analysis and action in different manifestations of the struggle — the search for a world economic order, the concern for human rights, combating racism, striving against the oppression of women, supporting refugees, overcoming world hunger. In such struggles churches are called to work together in ecumenical solidarity with the suffering peoples of the world.

7. Learning in Community

The past decade has seen a radical probing into goals, methods and institutions of education. We have examined and experienced many different ways of learning and listening — through life in community, through formal and non-formal education, through linking the local and the global, through learning in action and through programmes equipping the whole people of God for their ministry and renewal in unity. The churches themselves are called to be learning, teaching and liberating communities.

8. Communicating with Conviction

The communication issue begins with what it is we have to share rather than how to go about sharing it. The choice of communication media, and the methods and motives for using them, follow on from that. The churches' own communication styles, structures and choices are inescapably linked to the communication order of the wider society, reflecting the divisions of rich and poor, power and dependency. We need to work out new criteria as we seek to discover how to communicate the Gospel with credibility and authority.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.

OFFICE ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115 (212) 870-2156

James Armstrong, President

Claire Randall, General Secretary

David E. Simpson
Director

June 15, 1983

Landrum Shields
Chairman

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
New York, New York 10022

Dear Marc:

Welcome back from your trip to Geneva. I still have such fond memories of the time we had to spend together in Heppenheim, West Germany. It is hard to believe that two years ago we were on a program together in my home town of Portland, Oregon.

Allen Brockway has informed me that you will be one of the few official observers at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Vancouver this summer. Although there seems to be no official way for those who are working in the area of Christian Jewish relations to get together during our time in Vancouver, I think it would be a good idea for us to plan to meet.

Sometime during the first week, July 24-30, 1983 I would like to suggest that we host a reception in Vancouver bringing together those who have common concerns about Christians and Jews. It could be done at a free time that would not compete with something on the program. Perhaps a dinner and an early evening. Bishop John Burt, Krister Stendahl, Allen Brockway, the two of us and others could be invited.

During the Bellingham Forum, information enclosed, we will be sponsoring two identical seminars on Christian Jewish Relations. They will take place on Thursday, July 28, 1983, the "NAES" day at the Forum. I would like you to be a part of our presentation if you could come to Bellingham for the day.

Can we get together early next week to discuss these and other matters yet unfinished? I will be in your office to see Inge and Jim on Tuesday, June 21st and would like to see you mid afternoon if you are available. I will call on Monday. Thanks again for your warm support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

David Simpson

NCC--009

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234579 NCC UR

NOTIFIED

6-9-83

DELIVERED BY

Judith Hoover

DATE

6/9/83

23423Z OIK CH9.6.1983

ATTN JOAN CAMPBELL

MARC TANENBAUM AND JORDAN PEARLSON (CANADA) ARE IJCIC "QUESTS".
BILL JONES HAS NAMES OF JEWISH ACCREDITED VISITORS. SO FAR NO OTHER
US INTER-FAITH VISITORS TO MY KNOWLEDGE. SUGGEST NCC CHRISTIAN-
MUSLIM TASK FORCE PROVIDE NAMES TO YOU AND JONES.

INTER-FAITH ACTIVITIES BEING COORDINATED WITH VANCOUVER INTER-
FAITH COMMITTEE MOSTLY FOR VISITOR AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMES. I PLAN
TO HAVE A MEETING OF CCJP-RELATED PEOPLE - JEWS AND CHRISTIANS-
BUT TIME AND PLACE WILL BE DETERMINED AFTER START OF ASSEMBLY

AT THE MOMENT THERE IS NO SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE REQUIRED FROM
YOUR OFFICE BUT I WILL KEEP YOU POSTED

ALLAN BROCKWAY

23423Z OIK CH

234579 NCC UR

J



Mr. Joan Campbell

P.O. BOX No. 66 • 150, ROUTE DE FERNEY • 1211 GENEVA 20 • TELEPHONE: (022) 98 94 00 • TELEX: 23 423 OIK CH • CABLE: OIKOUMENE GENEVE

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

June 1st, 1983

JBT/lw

Dear Friends,

As the Assembly draws nearer, we realize that some of you will already be receiving invitations and making appointments. Accordingly, I have prepared a draft which indicates ways in which the three layers of the Assembly, namely the official, the visitors and the public programmes interlock. From these you will observe that, even though the dialogue issue may not have such particular focus and publicity as was the case at the last Assembly in Nairobi, there will nevertheless be many places when the issue becomes visible.

You will recall that the pattern of this Assembly is to avoid major addresses and lectures so as to permit the maximum number of shorter interventions in terms of panel discussions, group work, etc.. None of the almost daily group sessions appear on the attached list but it should be noted that they may be the occasion for some of the best discussion. Nor does the attached list indicate those plenary sessions in the last three days of the Assembly when the Assembly will discuss and adopt various statements on public issues and on programme priorities for the future; needless to say those sessions may be particularly important for our dialogue concern.

We realize what a long period of time you are being asked to offer to the Assembly, but we hope that it will be time which is full of interest and stimulus for you as well as providing us with the enrichment of your various contributions and co-operation.

My colleagues join me in sending our warmest good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. John B. Taylor
Director

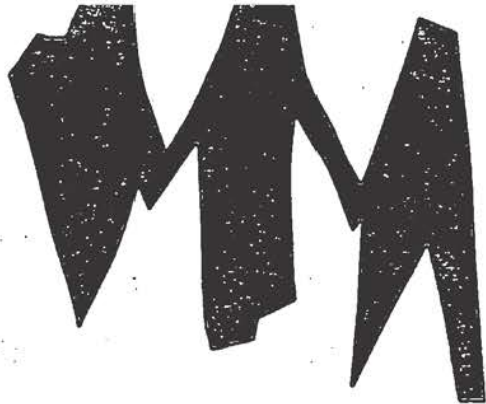
Encl.

Official Programme, Visitors and Public Programme

JULY 24	20.00	O/P/V	Interfaith Reception in Asia Centre (by invitation)
25	9.30 - 11.00	O	Official Welcome to Guests during first Business Session (Reply by Dr Gopal Singh)
	13.00	P	"Life of the World" - Jewish and Hindu perspective: Dr D. Jay*, Rabbi J. Pearlson, Anant Anand Rambachan
26	16.30 - 18.00	O	Readings by guests of other faiths during plenary presentation on sub theme I "Life the Gift of God" (Goswami/Shakirov/Buddhis and Tanenbaum)
27	11.00 - 12.30	V	Christian-Muslim dialogue: Dr D. Jay*, Dr Inamullah Khan, Shaykh Kattan+, Dr D.C. Mulder
28	14.30	P	"Life in Community" - Muslim and native Canadian perspective: Prof. M. Talbi, Mr A. Solomon, Dr D. Eck*
28	20.00 - 21.30	O	Hearing on WCC Programmes - DFI programme discussed under Unit I
28	12.15 - 13.15	P	Miss P. Webb - downtown presentation on interfaith
29	11.00 - 12.30	V	Christian-Hindu-Buddhist dialogue: Dr D. Jay*, Shrivatsa Goswami, Sri Lankan, Hindu woman, Rissho-kosei-kai, ?Samartha
31		O/P/V	Festival of Cultures
AUGUST			
1-5		O	See especially Issue Group I "Witnessing in a Divided World" although Guests of other faiths will contribute to other Issue Groups as well
1	11.00 - 12.30	V	Christian-Jewish dialogue: Dr D. Jay*, Mrs J. Gerber+, Vancouver rabbi, Dr C. Schoneveld, Christian woman
1	20.00 - 21.00	P	"Witnessing in a Divided World" - Buddhist and Sikh perspectives: Dr C. Schoneveld*, Dr G. Singh, Dr S. Sivaraksa
2	14.30 - 16.00	V	The Work of the WCC - presentation by DFI: Dr D. Mulder* and DFI staff
2	20.00 - 21.30	P	Three religions on P and J: Dr V. Goldbloom, Shaykh Shakirov & Dr Inamullah Khan, Canon Lloyd Casson, local interfaith * member
4	9.30 - 11.00	O	Plenary on Peace and Justice - proposed response from floor by Dr Inamullah Khan
4	14.30 - 16.00	V	Traditional religions: Dr D. Jay*, Mr A. Solomon, Miss G. George, Prof. N.K. Dzobo+, Hawaian
6-10		O	Dialogue issues may be raised in reports of any Issue Groups, Programme Guidelines committee, Message committee, etc.
8	13.00 - 14.15	P	Interfaith panel: Dr Stanley Samartha*

O = Official programme
V = Visitors' programme
P = Public programme

* = overall Moderator
+ = other faith Moderator



CURRENT 4

DIALOGUE

(Continuing CCJP Newsletter)

WINTER, 1982-83

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- Observations

ON THE ROLE OF GUESTS OF LIVING FAITHS AT VANCOUVER

Among the official "guests" at the Assembly will be fifteen who are Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim or Sikh or who come from traditional cultures. In addition, about twice that number will be present as "accredited visitors". These numbers represent a significant increase over the five such guests invited to the Nairobi Assembly in 1975.

At the Nairobi Assembly in 1975 guests were primarily involved in the work of Section III "Seeking Community: The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies", where it is commonly acknowledged that they were of great assistance in developing the report adopted by the Assembly. But the specific role of guests at Vancouver is by no means so clear-cut and obvious; no sub-theme or issue has been chosen that so explicitly concerns inter-religious relations as did Nairobi's Section III. The question therefore arises as to the purpose of inviting guests of living faiths other than Christianity; and, once invited, of their specific role during the Assembly.

At a recently concluded WCC consultation of third-world theologians, Christopher Doraisingh from India noted that "Asia's religiously plural context demands that our understanding of the Assembly theme take into account the search for life in other faiths and ideologies. And that, in turn, means living and struggling with people for fullness of life, which is denied by the deprivations of Asian people (*Network Letter*, CCPD, October 1982, p. 17).

Pluralism of religious, cultural and ethnic character is not, of course, limited to Asia. It is firmly entrenched in virtually every part of the world. So much so that it may properly be understood as the very definition of the human world of which the Assembly theme "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World", speaks. Christians and the church live among and are a part of this sometimes perplexing diversity of peoples.

At Vancouver, delegates and others will give ample evidence of the world's cultural and ethnic pluralism - but only by the presence of especially invited guests will those at the Assembly have opportunity to encounter representatives of those faiths which, taken together, have vastly more adherents than does Christianity. It would be inconceivable for the Assembly to consider "the Life of the World" in their absence. In sum, the presence of guests of living faiths is demanded by the theme itself.

Much progress has been made in the understanding of interreligious dialogue since the sometimes heated debate at Nairobi over the question of "syncretism". In 1979 the Kingston Central Committee adopted the statement "Guidelines on Dialogue", which has become an authoritative text on the need for and value of dialogue in the life of the churches. In 1982, the Executive Committee received and commended to the churches for study the document prepared by the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People entitled "Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue", which is a specific application of the Kingston "Guidelines".

Further, numerous dialogical conferences have been held between the World Council of Churches and those of the various faiths and ideologies. Moreover, people of other faiths have been prominent as speakers and resource personnel at World Council meetings such as the MIT Church and Society conference. The fact has clearly emerged that people of other faiths are no more interested in the encouragement of syncretism than are Christians.

In order for the Assembly to receive maximum benefit from its guests, they will need to be visible from the very beginning, not as mere onlookers, but as participants in plenary sessions, issue groups, clusters and every other type of activity. Visibility does not mean, of course, that they will be "seen and not heard". On the contrary, delegates need to hear their testimonies as to the search for life in religious traditions that may differ markedly from their own, thereby coming to a better understanding of the world in which the church must live.

In order that they may be acquainted with the World Council of Churches and the role of the Assembly in the ecumenical movement, and for a select group of delegates to come to know them, guests and accredited visitors from the living faiths are invited to a pre-Assembly meeting in Mauritius, 25th January - 3rd February, 1983, organized by the sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies. During these days the Vancouver guests will discuss with the Christians present and each other their own understandings of "The Meaning of Life", under the rubrics: "The Dignity of Life", "Life and Death", "Quality of Life", and "Life in Community".

In addition, full discussion will be held on the detailed ways in which guests and visitors will have opportunity to participate in the plenaries, groups, clusters, etc. and the visitors' programme. The result should be that they arrive in Vancouver already involved in the Assembly and prepared both to make their contributions and to benefit from encounter with the countless Christians they will meet.

- Allan R. Brockway

ECUMENICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

To many, who are familiar with the years-long process through which the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People struggled to develop "Guidelines", the title of the document that begins on the opposite page will seem strange. To many, however, familiar with the ways of ecumenical politics, the title change will be understandable. The fundamental question is the authority of the document within the World Council of Churches.

As the "historical note" indicates, this text was "received and commended to the churches for study and action" by the Executive Committee of the WCC. While that language does not mean that every "and", "the", and comma has been voted upon and approved, it does mean that the Executive is convinced the "Ecumenical Considerations" should be read, studied, and taken very seriously by the churches and their members.

And so it is now being received, by both Christian and Jewish participants in the dialogue. Already the text has appeared in several journals (e.g., SIDIC, Vol. XV, No. 3, 1982 in both English and French). In addition to English, the text is available in limited quantities in German and in French from the DFI office.

GENEVA N TD0 288

URGENTLY REQUEST IMMEDIATE SUBMISSION OF YOUR MISSING WCC ASSEMBLY
MANUSCRIPT AND/OR BIOGRAPHICAL DATA. PLEASE RESPECT SPEECH TIME
LIMITS AND SEND AT ONCE FOR PRE_ASSEMBLY TRANSLATIONS.

VAN DER BENT

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RABBI MARC TANENBAUM
AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
165 EAST 56TH STREET
NEW YORK (10022)



URGENTLY REQUEST IMMEDIATE SUBMISSION OF YOUR MISSING WCC ASSEMBLY
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VANDERBENT

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

GENERAL SECRETARIAT
Sixth Assembly Office

To Member Churches

Associate Councils

Vancouver Assembly participants

Christian peace and justice groups

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Geneva, June 10, 1983

Dear friends,

One of the most important questions, to which we will give considerable attention, at the Sixth Assembly of the WCC is the concern for peace and justice in the world.

It will be the focus of discussion in several groups and committees of the Assembly, as well as in plenary sessions. But I want to bring to your attention particularly the Witness for Peace and Justice on the 5th and 6th August. On Friday evening, the 5th, we shall gather as an Assembly, together with other concerned persons from the Vancouver community, in a public symbolic act. Following this public witness, there will be a procession to the tent of worship at the Assembly where there will be a service of worship, followed by an all night vigil. This will be followed by the celebration of the Eucharist according to the liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church on the morning of 6th August, the Feast of the Transfiguration and the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima.

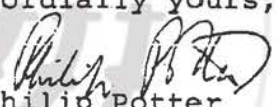
We anticipate that many churches and groups around the world will want to plan their own observances and celebrations to express their own concern for peace and justice as the Assembly will do. This shared ecumenical witness around the

world can be a powerful testimony to our common commitment to work for peace and justice in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ - the Life of the World.

I hope that you may wish to join your prayers and action with ours on 5th and 6th August. The public witness will start at 8 o'clock in the evening, Pacific Summer Time (-7 hours GMT). Enclosed you will find a short responsive reading that we will use that evening. We would be pleased to hear of your plans as well as reports of observances.

I do not need to remind you how critical is the struggle for peace and justice today, in view of the continuing and increasing threats to peace and the injustices and sufferings of our world. I hope this can be an opportunity for Christians and all persons of good will to join in solidarity, to choose life that we and our children may live.

Cordially yours,



Philip Potter
General Secretary

Enclosure

WCC Vancouver Assembly, August 5/6, 1983
Public Event on Peace and Justice

Responsive reading

A woman: Sisters and brothers who are here tonight
let us dedicate ourselves anew
to live in such a way
that justice may roll like waters
that peace may become real
that the dignity of all persons may be manifest.
Let us make a covenant with one another
and seek to make a new beginning.
Let us declare solemnly that we are
at peace with all people of good will.

Response: WE SEEK PEACE WITH ALL PEOPLE.

A man: We affirm that our security
rests not in armaments
we seek a just economic order
in which everyone has access to the abundance of the earth
we seek justice in human relationships
nourished in the solidarity of the human family.

Response: WE AFFIRM JUSTICE FOR ALL PEOPLE

A woman: We choose struggle rather than indifference.
We choose to be friends of the earth and of
one another, not exploiters.
We choose to be citizens rather than subjects.
We choose to be peacemakers rather than peacekeepers.

Response: WE CHOOSE LIFE FOR ALL CREATION

A man: We join with sisters and brothers the world over
we join in communities of resistance
to the threat of hunger and injustice
to the threat of nuclear destruction.

Response: WE UNITE TO RESIST THE POWERS OF DEATH

A woman: Before us today are set life and death.

Response: WE CHOOSE LIFE THAT WE AND OUR CHILDREN MAY LIVE

Brief Silence

A woman: Let us exchange a sign of peace here and now,
a symbol of the greater peace
yet to be achieved.
Carry the peace wherever you go
Let love shine through whatever you do
now and always.



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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

GENERAL SECRETARIAT
Sixth Assembly Office

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
Sixth Assembly, Vancouver B.C. - Canada
24 July - 10 August, 1983

Information Bulletin No. 5

June 1983

To all Assembly participants :

Please read this important information carefully and bring it with you to Vancouver.

Visas :

If you need a visa to enter Canada, you must obtain it from the nearest Canadian Consulate before leaving for Vancouver. In case of any difficulty, please contact:

The Rev Donald Anderson
Canadian Council of Churches

until 15 July 40 St Clair Ave. East
Toronto, Ont. Canada M4T 1M9

telephone (416) 921-4152
cables canoikos toronto
telex 04-065-24128 marturia tor

after 15 July Assembly Office, Vancouver
telephone (604) 228-6916
cables oikoumene vancouver
telex 04-508417 oikoumene vcr.

If your travel plans call for you to go via the USA before or after the Assembly, even if only in transit, you will also require a US visa. You must obtain this at the nearest US consulate before leaving for the USA. If you are going to the USA both before and after (or during) the Assembly, you should ask for a "multiple entry" visa.

Travel :

Enclosed is a reply form on which we ask you to indicate your travel plans. Please return it as soon as your plans are made.

Before 30 June, please send it to GENEVA
after 1 July, please send it to VANCOUVER

at the addresses on the form. If your travel plans change at the last minute, please cable, telex or phone the WCC in Vancouver (see below).

Electricity :

Please note that electrical current in Canada and the USA is 110 V. Those coming from 220 V areas will need a converter and adapter plug for electric shavers, hair dryers etc.

Currency :

Most banks in Vancouver do not change foreign currency, except US dollars. Therefore, all currency to be brought with you should be in either Canadian or US dollars (cash or Travellers cheques) or British Pounds Sterling. Some other currencies can be exchanged on arrival at Vancouver airport but not at any bank near the Assembly. Banks do not accept personal cheques. The WCC will accept other hard currencies in payment of board and lodging on arrival, but will not be able to provide other currency exchange during the Assembly and cannot cash personal cheques.

Arrival in Canada :

At your first point of entry, whether Vancouver or another location, you will have to pass through Canadian Customs and Immigration. Be sure to have accessible (not in your luggage) your passport, Accreditation Certificate, and the guarantee letter from the Canadian Council of Churches.

Arrival in Vancouver :

The enclosed labels should be attached to your luggage to facilitate identification at the airport. The large ones are for your luggage, the smaller one should be worn. Please go to the WCC Welcome Desk on Level 1 and present your Accreditation Certificate. You will then be directed to your bus, your host or other transportation.

If you come to Vancouver by other means, please come to the WCC Registration Centre in the GAGE Towers, University of British Columbia (U.B.C.).

Accreditation Certificate :

This form certifies that you have been officially accredited by the Assembly Office in Geneva. If it is not enclosed, it will be sent to you later. It should be presented at the Vancouver airport to facilitate your transfer to host or residence. It must be presented to the WCC Registration counter at the U.B.C. before you can be registered or receive your room. Without this form, you will be considerably delayed in the registration process at the Assembly.

In order to facilitate your registration please bring with you a passport, driver's licence or other personal identification with photograph.

Registration :

Assembly participants will register as follows at the U.B.C.:

Stewards : Check-in at the VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY on 17 July, and then complete registration at the GAGE Registration Centre.

Other participants in the Pre-Assembly Youth Event register at the GAGE Registration Centre on 17 July.

Participants in the Pre-Assembly Women's Meeting register at the TOTEM PARK Registration Centre on 20 July.

Other participants living at TOTEM PARK register there 20-24 July (inclusive).

All other participants register at the GAGE Registration Centre (starting 20 July).

Press : check-in at the Press Centre, upstairs in the Student Union Building. (starting 22 July)

Accredited Visitors (not staying on campus) check in at the Visitors' Centre, Student Union Building (starting 22 July). Use the special entrance.

Finances :

If your board and lodging have not been paid, this will have to be done in Vancouver before your registration can be completed. Please make financial arrangements with your church or organization so that this will not delay you on arrival. Personal cheques or credit cards will not be accepted.

Headphones :

At the time of registration, all participants, except Accredited Visitors and Press, will be issued a set of interpretation headphones/receivers. These are to be kept for the duration of the Assembly and returned at the close. If any set is not returned, your Church or Organization will be billed for the loss (US \$140).

Cancellations :

If for any reason you have to cancel your participation in the Assembly, please inform the WCC (and your Church or organization) immediately by cable or telex. After 1 July, please use the Vancouver address (see below). If you are to be replaced your Church or organization must inform the WCC officially of your replacement in order for that person to be accredited and registered without difficulty.

Programme :

The Assembly will begin with Opening Worship on Sunday, 24 July, at 9.30 in the Worship Tent on the U.B.C. campus. The last event of the Assembly programme will be the closing worship which is due to conclude at 18.00 hours (6 p.m.) on Wednesday, 10 August. The newly elected Central Committee will meet on 11 and 12 August.

Accommodation :

Rooms have been reserved as specified on the Accreditation Certificate.

All campus rooms must be vacated on 11 August, except for newly elected Central Committee members who may stay until 13 August. Special arrangements will be made for those for whom airline schedules prevent their leaving on these dates.

The WCC cannot guarantee accommodation for participants who arrive earlier than the date confirmed on the Accreditation Certificate.

Persons who arrive earlier than these dates and/or wish to stay longer are expected to stay with a family as arranged with the Vancouver Hostprogramme or to have made private arrangements prior to their arrival in Vancouver.

Publications :

You will have received a number of Assembly publications. Be sure to bring with you the Issues, the Nairobi to Vancouver Report and the Assembly Workbook. Additional copies will be available for sale in Vancouver.

Insurance :

All official Assembly participants, except for Observers, Accredited Visitors and Press, will be covered by the WCC insurance for medical costs due to health emergencies or accidents, including third party liability. The same insurance can be provided for others at their own expense. (Please contact the WCC Finance Office).

Parking :

Participants living on campus may park at the GAGE and TOTEM PARK residences. Several U.B.C. parking lots are available for persons living off-campus. For the time of registration, parking will be allowed around the GAGE Towers.

Weather :

It is expected that the climate will be warm: the average maximum temperature at this time of the year in Vancouver is 23° C (74° F), though evenings will be cooler. Sun is promised, but it might be wise to have a raincoat or umbrella!

Recreational facilities :

Various facilities will be available to participants for swimming, tennis and squash.

Children :

Daycare will be provided during the Pre-Assembly Women's meeting and during the Assembly itself. There will also be a children's programme/day camp during the Assembly. For further information, please write to

The Well
Vancouver Planning Committee
6050 Chancelloe Blvd, room 185
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1X3

Address :

The official address for the Assembly will be:

World Council of Churches
2075 Westbrook Mall
University of British Columbia
Vancouver B.C., Canada V6T 1W5

Telephone: (604) 228 6916

This is the central number for incoming calls for the Assembly and participants. Messages will be taken, as it is unlikely that participants can be found when calls are received. Vancouver summer time is -7 hours GMT.

Cables: oikoumene vancouver

Telex: 04-508417 oikoumene vcr

Participants living in the GAGE Towers may have private telephones installed in their rooms on request for a fee of Can\$ 60 for the duration of the Assembly.

WELCOME TO VANCOUVER!

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER

W.C.C. Assembly Registration

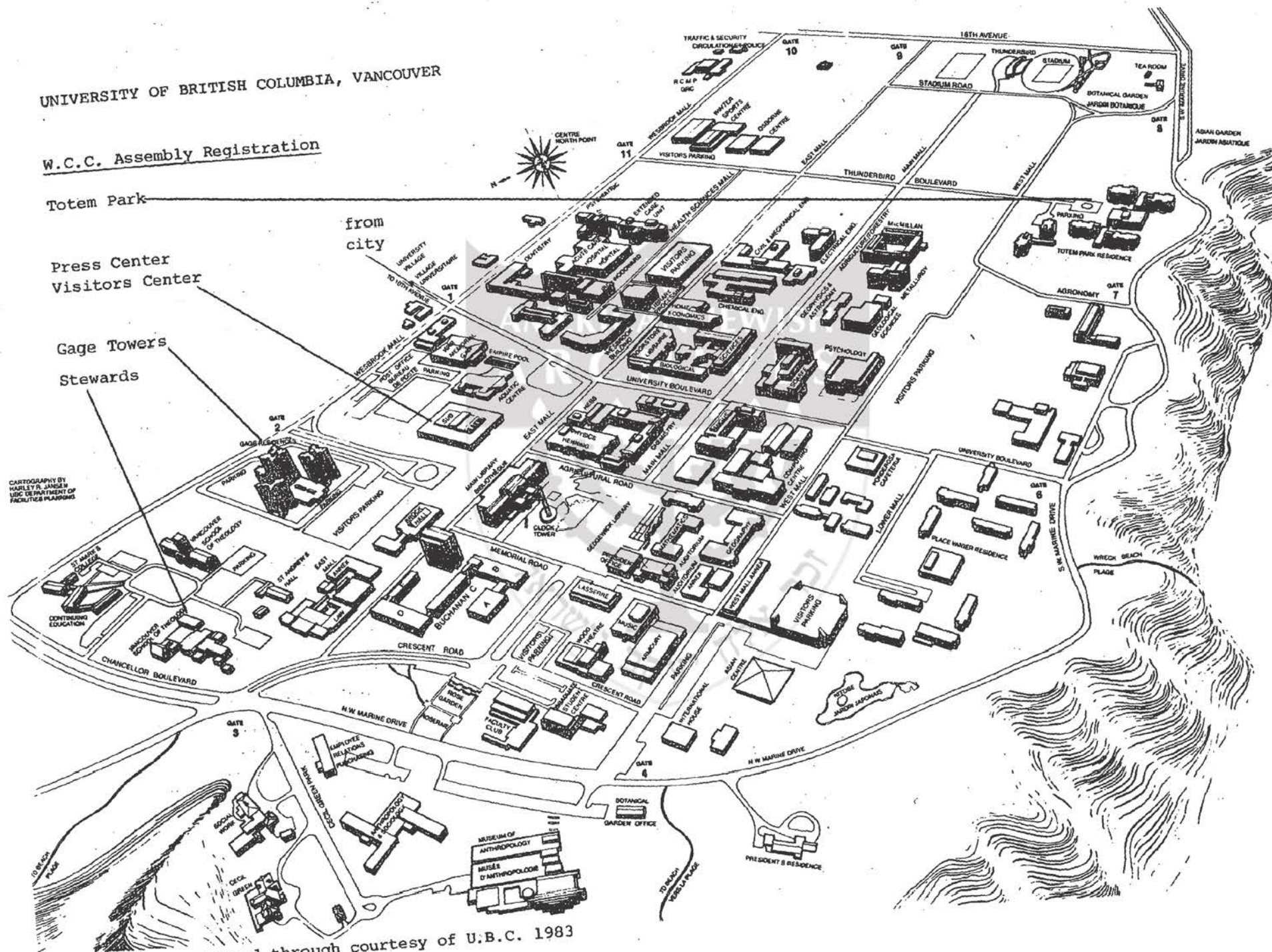
Totem Park

Press Center
Visitors Center

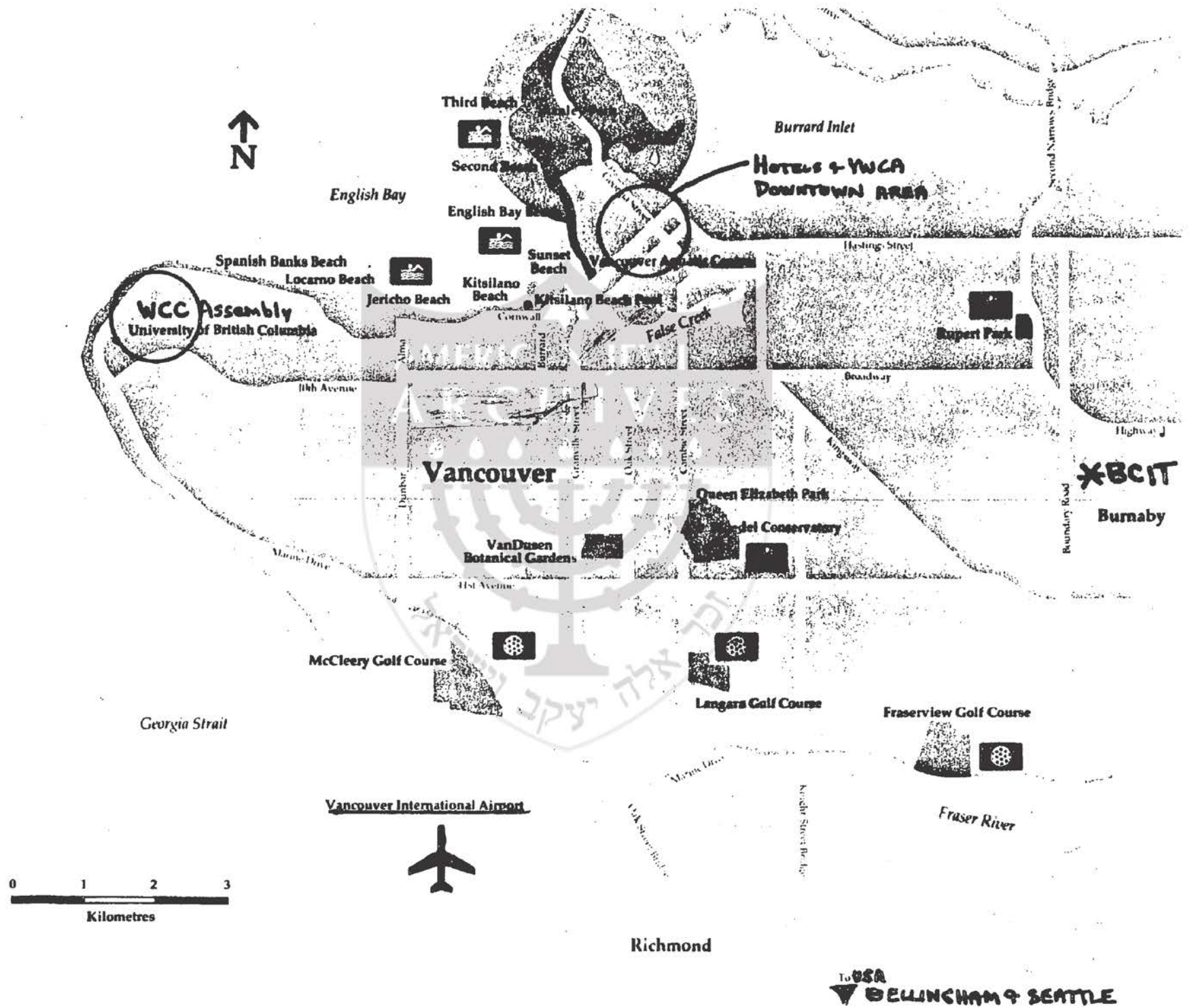
Gage Towers
Stewards

from
city

from airport



... prepared through courtesy of U.B.C. 1983





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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

GENERAL SECRETARIAT
Sixth Assembly Office

10 June 1983

To all Assembly participants

Dear friends,

The time for our assembling in Vancouver is drawing close. I take this opportunity to send you a further word of greeting as we prepare for this significant event.

We shall be meeting in the multi-cultural city of Vancouver - a city that looks east and north towards the reaches of our host country, south towards a powerful neighbour and the struggles of the southern part of the hemisphere, and west towards the other peoples of the Pacific basin. We shall be meeting at a time when the message of faith and hope embodied in our theme is needed even more by a suffering world.

I look forward to welcoming you to the Assembly and to the joyous celebration and the hard work that await us.

Please read carefully the enclosed practical information which is of vital importance as you make your own preparations, and bring these papers with you to Vancouver.

Cordially yours,

Philip Potter
General Secretary

Encs..

M. Tanenbaum - for 6/22 mtg.

DR. D. FELDSTEIN

JUN 16 1983

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date June 16, 1983

to Donald Feldstein

from Milton Himmelfarb

subject Delegation of the American Jewish community

1. In the most extreme varieties of antisemitism Jews, individually and collectively, are seen as undesirable and dangerous, to be suppressed or expelled--or worse. For the Christian variety, Jewish religion depraves the Jews. (Irreligion makes them even worse.) For the more modern, racist variety of antisemitism, a radically defective racial-genetic constitution makes the Jews at once inferior and menacing. Both the Christian and the racist varieties agree with pagan antiquity that the Jews are the enemies of the human race.

Generally, this is not the antisemitism that Jews have known in the United States. Much, perhaps most, of American antisemitism has been like non-racist stereotypes about black people. Black people were seen as disproportionately shiftless, impulsive, unchaste, violent. The cause was thought to be not sermons in black churches or editorials in black newspapers, but black culture, "the culture of poverty." As the circumstances of black people changed for the better, so would their behavior change for the better.

Similarly with the Jews. Jews were thought to be typically dishonest, grasping, pushy, loud, vulgar, clannish. The cause was their unfortunate history, which had had a bad effect on them. Besides, most of them were new in America. As time passed and the Jews became more Americanized, their character and manners would no doubt improve. In the meanwhile it was necessary to protect real Americans, especially American ladies and gentlemen, by keeping Jews out of neighborhoods, clubs, and hotels and limiting their numbers in universities, professions, and firms or corporations.

Memorandum

This is not what most threatens us today--which does not mean that it is dead and safely buried.

2. The danger that American Jews face today is more like that represented by the anti-Jewish outlook and pronouncements of Charles A. Lindbergh, America's most admired hero, in the period just before America went to war in 1941. Lindbergh did not say, and may not even have thought, that most Jews had undesirable qualities. He did not think or say that rabbis preached sharp practice or that Jewish newspapers advocated vulgarity. What he did think and say was that Jews, not individually but as a self-conscious, organized group, were selfishly trying to get America to do things in the Jewish interest that were against the American interest. The Jewish interest was to get America into the war to defeat Nazi Germany, while the American interest was to stay out of the war. In Lindbergh's logic, most Jews as individuals might be admirable human beings. That did not matter. What mattered was that by promoting their group interest the Jews were bad citizens, American enemies of America. Lindbergh, or anyone else like him, could see himself not as an antisemite but merely as a good American vigilant in the defense of America.

Rightly, American Jews were more afraid of Lindbergh than of the prejudice and discrimination they were used to.

3. The resemblance to the present is obvious. If America's global interests require a more favorable policy toward the Arabs and a less favorable policy toward Israel, then American Jews, as an organized and purposeful entity standing in the way of effecting such a change, are selfishly and disloyally acting against America's true interests. If American interests require more detente and trade with the Soviet Union, then the Jewish community's anti-Soviet campaign, for the purpose of getting the Soviet Union to let its Jewish citizens go, is an unpatriotic and selfish elevation of narrow interests above America's broad interests.

Not all the people who think and say such things are anti-semitic. They may have Jewish friends and may even be respectful of Judaism. They are nevertheless hostile to vital Jewish interests. They face the temptation, to which some will inevitably


yield, to paint us as disloyal or to intimidate us by telling us they are worried others will see us as disloyal.

4. Now we are also faced with something new. Lindbergh and his supporters were essentially people of the right, nationalist and isolationist. There are fewer such people today than there were then. Today opposition to us on the right comes primarily from industries or corporations eager to do business with the Arabs or the Soviet Union, and from their allies in government. Strikingly, the organ that might be expected to represent them, the Wall Street Journal, so far from voicing such views, actually is pro-Israel-- and pro-Jewish.

It is from the left of center that most of the opposition to our interest in Israel comes, and perhaps also to our interest in Soviet Jewry. From the left the accusation is not so much that we are disloyal to America, for one need not proceed very far left to find a suspicion that America, at least as it is, does not deserve much loyalty. Rather, the accusation from the left is that the American Jewish community is disloyal to nobler causes: peace, whether in the Middle East or with the Soviet Union; the human rights of Palestinians, Arabs, and Third World peoples generally; the struggle against racism, imperialism, and apartheid.

Much has been said about the delegitimation of Israel in the world. This has essentially been accomplished by the left. Now the American Jewish community may be facing delegitimation, by the American left. And not only the secular but also the ecclesiastical left: NCC, for example, and Catholic liberation theologians. The national press--Washington Post, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Newsweek, Time--is liberal, unfriendly to Israel, and annoyed with us for supporting Israel.

This threat of delegitimation, from both the left and the business right, is our great danger today.





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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

ARB/JMS

Dr Gerhart Riegner,
World Jewish Congress,
1-3 rue Varembe,
Geneva.

23rd June 1983.

Dear Gerhart,

Enclosed are two copies of the form to be completed by accredited visitors to the WCC Assembly. I should be grateful if you would forward them to Israel to be completed by one or more Israelis and returned to the Assembly Office of the WCC in Geneva.

I hope that the agreement which we made concerning consultation at critical points in the Assembly will be acceptable to everybody concerned. I myself intend to keep a very close watch in order to ensure that consultation does indeed take place.

Cordially,

Allan R. Brockway





7/24-25-83

150, ROUTE DE FERNEY P.O. BOX No. 66 1211 GENEVA 20 • TELEPHONE: (022) 98 94 00 • TELEX: 23 423 OIK CH • CABLE: OIKOUMENE GENEVA

Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
New York, NY 10022
USA

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Commission on Faith and Order

WHL/rs
March 21, 1983

Dear Rabbi Tannenbaum,

During the first week of the WCC Assembly, plenary sessions will be held on each of the sub-themes chosen to explicate the main theme. The first of these will be on "Life, a Gift of God", on 26 July 1983. An important part of that session will be a 15-minute presentation on affirmations of life from religious perspectives other than Christianity.

It is my honour and pleasure to invite you to prepare and present to the Assembly a brief (2-3 minute) statement of the Jewish understanding of life, either from sacred texts or another source, during that plenary session. Enclosed you will find (a) an outline agenda for the plenary programme on sub-theme I, as well as (b) the introduction to my Lord of Life in which is sketched the interrelation of the projected sessions on the Assembly theme, sub-themes and WCC programme issues.

My colleagues and I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have about this request. For now, however, may we have your agreement to assist the Assembly in this way? I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

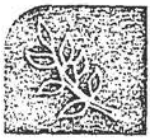
William H. Lazareth
William H. Lazareth

P.S. Please send text
for translations
by 1 June.

Enc.

c.c.: Philip Potter
Konrad Raiser
Gwen Cashmore
ans v.d. Bent
Allan Brockway

P.S. Please plan to attend two important sessions on "Theme/sub-theme Plenary Rehearsals" on the evenings of July 24 and 25 at a time and place to be announced. Thank you.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.

COMMISSION ON REGIONAL AND LOCAL ECUMENISM

475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115-0050 Room 870 (212) 870-2157

James Armstrong, President

Claire Randall, General Secretary

Joan B. Campbell
executive director

Joseph Moore Stemley, Jr.
associate executive director

Ellis H. Casson
chairperson

David E. Simpson
director
Office of Christian-Jewish Relations

Donald G. Jacobs
director
Partners in Ecumenism

13 July 1983

TO: U. S. Delegates, Accredited Visitors and other
Participants in the 6th Assembly of the WCC

FROM: Joan Campbell, for U.S. Preparations Committee

RE: Visitation Reports

The days and nights of preparation are nearly over!
As you prepare yourselves spiritually and physically to go to Vancouver
we'd like to share an important document with you.

As you are no doubt aware, the Visitation process
leading up to the 6th Assembly was an essential component in "assembling"
the Assembly. The result of this process will be felt throughout the
entire 6th Assembly. We had 3 team visits to the United States and we felt
you should have the report of these visits before you as you prepare for
Vancouver.

The team visits in the U.S. were part of the work of
the U.S. Preparations Committee, chaired by Fred Wilson, UPUSA, and were
organized by the Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism. They were
focused in local communities and congregations and were planned by local
and regional councils of churches. The Governing Board of the National
Council of Churches showed their appreciation for this effort in a
resolution passed at the November 1982 Governing Board meeting (attached).
There is no doubt that the Visitation process will be looked at by the WCC
as a "way of work" and surely as a means of "communicating with conviction"
in the future.

The reports of all 3 Visitation Teams are enclosed for
your prayerful reading and reflection. We recognize that it is never easy
to see ourselves as others see us and it is always tempting to argue with
the perception of "the visitor" but the insights of our fellow Christians
call us to be thoughtful about our situation.

Peace and Power -

Joan Campbell

JBC:ep

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE USA

475 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10115

RESOLUTION ON A MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION FOR
VISITATION TEAMS OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
Adopted by the Governing Board
November 5, 1982

WHEREAS,

- An international and ecumenical visitation team sponsored by the World Council of Churches has recently visited the South East, the South Central, and the Upper Mid-Western parts of the United States, deeply enriching the lives and work of Christians in this country;
- Their presence has made a significant witness for seeing ecumenism in a global context and inextricably linked at all levels in interpretation, support, and commitment to Christian unity and mission;
- The facilitation of their visit could not have happened without the full cooperation and interdependency of world, national, regional, and local ecumenical agencies;
- The extensive network of the Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism related agencies and staff throughout the country provided a natural means of organization for this purpose; and
- Their visits in our country have enabled unique opportunities for education for ecumenism -- with significant spin-off value for the National Council of Churches -- among persons in our local communities;

THEREFORE,

the Governing Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA expresses its appreciation to:

- The World Council of Churches for promoting these international visitations as part of "the Assembly assembling";
- The General Secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in

the USA for joining in partnership with the World Council of Churches to enable this in-depth preparation for the 6th Assembly and the process of modeling an interconnected ecumenical system;

- The Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism for the gift of the time and creative energy of its Assistant General Secretary, Joan Campbell, in planning and carrying out the visitation process, and to CORLE for maintaining the network of local and regional ecumenical units;
- Local and regional ecumenical agencies and staff for their willingness to model the fabric of ecumenism by joining in partnership with the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches towards becoming a global force for the unity of the Church and the unity of humankind;
- The denominations whose generous funding made these itinerations possible and whose personnel traveled with the teams;
- The twelve members of the World Council of Churches October visitation program in the United States for their commitment, for their seriousness of purpose, and for the deeper understanding they brought to the United States of the World Council of Churches's theme "Jesus Christ, the Life of the World; and

the Governing Board directs that:

- this message be communicated to all the persons included in these appreciations; and that
- attention be drawn to the forthcoming visits of two more World Council of Churches visitation teams (the West Coast in January and the Eastern Seaboard and selected Midwest sites in March), urging Governing Board members to be alert to the enriching presence of these Christians in

their local areas.

POLICY BASE: Article II of the Constitution of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; Purpose: "9. Nurture ecumenical life through relations with.....local, regional, national and world ecumenical bodies....."



WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

VANCOUVER 1983

October 1982



Letter from the WCC Teams which visited Churches and Groups in the Southeast, Southwest and Midwest Regions of the USA, October 8-26, 1982

Dear Friends,

We, the members of the ecumenical teams which visited the Southeast, the Southwest and the Midwest areas of the USA came as part of a network of WCC visits taking place around the world. Women, youth and men, laity and clergy ... we came from twelve different countries and about as many different churches, to talk with you, to discuss the concerns of the WCC, especially in view of the Vancouver Assembly, and to be sensitive to the issues which are of great importance in your country at the moment.

You welcomed us with tremendous warmth and generous hospitality, and we were grateful for the many conversations and the opportunity to learn about the work of your churches and their ecumenical concerns. We want to thank you most sincerely for your kindness and your patience. The whole experience has been for us personally very moving and very enriching. We shall none of us be the same again.

We came to you bearing the message of Vancouver that Jesus Christ is the Life of the World. One of the Bible studies suggested for use in preparing for that Assembly is centred around the theme of Jesus Christ - the Bread of Life. In the passage suggested from Mark 8 we read, "His disciples asked him, 'Where in this desert can any find enough food to feed these people?'" - and then a little later on, "Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks to God, broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute them to the crowd ..." Every-body ate and had enough!

The Gospel of John sees the meaning of the feeding of the multitudes in Jesus' words, "I am the Bread of Life". The Eucharistic overtones are clear. It is in the Eucharist that we share in the life of Christ given for others. We share our lives with one another and with the world.

In his book on the Assembly theme entitled, The Feast of Life, John Poulton comments that we should only receive the Eucharist if we are truly working for unity and if we are truly trying to feed the hungry. He also points out that if we share the broken bread we should be ready to go out and have our lives broken for Christ's sake.

In our journeys through the USA we have rejoiced to note the extent and effectiveness of ecumenical activity and to find Christian groups striving hard to reach a greater unity. We are encouraged by the use being made of the WCC study document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. We have been pleased to note the active cooperation of the Roman Catholics in these discussions and in the work of the local and regional ecumenical groups.

We have been impressed by the ways in which many churches seek to obey the will of Christ as expressed in the Parable of the Last Judgement (Matthew 25, vs. 31-46): ecumenical agencies to feed the hungry through food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens, maternity and child care clinics run by churches and funded by government for poor migrant worker families. We noted the attempt to provide clothing and we admired the work of the Housing Associations to improve or provide housing. We listened with humility to the accounts of difficult and painstaking work amongst immigrants and minority groups and we were impressed by the chaplaincy programme in prisons and by the church/government sponsored half-way houses for released prisoners.

We wondered, however, whether the churches should not do more to go beyond treating symptoms and attack the root causes of all this distress. One of our group commented that "the cooperation of the churches in serving the community is too often at the 'aspirin level'". It seemed to us that your congregations have a tremendous opportunity to work for more just social policies and more adequate welfare provisions. We put to you the question, "Do your churches, like so many of our own, choose not to challenge the social structures because their affluence and investment in property and buildings makes them all so much a part of the system?"

We are aware of the effort of the American churches to advocate a responsible social policy at the national level. We appreciate the work of the Washington Interreligious Staff Task Force, their expertise on crucial issues and their effective representation of Christian concerns to the Federal Government. However, we have questions about the conception of ecumenical witness underlying the work, including the apparent position of the National Council of Churches as though it was simply one among many agencies. While recognizing the complexity of the U.S. political system, we who come from countries deeply affected by U.S. policies urge the churches to strengthen their united efforts to influence the policies of the U.S. government.

As we shared our experience with each other we discovered five issues which arose everywhere and which we felt demanded urgent action by the churches:

1. Poverty and Deprivation. We found here in the midst of this wealthy First World country pockets of poverty, squalor, deprivation and hunger that we would normally expect to find only in the developing countries of the world - in, for example, parts of Africa, South America, the Pacific and Asia.

In a health centre in a poor area the five diseases most commonly treated were also the five most common diseases of developing countries, including malnutrition and gastro-enteritis.

We were amazed to hear about people being considered as too poor for public housing.

We were concerned by the return to traditional individualist economic philosophies and that the social welfare system is moving backwards at a time of high unemployment.

The churches must not be content to be the dispensers of charity when the need for economic justice is so clear.

"Small farmers", a mere 3% of the population, are a neglected part of the U.S. community. Their farms are being laid to waste by erosion and soil exhaustion. They are increasingly impoverished by farm policies that tend to sacrifice their interests to large corporations which can compete favourably in the international market. All these issues point to the need for new definitions of economic justice.

2. Racism. For the Blacks, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and some immigrant peoples, the effects of poverty are made so much worse by racism which appeared to us deeply rooted in spite of the efforts to eradicate it. Some of the most blatant aspects of racism may have been overcome and because of this, its continued existence is often not recognized. Yet we found it manifest in many areas of life. In a number of places there is fear of the resurgence of the Klu Klux Klan and its recognition by the authorities.

We were particularly saddened by the grip which racism has on the churches themselves. In this matter they not only reflected society but often seemed to be more segregated than society itself. Even where integration is slow, black and white churches could develop ways of cooperation to deal with poverty, deprivation and injustice. Neither black nor white churches are doing all they could. We are convinced that ecumenical agencies at national and local levels must work with a sense of urgency to involve the black churches more fully in ecumenical life.

3. Administration of Justice. A third issue which gave us concern is the way justice is administered.

We have questions about a penal system which seems biased against the minorities and the poor. Prison inmates complain of boredom and of a lack of meaningful activities and often suffer physical and sexual assaults. We heard accounts of brutality by the police and prison guards.

Although both blacks and whites suffer police brutality, as a result of racism the black community suffers more than the white. Black leaders in some states told us of corruption in the judicial system and how it is being used by the white community to thwart and harrass black elected officials.

A number of us from the South-East Visitation Team were present at the opening of the trial in Lexington, Mississippi, of Mayor Eddie Carthan of Tchula, Mississippi. We were made acutely conscious of the fact that other black mayors believed that Eddie Carthan was not in jail for doing wrong but for standing up for what was right. They thought that it would be him today and them tomorrow. They regard the outcome of the case as of vital significance for themselves.

The death penalty which raises serious moral questions looms over the Eddie Carthan case and over the entire correctional system of the U.S.*

4. Treatment of the Marginalized and the Refugees. The problem of justice arises also in the treatment of Haitian and Cuban refugees, migrant workers, North American Indians, Mexicans and other minority groups.

Long, complicated and expensive legal proceedings are often necessary to establish the rights of these people. In the case of the refugees even when the right to stay in this country has been established, many problems remain. There is the urgent need to find housing and work, food and clothing. Children are left behind in the educational system and never have an opportunity to catch up.

We found many examples of impressive church activity on behalf of refugees but too many congregations still are unwilling to open their doors to them. When local congregations do become involved it is deeply appreciated.

We were also drawn into the debate about the way in which the U.S. Government often applies the law about political and economic refugees. We believe that the Haitian refugees have a justifiable claim to belong to the first category because of the well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries if they return. The arbitrary application of the law is working hardship for many people and a review of it and its ramifications are badly needed.

Migrant workers suffer from many of the same conditions as refugees. Their living conditions are deplorable, their family life constantly disrupted, the education of their children neglected. Their low rate of pay hurts them and allows growers to utilize cheap labour thereby undermining the job market.

5. Peace with Justice. We had many discussions on the question of Peace with Justice. We were encouraged by the increasing number of efforts for peace and hope that more and more people realize the gravity of the nuclear threat and the menace of the present arms race.

It was pointed out to us that black groups tend to concentrate on justice issues and white ones (especially the middle-class) on peace issues. The churches especially need to make the connection between the two; where financial resources are constantly poured into the making of weapons then there is much less available for welfare concerns and the needs of the poor.

While the major concern today is nuclear disarmament the whole problem of war and militarism has to be faced. Since the Second World War, 130 "local" wars have been fought with so-called conventional weapons.

*

We have since learnt that Mayor Eddie Carthan was found not guilty of the murder charge but must still stand trial on other charges.

x x x x

Faced by all of these grave issues, we are struck by the need to search for alternatives - alternatives in life-styles and alternatives in economic policy. These alternatives will only be found if time, thought and effort are concentrated upon producing them. We would be greatly helped in this if we could find effective ways of listening to each other across national and confessional barriers.

In this search for "alternatives" we need a renewed ecumenism and a new vision. To think ecumenically is to think bigger than our own town. It is to think of the oikumene - the whole inhabited earth. We believe that the churches in the U.S. need to be ecumenical in the global sense. We found much individualism and denominationalism and too big a distance between the local, national and world councils of churches.

We noted with dismay the inadequate communication between the World and the National Councils of Churches and the local congregations. The denominational networks operate very unevenly and often do not help to inform clergy or laity. The local and regional councils of churches have information which could be shared ecumenically. Utilizing and strengthening this ecumenical network could greatly improve communication and help the WCC and the NCC contact with the local congregations. The black churches seem largely outside the communication network. The best information they receive about the WCC is through Partners in Ecumenism.

We have come to you from all parts of the globe and now we return to our homes. As we do so, we will take with us the questions we have issued to you and apply them to ourselves, our own churches and our own countries.

What we have said to you is written in a spirit of love and fellowship. We do not exempt ourselves from the criticisms. None of us is without sin, and not one of us is fit to cast the first stone. We speak to you humbly as we speak to ourselves in the name of Jesus Christ who is the Life of the World.

In this same spirit we would invite you to write to us directly or through the NCC Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism to tell us how you viewed our visit. Please help us continue the dialogue.

Yours in Christ,

Adeolu Adegbola, Centre for Applied Religion and Education,
Ibadan, Nigeria

Cesar Espiritu, University of the Philippines, Manila

Metropolitan Yohanna Ibrahim, Member of the WCC Central
Committee and Delegate to the Vancouver Assembly, Syrian
Orthodox Diocese, Aleppo, Syria

Jean Mayland, Member of the WCC Central Committee and
Delegate to Vancouver Assembly, York, U.K.

Overtoun P. Mazunda, Pastor, Malawi

Jobson Misang, Youth Delegate to the Vancouver Assembly,
Rabaul, Papua/New Guinea

Kofi Asare Opoku, Deputy Director, Institute of African
Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana

Aracely E. de Rochietti, Methodist Pastor, Uruguay

Gabriel Setiloane, Methodist Pastor, Kronstad, S. Africa

Erika Stöffler, Delegate to the Vancouver Assembly,
Leonberg, Federal Republic of Germany

WCC Staff:

Paul Abrecht, Director, Church and Society, WCC, from USA

Marie Assaad, Deputy General Secretary, WCC, Egypt

Eric Ram, Christian Medical Commission, WCC, from India

American Liaison Staff:

Joan Campbell, Associate General Secretary, NCC, USA

Lew Lancaster, Ecumenical Officer, Presbyterian Church U.S.

Fred Wilson, Ecumenical Affairs, Officer, United Presbyterian
Church, USA.

PA/cs

REPORT OF A PRE-ASSEMBLY TEAM VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

by Sutarno, Javanese Christian Church, Indonesia, University President;
Elisabeth Lidell, Lutheran Church, Denmark, Pastor;
Raymond Fung, Baptist Church, Hong Kong, WCC Secretary for Evangelism

From 9th April till 24th April, 1983, we travelled as a WCC team visiting local churches and ecumenical ministries in the North-East region of the USA. Our visits took us to towns and cities in Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Michigan and New York. We were accompanied in turn by the Rev. Joseph Stemley and the Rev. Jovelino Ramos, respectively present and former staff members of the NCCC/USA. The visit was organized by the Local and Regional Ecumenism office of the NCC, in the person of the Rev. Joan Campbell and hosted by local and state-wide councils of churches.

Now that the visit is over, we have decided to report our findings directly to Christians and churches in the ecumenical movement outside of the USA. We do so in faithfulness to the belief that the visit is meant to facilitate understanding among Christians across national boundaries. What is happening in the United States is important to the ecumenical movement.

To communicate our experience, we are opting for a story and reflection format. This is called for by the very nature of the visits: sharing and listening encounters on the level of the grassroots. In our reflection, we are not afraid to conceptualize, and generalize and occasionally to make judgements, recognizing fully that we were as much participants as spectators in those two weeks.

Pickers - Ideology - American Way of Life

At every meeting in Delaware and Maryland, we met with seven or eight people who picketed us. They were followers of Carl McIntire. Most were old people, one was a young Philippino. Their signs read "WCC promotes Communism" and slogans to that effect. But they were not disruptive. Sometimes there were even a few smiles. At one open meeting in a church, the group came in. They sat together in a far corner, far from others. Carl McIntire asked a couple of brief questions about providing aid to the people in Vietnam. At the end, he came up for a few words, shook our hands, have his picture taken. We remember his parting words, "You know, we are different. I think Christianity is an ideology."

"Ideology", as far as we understand the word, is a system of beliefs and goals about society, and a way of achieving them. To us, one of the great glories of the Christian faith is its refusal to be captive to any ideology and any political, economic system. The ecumenical movement has strived very hard to help churches understand this, against some very powerful contemporary forces. Carl McIntire and his people, a tiny little fringe group, as it in fact is, is nevertheless, probably a pale and pathetic reflection of something much more powerful and sophisticated in the US, the equating of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the "Good News of the American Way of Life."

Airforce Base - Peace Movement - Pastoral Letter - War Already

In Dayton, Ohio, we visited the world's largest airforce logistic command: Wright-Patterson Airforce Base, with a daily pay-roll of \$1.4 million and capital assets estimated at \$76 billion. After a brief tour of the Chaplain's office, we were shown a colour film about the command which is, in content, really black and white, complete with military and love music alternating between USA's need to arm up to its teeth and its desire for peace. The film, predictably and understandably, is a justification of the US arms build-up. Commentary was provided by two straight-back young officers whose faces were hidden in the dark. The Chief Chaplain was with us. Still, we were unprepared for the basic message: The Logistic Command exists for combat readiness, a readiness to fight to win - a nuclear war! Some of us were very much disturbed by such obvious propaganda which apparently was not perceived as so by the officers and some others we had met on this trip. Soon, a discussion ensued about the priority for human needs. The former Chief Chaplain, who appeared sensitive to these issues, frankly admitted that there was no reason to believe that a weapon dollar would become a food dollar in the USA. A frank and perceptive answer, but all the more disturbing.

We asked the military chaplain to comment if, given that the Logistic Command exists to provide for combat readiness, and given that the Chaplain's office is part of the Logistic Command, it would be fair to conclude that the chaplaincy service exists to provide spiritual support for combat readiness! He told us that chaplains are non-combat personnel, and that they are subject to the discipline of both the military and the Church. A better answer could have been given, but in a sense, the Chaplain's position is not too dissimilar in nature with that of anyone else in the pastoral ministry.

In Troy, New York, we had lunch with some Christian students and faculty members of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, one of the oldest and most prestigious in the country. A young man told us that he has just signed a four-year contract for military duties to begin at the completion of his current studies. In return, the military would pay his entire school fee of \$40,000. We learn that 10% of the students there have similar arrangements with the military. The implication for the peace movement in college campuses is obvious. Less obvious but far more serious in long-term consequences is the role of the military in the education of the next generation of leaders in the US.

Everywhere we went, we ran into peace groups and organizations which lobby for a policy of nuclear freeze of the two superpowers. It is a movement both of the old and the young. The churches are very much part of it, providing facilities and moral support. There is every indication that the peace movement is now the most rapidly growing grassroots movement in the US. For this very reason, one cannot but recall what a churchman said at the last WCC Central Committee, "Why is it that when so many people want peace, the world does not have peace?" - naive and yet so profound.

Bishop Hubbard, Albany, New York, honoured us with breakfast. As one of the active proponents of the US Catholic Bishops Conference pastoral letter "The Challenge of Peace - God's Promise and Our Response", he shared with us his assessment and hopes. The pastoral letter, then still at the final drafting stage, declares nuclear war "immoral", calls for a nuclear freeze of the US and the Soviet Union, denounces any intention to use nuclear weapons against civilian populations, and asserts that nuclear deterrence is justified only

if accompanied by committed efforts at disarmament. Predictably, such stance caused great consternation in the Reagan Administration, and much pressure was put on the bishops to modify their positions. The strength of the letter lies of course in the strength of the US Catholic bishops, but no less in its clarity of reasoning, its boldness in going into practical and strategical implications of moral questions, and above all, its specificity in terms of whom the letter addresses and seeks to influence. In a positive sense, this pastoral letter places great pressure on the WCC Sixth Assembly to come up with an equally clear and powerful message on peace. That the WCC has constituencies from all six continents makes the task doubly difficult. And hopefully, doubly exciting.

It will not be easy, though. But WCC, as a world body of Christians, has no cause to apologize. The concern for peace of the rest of the world has to come into the equation, as exemplified perhaps feebly and yet authentically by members of our team. Our member from Denmark does not want her eight-month old daughter killed, either by a US bomb or a Russian bomb. And another member from Indonesia gently and firmly brought to our audience's attention that to the peoples and countries of the Third World, war is already here, and that to the victims, conventional warfare is no less lethal. Many of the people in the peace movement in the States are aware that peace, to be real, has to be sought in the context of global justice. We hope that the struggle at peace-making of the churches in the USA is not a cultural fad, but a real commitment to the God of Peace, and real solidarity with the peoples of the rest of the world many of whom know too well what war is like in a personal way. We salute the people in the peace movement we have met on this trip, inside and outside of the churches. We remember that blessed are the peace-makers.

Unemployment - Soup Kitchens - On the Welfare Line

The impact of unemployment on society and on people's mind-set came as a surprise to us, especially to the two from the Third World. Despite the knowledge we thought we had about the USA, we were unprepared to see the soup kitchens, food banks, urban deterioration which came at us at almost every stop. We were puzzled by the very thin safety margins of middle level families (reason: high consumption fuelled by easy credit), the economic disparity, still, between black and white, the "permanent" lostness of entire groups of people in American society - the "bag ladies" in urban centres, the Appalachian white, itinerant farm labourers, to name a few. They just do not fit.

To these situations, the Christian churches have made many responses. The most proliferate and visible is undoubtedly the soup kitchens which provide free meals to everyone who would show up. Tremendous energy is expended in the collection of food, the mobilization of volunteers in the organization and service of the kitchens. And many showed up, mostly elderly people, single mothers with children, and youth - both black and white.

It was difficult for us to sort out our reactions to such manifest concern and active generosity. On the one hand, we were extremely impressed by such visible Christian witness. And it is no sudden burst of enthusiasm: soup kitchens provide free meal after meal. Clergy and lay people work at it day after day. We were humbled when we reflected on the passivity of the churches from which we came. And yet, we were also puzzled and disturbed.

We were told, for instance, that people in the States throw away 137 million tons of food each day, or 20% of the total consumption.

The pastor of a big church which runs a much-supported soup kitchen justified the work on the ground that it had not cost the church anything. He chose to apologize for it in his report to the church council.

While appreciating those who organize, and come personally to serve in the soup kitchens, we cannot but recognize that the same people have, most of them, moved out of the neighbourhood where their church is, and have come back to the neighbourhood on certain hours on the day for their voluntary service, to give food to those who live in that neighbourhood and who, most of them, have no use for that church other than getting a free meal.

The reflection of a woman who organizes a food bank which supplies food to soup kitchens: "People in this community are willing to give food. They are unwilling to give money. Money is power. They are only willing to give food."

After a lengthy conversation with an unemployed steel worker in Youngstown, Ohio, an impression: the man was complaining against the system which had cost him his job, one which used to be the best unionized and best paid in the States - Japanese import, subsidized European competition, obsolete plants. Yet, even when he found himself on the welfare line after his unemployment benefits had run out, along with out-of-work kids, blacks and women, he could not accept the fact that he was one of them. The poor remained "they" and "them". His presence in the welfare line was only an accident. What a self-hurting state of mind. What has the church to say to this man? Is there not truth that western capital which engaged in exploitation of peoples across the shores in the early 20th century has now turned homeward for the exploitation of their own people? The presence of masses of unemployed people in the US requires of the churches a deeply spiritual and solidly ideological response, in both personal and global terms.

Dollars - Local Church Participation

At an evening session in a local congregation our team met with Christian people in the surrounding area. A woman asked us pointblank, "Where did my dollar go?" Probably, she was referring to her mission contribution to ecumenical work through her denomination. It was not our first such encounters. The attack on the NCCC/USA and the WCC in the Readers Digest and the CBS TV programme "60 Minutes" obviously was helping this and similar questions. After a full day of meetings and media interviews, we were less than eager to turn the other cheek. After all, financial accountability is available through denominational structures if anyone really wants to know. After all, she should not be talking of "dollars" but of a couple of cents, the amount an American Christian gives to the ecumenical movement beyond the US per year. One of us suggested she showed an interest in the ecumenical movement other than that of the dollar. The woman would not budge. Much as our distaste for such attitude and behaviour, which to us smacked of "I give my dollar, therefore, I own you," we nevertheless recognized the objective validity of the challenge. Still, we shuddered at the thought that this type of mind-set and attitude might very well lurk behind the mission dollars from the churches in this affluent land. Time, perhaps, to call for a second round of discussion on moratorium. But, as we reflected, there could be cause

for a different interpretation. Perhaps, to this woman, and others like her, giving money, assuming that she did give, has been the only form of participation in the ecumenical movement available to her. If that is the case, right away the whole encounter should be cast in a different light.

A Methodist woman pastor who has responsibility for three local churches in the State of Delaware wrote our team a painstaking statement of her expectation of the Vancouver Assembly. Among the five pages:

"Factions of average people across the globe join together on numerous issues that clearly differ from the opinions of their representatives. Who heeds their cries? In many cases the cry is ignored, or suppressed. In other cases the cries are temporary pacified. But in general, the same cries continue to be heard without serious affirmative action being taken.

"A current example of this belief is the situation of nuclear arms. Protests and cries are heard from people around the world, but what affirmative action is taken?

"I am aware of the World Council of Churches and somewhat of what the purpose of this organization is to achieve. However, the only way I have participated in this organization is through the offering I contribute in my local church. Is this to be the only participation open to people from local churches? In what way can individuals participate?"

From friend and foe, the message is clear enough.

Ecumenism - Substantial Local Leadership

Ecumenism is under attack. But, as always, a crisis is an occasion for danger as well as hope. The impact on the national level of the attack of the Readers Digest and the CBS programme "60 Minutes" has yet to be assessed. Here are a few local facts we gathered during the visit:

A bishop of the Lutheran Church in America told us that of the over 300 congregations in his synod in Ohio, 10 have raised critical comments on the WCC. Of the 62 churches in a United Methodist Church District, a quarter have asked, "Why give to the WCC?" In the case of an American Baptist Church area in New York State, 3 congregations out of 69 raised questions. In the same State, a Reformed Church in America Class reported 8 petitions to withdraw from the NCC and the WCC, out of some 60 congregations. To be precise, some of the above are perennial features in the life of US churches and are not necessarily direct responses to the attack by the popular media. Nevertheless, these figures paint a sombre picture.

Local ecumenism in the States, however, is alive and well. Nationwide there are 750 local councils of churches, under different names, of which one third have Roman Catholic membership. In some areas, there is also the participation of the unitarians and Jews in which case the designation of the fellowship as "ecumenical" has become a matter of interesting debate. We were deeply impressed by the commitment and quality of local ecumenical leadership. They are the ones who have to do the job of communicating, and occasionally of defending, the actions of the NCC and the WCC to the grassroots. We feel

they should be getting much more support. During the heat of the media attack on the NCC and the WCC, these local ecumenical councils across the USA had the option of dissociating themselves from the national and world ecumenical bodies, which they had a perfect right to, legally and technically speaking. But they did not. They spoke up. They took advantage of the opportunity to share the ecumenical vision with local pastors and in the local media. We salute our fellow ecumenical colleagues in this part of the world.

Blacks - Other Minorities

With a few notable and successful exceptions, the black churches in this region are not active in local ecumenism, much less nationally and beyond. At a meeting hosted by a black church, one of us asked bluntly when the black churches in the USA would play an active role in the WCC. We had in mind, among many thoughts, their historic commitment against racism. The WCC Programme to Combat Racism Special Fund, for instance, has not been well subscribed to at all by mainline churches in the USA most of which are predominantly white. So we posed the question. The response was immediate. A black pastor suggested loudly that if they come in at all, they come in on the ground floor, meaning that they must participate in the setting of the agenda, and not work on an agenda set by others. The remark prompted our thoughts to the soup kitchens - probably the most prominent and best supported local ecumenical ministry we encountered on this trip. If this charity-oriented service remains a key expression of ecumenism, however necessary it apparently is, the black churches may not be too keen to enter in. It is easy for relative affluent people to respond with food and blanket. But food and blanket is not easy to respond to by the socially and economically ostracized, with whom black churches must have much first hand experience. Then there were voices about the need to put their own house in order. Their sense of priority of need. To many black churches, economic and social survival of their people remain a matter of real concern in these days.

The other minorities - the Hispanics, the Orientals for instance - we never met any during those two weeks. They are not part of the organized mainstreamed ecumenical movement in this part of the USA. There is nothing we can say here except note their absence.

Spirituality - Prayerfulness - Analysis - Will

We had some very deeply felt moments with people and groups whose spirituality left a mark on our lives. Most ministered among the poor in concrete action in meeting human needs. They did not talk revolution. They were all too aware of the limitations of their ministry. Neither were they Thomas Mertons nor Mother Teresas. They could be ingenious in their organizing tactics, in getting hold of an extra Federal dollar. Many have gone through the struggles of the 60's. We encountered in them flashes of anger at the waste of human lives, at human greed, and the powers and principalities which want to make puppets of us all; but generally, theirs was a naturalness, an ease of spirit which was all the more defying and strong. It is a spiritual texture characterized, for want of better terms, not so much by pietism, charity and emotion as by prayerfulness, analysis and will.

We would like to share our encounter with Sister Mary who coordinated a food programme in a parish in Detroit. It was a big old building. When we arrived, a couple of hundred elderly people were eating, serving food, walking around with metal support. Sister Mary did not have much time. She had to speak with her attorney. An old woman, one of the "bag ladies" who carry paper or plastic shopping bags all day long, wandering from railway station toilets to park benches to abandoned stairways, had been eating there for months. She was all alone in the world. She died. Her relatives and their lawyers showed up, enquiring about her money. Perhaps the old woman might have left a few clues on a piece of paper that Sister Mary gave every frequent visitor to write his or her life story on. Sister Mary came back and sat down with us. "We've got to go all the way with the poor. To give a piece of yourself. Why do we choose to call this 'soup kitchen'? To make sure that the poor know their place, to drive home their sense of unworthiness? No, this is a nutrition centre....This old woman who died, she came to us, she enjoyed being here. But she feared too close a relationship. She did not want us to know too much about her life....People are dying of hunger, out there, but USA is sitting on a huge supply of food, rotting. That is how we respect the poor. Only give-away food. Food in return for human dignity....We were offered a good supply of cheese. But I would not give out cheese. It would make the poor more greedy. Standing in line is their way of life. We make them stand in line....This house makes a hot lunch available to anybody. We have enough for everyone. There's no need to line up. But the poor still line up at 8.45 in the morning, or 6 a.m. if we open that early. We've got to be honest to these people. I tell them, 'Don't just sit here for three hours. Clean up your face. There is work for you. Wash the dishes. Peel the potatoes. Brush up the floor.' This is our philosophy. We take risk to build up their dignity. Very hard. The poor are sick, especially the senile. We want to love them, and they are not prepared. Half the women here, if put in nursing homes, would be dead by now. In this centre, we ask them to work, to do their part. If you can't give, you might as well be dead. There's no need to line up for a hot meal here, no need to grab. But the poor grab food. Make sure they have it. But young people do that too, grabbing a bus seat. And you know, the rich do that too, everyday."

Concluding Remarks

The encounters and our reflections speak for themselves. The three of us recognize that we are very privileged persons in having experienced those two weeks. We recognize that the struggle of the churches in the USA to be faithful in these days is a struggle within themselves, and more often than not, against themselves. The congregations deliberating on peace-making in Dayton, Ohio, include military personnel and civilians whose livelihood depends on the airforce base. And the corporations in Albany, New York and Cleveland, Ohio, which make decisions affecting the job and dignity of millions of people at home and abroad, are owned and run by people most of whom are found on the Sunday pews of churches in this land. We recognize that what is happening in the USA is important to the ecumenical movement.

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE
DAILY ASSEMBLY COVERAGE

SHOPTALK: WCC and
Assembly Background

World Council of Churches
Sixth Assembly - 83.td.09

- 1) The WCC currently counts 300 member churches in approximately 100 countries.
They include denominations from the following church traditions or families: Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Old Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed (Presbyterian and Congregational), Methodist, Baptist, Disciples, Pentecostal, United, Independent, Moravian, Anabaptist (Mennonite, Brethren), Friends (Quakers).

Geographically, they include 61 in Africa, 58 in Asia, 19 in Australasia/Pacific, 10 in the Caribbean, 30 in Eastern Europe, 56 in Western Europe, 19 in Latin America, 13 in Middle East, and 34 in North America.

The total membership of the WCC members is estimated at between 400 and 500 million.
- 2) Previous WCC assemblies:
Amsterdam, 1948
Evanston (suburb of Chicago), 1954
New Delhi, 1961
Uppsala, 1968
Nairobi, 1975
- 3) The WCC has three program units -- I: Faith and Witness, II: Justice and Service, III: Education and Renewal. Each unit includes several subunits:
I: Faith and Order
World Mission and Evangelism
Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies
Church and Society
II: Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service
Programme to Combat Racism
Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
Christian Medical Commission
Commission on the Churches Participation in Development
III: Education
Theological Education
Youth
Women
Renewal and Congregational Life

Shoptalk/2

Copies of the following EPS items are available on request.
Please ask for them by number:

83.04.95 ECUVIEW: "Beyond Collaboration: WCC/RC Relationships"
83.06.43 ECUVIEW: "The Ecumenical Art of Public Speaking (I)"
83.06.49 ECUVIEW: "Peace and Justice Issues in Vancouver"
83.06.46 FIRST 3 WCC ASSEMBLIES REVIEWED
83.06.47 LAST 2 WCC ASSEMBLIES REVIEWED
83.06.79 ECUVIEW: "The Ecumenical Art of Public Speaking (II)"
83.06.135 ECUVIEW: "What is a WCC Assembly?"
83.07.22 ECUVIEW: "Human Rights on the Ecumenical Agenda"
83.07.47 ECUVIEW: "Ideology, Theology and the WCC"
83.07.50 ECUVIEW: "Assembly Costs"

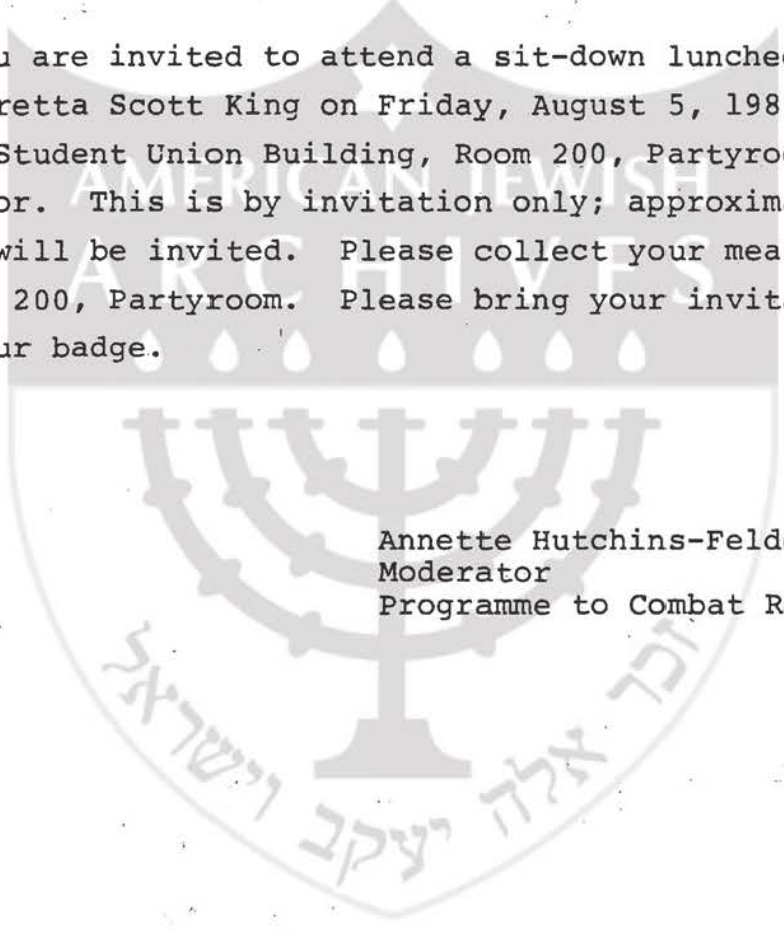


RABBI MARC TANNENBAUM



Vancouver, August 4, 1983

You are invited to attend a sit-down luncheon-reception with Coretta Scott King on Friday, August 5, 1983, 12.30 - 14.00 in the Student Union Building, Room 200, Partyroom, on the 2nd floor. This is by invitation only; approximately 150 people will be invited. Please collect your meal and come to Room 200, Partyroom. Please bring your invitation and wear your badge.



Annette Hutchins-Felder
Moderator
Programme to Combat Racism.

World Council of Churches
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
24 July - 10 August 1983
Vancouver B.C., Canada

Document **TH-3**

PLENARY ON THE MAIN THEME

25 July 1983, 11.00-12.30

Act of Commitment

Leader (L): Let us pray:
Come let us worship and fall down before Christ, who is one of the Holy Trinity, the only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit. For our salvation He was incarnate and crucified in the flesh and gave himself up for the life of the world. By His death he destroyed death. Come You faithful, let us praise and glorify the risen Christ our God, Giver of Life, He has filled all things with joy in coming to save the world.

Let us so love one another that we may say with one mind:

Assembly (A): - Christ is in the midst of us:
- He is and shall be.

L: Let us pray.
Lord, every blessing we possess and every good deed we do is of you and comes from you. We are immersed in your divine blessings, given blessings and promised blessings.
How, then can we express our gratitude for these blessings? What shall we offer you, O Christ, who for the love of your Church, you gather us here? We offer to you this spiritual communion, a humble human fellowship, and we pray to you and implore you, send down your Holy Spirit upon us, upon our work and ministry, and upon our lives, so that we understand and see that your presence, your help and love are within us and among us, now and for ever.

Let us so love one another that we may say with one mind:

A: - Christus ist unter uns:
- Er ist es und er wird es sein.

L: Let us confess our faith in the power of the Word of Life by saying together:

A: We believe and we confess that you are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom we are first. We also confess that whoever believes in you should not perish but have eternal life, and as many as have been baptised by one spirit have been united into one body. You are the head of the body; in you and through you all things are now recreated and reconciled. Do not turn your face away from us because of our divisions but unite us in your Holy, catholic and apostolic church. Make us worthy to bring our prayers for unity, and to participate by the power of the Holy Spirit in this your ministry of unity. Enable us to call upon you in every time and place and to say:

This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Let us so love one another that we may say with one mind:

A: - Christ est au milieu de nous:

- Il y est et y demeurera.

L: Let us pray:

We pray for the unity of the churches and of all Christians: O Lord, who stretched forth your holy arms on the cross in order to embrace all creation and call it into your saving fellowship, gather together your Universal Church scattered throughout the earth, that it may together confess "the faith which has been once and for all entrusted to the saints".

A: - Cristo esta en medio nuestro:

- El es y siempre sera.

L: We pray for peace, love and goodness in the world, for justice and solidarity among the peoples: O Lord, who according to your will, grants each nation its place, age and time, who raises the sun upon the just and the unjust, who loves the righteous and has mercy upon the sinners, inspire and sustain all men, women, youth and children of the earth that they may be peacemakers, so that together serving you they may become part of a new heaven and new earth.

A: - Christos posrede nas:

- I est i budet

L: Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, peace I leave you, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church and grant it the peace and unity of your dwelling-place where you live and reign for ever.

A: - O Christos en to meso himon:

- Kai esti kai estai

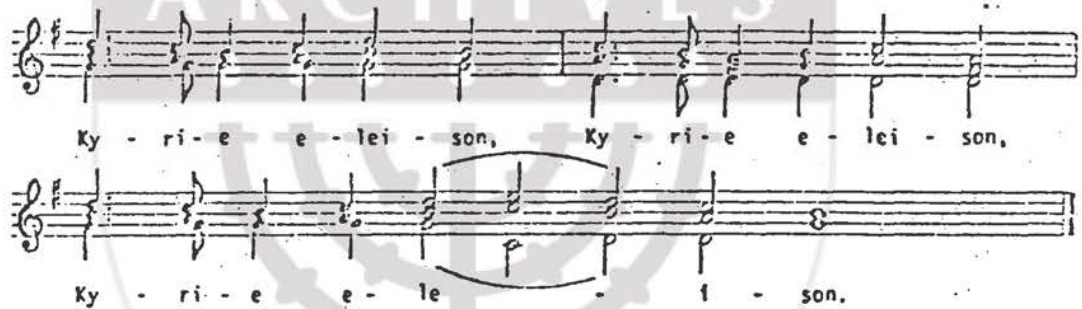
L: We give thanks unto you, O Lord God Almighty, who in the greatness of your love and forgiveness towards your people, has given us the grace of this assembly to be gathered together in your Name and to make with one voice this common supplication and confession:

A: (Participants may now exchange greetings of peace by saying:)

- Christ is in the midst of us:

- He is and shall be.

A: Hymn: Kyrie eleison (three times)



Welcome to
Vancouver Public Programs



Sixth Assembly of
THE WORLD COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES
July 24 - Aug. 10, 1983

FOR ASSEMBLY DELEGATES,
PARTICIPANTS AND THE PUBLIC

Presented by the Vancouver
Planning Committee

Welcome to Vancouver

This program of events has been arranged for all Assembly participants, visitors and the general public by the Program Committee, on behalf of the Vancouver Planning Committee for the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

We hope that it offers

- recreation and refreshment in the midst of tiring deliberations,
- challenge and stimulation on matters that concern us all,
- opportunity for direct contact with members of our community,
- a glimpse of our cultural reality and a vision of our life together in the future.

Over the past three years, hundreds of people have spent thousands of hours in preparation for this event.

Without the perseverance of all those responsible — convenors, coordinators and committee members — this program could not have been conceived.

Without the commitment of all those involved it could not have been delivered.

Without the continuing leadership of June Lythgoe, chair of the Program Committee, it would not have become a reality.

To each and every one of those who contributed to this offering, HEARTFELT THANKS!

Archbishop David Somerville
Chairman
Vancouver Planning Committee

Please refer to the accompanying document for details of each day's schedule and check daily Assembly Newsletter for possible changes.

For information during the Assembly
phone 228-6916

WORSHIP

Worship takes place daily at 08:00, 12:45 and 21:30 and is open to the public. The morning worship follows a non-verbal liturgy developed last year at a worship workshop at Bossey, near Geneva. Noon worship focuses on preaching. Evening worship on eight occasions is being conducted by local congregations of diverse traditions, according to their own rites. In addition there are special worship services on a number of occasions.

One central purpose in holding an Assembly is to allow member churches of the Council, in all their diversity, to meet together in worship. To this end, a huge tent is being erected on campus in which worship services take place. The Worship Tent reminds us of our area's brief history — how close we are in time to the frontier, with its temporary, makeshift shelters — and of the Church as a body on the move — the dwelling of a pilgrim people.

Evening Prayers 21:30-22:00 Worship Tent

Date Leadership

July 25	Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
July 26	Tent Team
July 27	St. James Presbyterian Church Bellingham, Washington
July 28	St. John's (Shaughnessy) Anglican Church
July 30	Service of Repentance in Preparation for Open Eucharist
July 31	Chinese United
Aug. 1	West Point Grey Baptist Church
Aug. 2	Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Church, (Orthodox Church in America)
Aug. 3	Tent Team
Aug. 4	Paroisse catholique romaine du Saint-Sacrement
Aug. 6	Tent Team
Aug. 8	Tent Team
Aug. 9	University Hill United Church

Special Services

- 30 July (21:30-23:00) Service of Repentance in
Preparation for the Open Eucharist
- 31 July (09:30-12:30) Open Eucharist
- 6 Aug. (07:30-09:30) Orthodox Eucharist—Feast of
Transfiguration

The public is welcome at all of these services.

PUBLIC FORUMS

On three occasions the general public is invited to join with Assembly participants for major presentations in the Plenary Hall (War Memorial Gymnasium). There will be no reserved seats and no admission charged.

Wednesday 27 July, 20:00 Bishop Festo Kivengere, charismatic church statesman from Uganda, and Dr. Alan Boesak, outspoken church leader and opponent of apartheid, will address the theme **"THE GOSPEL AND SALVATION"**.

Thursday 4 August, 20:00 Mrs. Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King Jr. will address a forum on the theme **"THE GOSPEL AND PEACE"**. Mrs. King is a prominent leader in the struggle for peace and justice.

Tuesday 9 August, 20:00 the very Rev. Lois Wilson, immediate past moderator of the United Church of Canada, and Canon Herbert O'Driscoll, formerly Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver and now Warden of the College of Preachers in Washington, D.C. will focus on the theme **"THE GOSPEL AND UNITY"**.

The forums will be chaired by Dr. Carl Amerding, Principal, Regent College; Dr. Robert Smith, Minister, Shaughnessy United Church; and Dr. Margaret Prang, Canadian historian and UBC professor.

DOWNTOWN SPEAKERS SERIES

Christ Church Cathedral at the corner of Georgia and Burrard Streets is the location for five noon-hour presentations by prominent Assembly participants (12:15-13:00) Tuesdays and Thursdays. Vancouver residents and visitors who are not able to attend on-site programs are invited to meet with these special guests to engage in discussion on issues of critical importance being addressed by the Assembly. Bring a brown bag lunch and take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Admission is free.

- 26 July — **"Development and its Human Impact"**
—Miss Leila Doss, Egyptian Coptic and Communications Advisor to the World Council of Churches
- 28 July — **"Interfaith Conversations and Concerns"**
—Dr. Pauline Webb, Co-ordinator, Overseas Religious Broadcasting, British Broadcasting Corporation
- 2 Aug. — **"Issues of Justice"**— Justice Annie Jagge, one of six Presidents, World Council of Churches
- 4 Aug. — **"Perspectives on Peace"**—Metropolitan Kirill, Orthodox Archbishop of Leningrad
- 9 Aug. — **"Issues of Human Dignity"**—Dr. Jovito Salonga, Philippines lawyer—delegate

INTERFAITH CENTRE

The Interfaith Centre is located in the foyer of the Asian Centre and is open daily 12:30-20:00. Audiovisual presentations on the various religious traditions will be shown regularly and a place for prayer and meditation is available for individuals and groups. The Interfaith Association's new book, **Circle of Voices, a History of the Religious Communities of British Columbia**, is available during the Assembly.

Public Programs

- 26 July **"The Life of the World—Jewish and Hindu Perspectives"**
13:00-14:30 Rabbi Jordan Pearlson
Asian Centre Dr. Anant Rambachan
Auditorium Dr. Douglas Jay, Moderator
- 28 July **"Life in Community—Muslim and Native Canadian Perspectives"**
13:00-14:30 Dr. Mohamed Talbi
Asian Centre Mr. Art Solomon
Auditorium Dr. Diana Eck, Moderator
- 1 Aug. **"Witnessing in a Divided World—Buddhist and Sikh Perspectives"**
20:00-21:30 Dr. Sulak Sivaraksa
Asian Centre Dr. Gopal Singh
Auditorium Dr. Jacobus Schoneveld, Moderator
- 2 Aug. **"Peace and Justice Among the Children of Abraham"**
20:00-21:30 Dr. Victor Goldbloom
Graduate Dr. Inamullah Khan
Student Shaykh Shakirov
Centre Rev. Lloyd Casson
- 3 Aug. **"Foundations for Dialogue between Judaism, Christianity and Islam—"**
14:30-16:30 **A Dialogue-Lecture**
IRC #2 Dr. George Grose
 Dr. Henri Front
 Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi
 Dr. Charles Anderson, Moderator
 (Co-sponsored by the National Conference
 of Christians and Jews, and the Academy of
 Judaic, Christian and Islamic Studies)
- 8 Aug. **"Interfaith Open Forum"**
13:00-14:15 Dr. Stanley Samartha, Moderator
Asian Centre
Auditorium

MULTICULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Sunday 31 July has been designated as Multicultural Day. The afternoon program, in the Auditorium of the Student Union Building, features two film showings, and two panel presentations. The evening festival of musicians and dancers is in the Plenary Hall (War Memorial Gymnasium). During the Assembly photographic exhibits are on display in the Asian Centre, and on two occasions delegates and accredited visitors have the opportunity to visit ethnic organizations in Vancouver.

Films

Beginning at 13:30 in the SUB Auditorium, 31 July, four outstanding films by Vancouver filmmakers on multicultural and ethnic groups in British Columbia are being shown. "Images of the First One Hundred Years" by Rick Shiomi, was completed in 1980. The 1979 film "Emigrante" produced by Mo Simpson and Elizabeth Walker follows. From 15:30 to 16:30 Jan Martell introduces her two films, "A Little While More Yet" and "One of Many: Dr. Nhan". Films courtesy Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution, West, National Film Board of Canada.

Forums

The first forum during the afternoon, 31 July, is entitled "Life in Multicultural Canada" and involves young people who have immigrated to Canada telling their experiences and impressions of life in this country.

At 16:30 the forum entitled "Vancouver Fighting Racism" features four representatives of programs in this city dedicated to fostering better understanding amongst various groups. Harry Rankin, lawyer and long time Vancouver city alderman, is the chairman of the city's Race Relations Committee. Donna Hill works for the Native-Police Liaison Project. Mohinder Grewal represents the OASIS project of Immigrant Services. Sam Fillipoff is the Race Relations Consultant of the Vancouver School Board.

Festival

A special dinner is planned for Sunday 31 July from 17:30-19:30 at which the delegates and visitors are invited to wear national dress. The day concludes with a two hour festival of music and dance performed by various groups coordinated by the Multicultural Society of British Columbia.

Mini-Tours

On Thursday 28 July and Wednesday 3 August, ten ethnic organizations in the city offer special programs for the delegates and accredited visitors. These include a brief tour of the city followed by refreshments and conversation at the centres of the organizations. The specific list of groups and destinations is available in the Assembly Office, Gage Towers where pre-registration for the tours is coordinated.

NATIVE PARTICIPATION

Participation by Native Canadians enhances the Assembly in a variety of ways. A special totem pole has been carved, to be presented as a gift to the WCC. The ceremonial raising of the pole takes place at 19:30, Friday 29 July which has been designated as Canadian Native Day. The Worship Tent is the focus that evening for a spiritual celebration featuring dancing, singing and drumming. An Arts and Crafts Centre is open from 25 July until 3 August in the Armoury, contemporary entertainment is available each of those evenings at 20:30 at the Musqueam Reserve Longhouse, and Native people participate in many presentations during those days including seven forums (12:30-14:30 30 July to 3 Aug) and (20:00-21:30 2 and 3 August.)

Totem Pole

The fifty foot totem pole is symbolic of Christianity meeting with the Native Spirituality so that the churches may learn of the Native philosophy. The pole has been carved by Native men from the Agassiz Mountain Prison with the support of the Canadian Penitentiary system in coordination with the Allied Indian and Metis Society.

Canadian Native Night

The Worship Tent is the site for performances of Native dancing, singing and drumming rituals demonstrating and sharing traditions and cultures respecting the Creator. To recognize the various tribes and aboriginal groupings in B.C. and Canada, eleven tribal groups have been invited to actively participate.

Arts and Crafts Centre

One section of the Armoury houses an exhibition and sale of Native art prints, weaving, jewellery, birch bark baskets, beadwork, argillite and silver carvings. It is open 25 July to 3 August, 11:00 to 20:00. All linguistic groups in B.C. are represented and artists are present to demonstrate their craft.

Native Arbor

This is an integral part of Native Spirituality and provides a sacred meditative area amongst the trees. At 06:30 on 24 July Native Elder Isadore Tom lights the sacred flame at the Arbor. It burns throughout the Assembly, and is extended to the Opening Day Celebrations at the Coliseum by a Native runner.

Sweat Lodges

Those individuals who wish to be cleansed may undergo a Native purification ritual in a sweat lodge. The Elders supervise this procedure which takes place on a reserve near the campus. Transportation will be arranged to the sweat lodges, eight of which are scheduled during the Assembly.

Native Forums

These forums allow Native leaders to communicate their various concerns and to elevate the awareness among Assembly delegates and the public of the "Canadian situation." Responses from the audience to these concerns are encouraged.

30 July 12:30-14:30 Law Building #101	"Nootka Oral History" —George Clutesi "Kwagiutl Oral History" —Roy Hanuse "Staulo Oral History" —Tillie Gurtereze
31 July 12:30-14:30 Law Building #101	"Resource Development on Sacred Lands" —Jewell James, Washington Federated Tribes "Spirituality in the 20th Century, and Land Claims Issues" —George Watts
1 August 12:30-14:30 Law Building #101	"Aboriginal Rights and the Canadian Constitution" —members of the Caughnawauqua Reserve "Land Claims" —members of the Nishga Tribal Council
2 August 12:30-14:30 Law Building #101	"Corrections: Natives and the Law within the Justice System" —Alfred Scow "Apprehensions and Court Proceedings" —Lou Demarais "Institutionalized Inmates, Parole and Release" —Cliff White
2 August 20:00-21:30 Law Building #101	"Aboriginal Law and Constitutional Rights" —Eric Robinson (Brotherhood of Indian Nations)
3 August 12:30-14:30 Law Building #101	"Land Claims and Economic Conditions" —Marie Wilson (Gitskan Carrier Tribal Council) "Section 12-1 B Non-Status Women" —Gloria George
3 August 20:00-21:30 Buchanan #104	"Aboriginal Spirituality" —Rolling Thunder "Native Spirituality" —TBA

THE WELL/LA SOURCE

Women from around the world have a unique opportunity to meet one another at The Well/La Source, a place for refreshment, the exchange of ideas, and program focussing on issues of concern to women. The Well/La Source is located at the Lutheran Campus Centre and provides a base for women participants and a place of hospitality. It is open daily from 08:00 to 21:30. Opportunities for worship and regular film showings are planned. The Well/La Source houses an exhibit of international crafts brought by women delegates from their home countries as well as an exhibit of photographs by Ulli Steltzer. During the Assembly the Ecumenical Women's Resource Centre of Vancouver is located at The Well/La Source. Free child care is offered upon pre-registration at The Well/La Source office.

Public Programs * = pre-registration required

23 July

20:00—21:30 **Dedication and Opening.** Begins at Gage Residence, proceeding to the Lutheran Campus Centre for a worship event. (Delegates only)

24 July

20:00—21:30 **Open House and Worship.** Opening remarks by Dr. Pauline Webb, Coordinator of Overseas Religious Broadcasting, British Broadcasting Corporation.

25 July

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Women, Health and Wholeness"**
Speaker: Dame Nita Barrow, President, World YWCA

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Women and the Ordained Ministry"**

Speakers: Rev. Susan Adams (Methodist, New Zealand), Rev. Barbara Brown-Zikmund (United Methodist, USA), Mary Tanner (Church of England, Britain)

26 July

11:00—12:00 Film. **"Somewhere Between"**—the alienation experienced by native Indian women due to government legislation.

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Native Women in the Cities"**

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Women Building a New Society"**

Speakers: Selena Tapper (Church of the West Indies, Jamaica), E. Wilandari Supardan (Christian Church of Java, Indonesia), Rev. Rita Panke (Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brazil), Very Rev. Lois Wilson (United Church of Canada)

27 July

11:00—12:00 Film. **"Buenas Dias Campaneros"**—Cuban women coping with the Revolution.

12:30—13:00 Worship.

18:00—20:00 **"Women Working for Peace"**—Totem Park Ballroom—Dinner with Helen Caldicott and Dorothea Soelle. **DINNER** for Women only. Pre-register at The Well/La Source or at the Coffeehouse. Admission \$7.

28 July

11:00—12:00 Films. **"You've Struck a Rock"**—women's resistance to the pass laws in South Africa. **"On the Bias"**—women in the clothing industry.

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Women Witness in Solidarity"**
Speakers: Grace Eneme (Presbyterian, Cameroons), Donna Hunter (General Secretary, W.I.C.C., Toronto), Priscilla Padolina (WCC Staff, Philippines)

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Women as Church Leaders"**
Speakers: Jean Skuse (Uniting Church, Australia), Nicole Fischer (Protestant, Interpreter, Switzerland), Baerbel Von Wartenberg (WCC Staff, Germany)

16:30—18:00 **Singalong**—Jim and Jean Strathdee

29 July

11:00—12:00 Film. **"Mother of Many Children"**—a once proud matriarchal society under pressure.

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Immigrant Women in Transition"**
Hosts: B.C. Taskforce on Immigrant Women, Elizabeth Lee et al

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Canadian Native Spirituality"**
Speakers: Polly Waterfall (Bella Coola, B.C.), Gerri Ambers (Nishga), Vi Smith (Hazelton, B.C.)

30 July

11:00—12:00 Films. **"Patricia's Moving Picture"**—one woman's story, her struggles and successes with changing values and ideas in her middle age.

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Eastern European Women in the Orthodox Church"**
Speakers: Nina Bobrova (External Relations Officer, Russian Orthodox Church), Mother Marfa Kovalevich, and Olga Ponomariova

14:30—16:00 Conversation.. **"Women in Liturgy and Worship"**
Speakers: Soeur Evangeline (Nun, France), Rev. Dr. Constance Parvey (Lutheran, Canada, formerly WCC Staff, Community of Women and Men in the Church)

16:30—17:00 Worship.

19:30—21:00 **“Woman, Why are you Weeping?”**—a Forum on Violence in Women’s Lives. Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, #2. Together men and women explore some of the facts and possible causes of violence in the lives of women. Aruna Gnanadson from India, Oo Chung Lee from South Korea and Jean Zaru, Palestinian from the West Bank, provide first hand information. Dr. Elizabeth Bettenhausen of the Boston University School of Theology attempts to interpret the source of violence and suggest strategies to overcome it.

31 July

15:30—16:30 Conversation. Follow-up meeting on **“Woman, Why Are You Weeping?”**

1 August

11:00—12:00 Film. **“Good Monday Morning”**—women office workers

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **“The Changing Consciousness of Women and the Bearing and Nurturing of Children”**

Speakers: Sithembiso Nyoni (Church of Christ, Zimbabwe), Alida Nababan (Indonesia), Rosalind Saint-Victor (Roman Catholic, Trinidad), Rev. Maggie Peery (Presbyterian, USA)

16:30—17:00 Worship. with children participating.

20:00—21:30 **“The Journey”** by Canadian composer Nancy Telfer, performed by Canadian soprano Catherine Robbin and the Vancouver Cantata Singers, James Fankhauser, director. Ryerson United Church, 45th Avenue & Yew St.

2 August

11:00—12:00 Film. **“Double Day”**—Latin American women describing their double work day.

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **“Women in the Economic Life of their Society”**

Speakers: Annathaie Abayasekera (Methodist, Sri Lanka), Theresa Hoover (Methodist, USA), Ophelia Ortega (Cuba), Bishop Remi de Roo (Roman Catholic, Canada)

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **“Voices from Guatemala”**
Speakers: Marta Torres (Guatemala), Julia Esquivel (Guatemala), Frances Arbour (Ex. Dir., I.C. on Human Rights)

16:30—18:00 **Music**—Louise Rose

3 August

11:00—12:00 Films. **"Weaving our Lives"**—the women of Oodi, Botswana, portray many aspects of their lives in their weaving.

"Great Grandmother"—in appreciation of women who settled Canada's prairies.

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Women Theologians"**
Speakers: Maria Teresa Porcile Santiso (Roman Catholic, Uruguay), Mercy Oduyoye (Methodist, Nigeria), Padmasini J. Gallup (Church of South India), and representative of North American Orthodox Church

16:30—17:00 Worship.

20:00—21:30 **"Songs for and about Women"** performed by Louise Rose, Asian Centre Auditorium. A resident of Victoria, B.C. Louise Rose has a variety of lively musical styles, including ethnic, gospel and jazz and she encourages her audience to sing along in parts of the concert.

4 August

11:00—12:00 Films. **"Loved, Honoured and Bruised"**—marriage breakdown and domestic violence. Panel discussion follows.

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Les Femmes dans les Eglises du Quebec"**
Speakers: Prof. Dr. Elisabeth J. Lacelle (Roman Catholic, Ottawa), Annine Parent-Fortin (Roman Catholic, Montreal), Maureen Kabwe (Protestant, Lachine)

16:30—18:00 Music—Louise Rose

5 August

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"The Church and Feminist Theologies"**

Speakers: Dr. Letty M. Russell (Presbyterian, USA), (Gave talk on "Unity and the Human Community" for the Commission on Faith and Order, Lima, Peru, Jan. 1982)

6 August

11:00—12:00 Films. TBA

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Can there be Peace between the Sexes?"**

Speakers: Rev. Michael Kinnamon, Rev. Janet Crawford, and a married couple.

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Women and Racism"**
Speakers: Lindiwe Myeza (South Africa), Annette Hutchins-Felder (Methodist, USA), Gloria George (Canada)

20:00—21:30 Film. **"Donna"**—the relationship between politics and women's lives in Italy.

7 August

20:00—21:30 Film. **"Nicaragua"**—women describing the present situation.

8 August

12:30—14:00 Lunch* **"Women as Ecumenical Pioneers"**

Speakers: Dr. Cynthia Wedel (Episcopal, USA), Rev. Ruth Epting (Reformed Church), Shanti Solomon (F.L.C., India)

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"What has International Tourism to do with Prostitution?"**

Speakers: L. Nellie Mercado (Philippines), Boonmee Julkiree (Church of Christ, Thailand), Hildegard Zumach (Evangelical Church, Germany)

9 August

14:30—16:00 Conversation. **"Women in the Jewish Faith"**

Speakers: Jean Gerber (Jewish, Vancouver), et al

10 August

13:30—14:00 Closing worship.

THE PLOUGHSHARES COFFEEHOUSE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

The Coffeehouse is located on the UBC Campus and is open throughout the Assembly (25 July-10 August) from 11:00 to 19:00 at International House and from 19:00 to 23:00 at the Graduate Student Centre. This is a place which enables persons to explore, discuss, debate, hear and be engaged in issues of peace and justice in a variety of ways. There is worship and meditation each day at 12 noon, four programme periods in the afternoon and evening, and entertainment every evening after 21:30. Light meals and beverages are available for purchase and Delegate lunches can be arranged by an advance request of twenty-four hours.

Programmes feature experts in the fields of science and technology, theology, and international affairs, as well as church leaders, victims of militarism, persons respected for their activities as peacemakers, and performing artists. The artists, which include musicians, folk singers, actors, dancers and clowns, are persons committed to peace and justice and who evoke a deepened response and commitment for those who participate. Literature and audio-visual resources are on display at International House.

Public Programs

Location F —Worship Tent
Location I —Graduate Student Centre
Location L —International House
Location M —Totem Park Ballroom

25 July

20:00—23:00 **Opening Celebration of the
Location F Ploughshares Coffeehouse for
& Location I Peace and Justice**

"Choose Life"—Proclamation and blessing of
a call to commitment for justice and
peacemaking.

—Representatives of International Peace &
Justice Movements

—Leaders of Canadian Churches

—Canadian Native dancers

—Patrick Wedd and the Christ Church
Cathedral choir

—Music with Jim and Jean Strathdee

26 July

12:45—14:15 **"Under the Gun: A Disarming Revue"**

Location I —Headlines Theatre

14:30—16:00 **"How Can the WCC respond to the
Location I Global Imperative for Peace and
Justice?"**

PANEL may include: Lamar Gible (U.S.
Council of Churches), Gabriel Habbib
(Middle East Council of Churches), James
Oporio Ekwaro (Uganda), Heiner Falcke
(GDR), Laurens Hogebrink (Netherlands
Reformed Church), Ron Sider (USA),
Frederico Pagura (Argentina)

20:00—22:00 **"An evening with Dr. Helen Caldicott"**

Location I Response: Dr. Ron Sider

Music: Bob Bossin of Stringband

27 July

12:45—14:00 **"The Hazelnut and the Planet"**

Location L —Canon Herbert O'Driscoll (former Dean,
Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver presently
Warden, College of Preachers, Washington,
D.C.)

18:00—20:00 **"Women Working for Peace"**

Location M —Dinner with Helen Caldicott and Dorothea
Soelle. **DINNER** for Women only. Pre-
register at The Well/La Source or at the
Coffeehouse. Admission \$7.

22:00—23:00 **"Kin Lalat"**—Guatemalan music group

Location I

28 July

16:45—18:00 **"The Deterrence Debate: Maintaining
Location I Peace or Fueling Destruction?"**

PANEL may include Allan Geyer (USA),
Metropolitan Mar Gregorious (India), Ron
Sider (USA), Heiner Falcke (GDR),
Archbishop Kirill (USSR), Heinz Held (G),
Right Rev. John Habgood (Britain)

19:00—20:00 **MUSIC:** Jim & Jean Strathdee

Location I

20:00—21:30 **"Myth of Scarcity—Towards a Just
Economic Order"**
Location I **PANEL** may include: Ron Sider ("Rich
Christians in an Age of Hunger"), Michael
Klare (Institute for Policy Studies), Bishop
Remi de Roo ("Canadian Bishops' Statement
on the Economy"), Dr. Carole Christopher,
Jan Pronk (UNCTAD)

29 July

12:45—14:15 **"Nations as Peacemakers"**
Location L —Discussions with government officials from
Canada and Sweden.
PANEL may include: Very Rev. Lois Wilson,
Bishop Remi de Roo, Sister Rosalie Bertell

16:45—18:00 **"The Land is My Mother"**
Location L —Discussion with representatives of the
Nishga Tribal Council

22:00—23:30 **MUSIC:** Bob Bossin of Stringband
Location I

30 July

12:45—14:15 **"Pacific Peoples: Innocent Victims
of Militarism"**
Location L Discussion with Darlene Keju (Marshall
Islands)

15:00—16:30 Report from the Nuclear Free Pacific
Location L Conference—Rosalie Bertell, Phil Esmond,
Chet Meyers

16:45—18:00 **"Under the Gun: A Disarming Revue"**
Location L —Headlines Theatre

31 July

22:00—24:00 **CONCERT:** Louise Rose
Location I

1 August

14:30—16:00 **"Strategies for Stopping the Arms Race
Canadian, American and European Peace
Movements"—DISCUSSION**
Location I Dr. Randall Forsberg (Nuclear Freeze
Campaign), Ernie Regehr (Project
Ploughshares), and Mient Jan Faber
(European Peace Movement)

21:30—22:45 **"Under the Gun: A Disarming Review"**
Location I —Headlines Theatre

2 August

12:45—14:15 **"The Faces of Militarism: Social,
Psychological and Spiritual Costs"**
Location L **DISCUSSION** with Ernie Regehr, Laurens
Hogebrink and Dr. Joyce Harris

16:45—18:00 **"Community, Spirituality, and
Nonviolence: Answers to Militarism"**
Location L **DISCUSSION** with Jim Wallis (Sojourners
Community), Jim Douglass (Ground Zero
Centre for Nonviolent Action), Dorothea
Soelle (European theologian, poet & activist),
Sister Rosalie Bertell (Jesuit Centre for Social
Faith and Justice)

21:30—22:30 **MUSIC:** Louise Rose *Location I*

3 August

14:30—16:00 **"The Faces of Liberation: Overcoming
Injustice through Armed Struggle or
Nonviolence?"**

Location L **DRAMATIC READING** of correspondence
between Daniel Berrigan and Ernesto
Cardenal. **PANEL** may include: Jim Douglass
(Peace Activist), Julia Esquivel (Guatemala),
Pilipe Ortiz (Central American Support
Committee)

16:45—18:00 **"Theology of Peacemaking"**

Location L **DISCUSSION** with: Jim Wallis (Evangelical
pastor/writer) and John Howard Yoder
(Theologian)

21:45—23:15 **"Teatro Vivo"**

Location I —Guatemalan Theatre Company

4 August

12:45—14:15 **REPORT** from the Peace and Justice
Location L Plenary Session

14:30—16:00 **"I Walked with Gandhi"**

Location L **CONVERSATION:** Mildred Fahrni

16:45—18:00 **RECEPTION & CONVERSATION** with

Location I Coretta Scott King (Widow of Martin Luther
King Jr.)

5 August

19:30—

**PEACE ACTION—TORCHLIGHT
PROCESSION AND ALL NIGHT VIGIL**

6 August

All day

Location L

**SPECIAL OBSERVANCE OF
HIROSHIMA DAY**

Worship, song, dance and prayer vigil
PREMIERE: "No more Hibakushas"
(NFB film) and **DISCUSSION** with
Hiroshima Survivors

8 August

12:45—18:00 **"Where to from here?"**

Location L —for the World Council of Churches
—for the Canadian Churches
—for the movements for peace and justice
(a series of discussions and films during the
afternoon)

20:00—21:30 **Liturgical Celebration of**

Location I **Commitment to Justice and Peacemaking**

9 August

12:00—13:30 **"Bird of Fire" WORSHIP &**

Location L **MEDITATION**—Paula O'Driscoll and
Patrick Wedd

22:00—24:00 **PARTY** (Square & Folk Dancing)

Location I

MUSIC

Many musical events enhance the Assembly, highlights being the presentations on 23 July, 1 August and 7 August, all at 20:00. A choral weekend, artists-in-residence, several series featuring young artists, organists and Asian music plus visiting artists, all add to the rich variety.

Choral Weekend

A two day choral weekend culminates with the Opening Day Celebrations in the Pacific Coliseum (24 July 14:30-16:00). The time together allows the singers (800 expected from British Columbia and Washington) to gain a deeper understanding of the significance of this occasion and to prepare for their part in it. Rehearsals, an anthem reading session, two short choral concerts and a supper are scheduled.

Highlight Presentations

- 23 July (20:00) Music Building Recital Hall. A welcoming recital on the eve of the Assembly. **"A Circle of Voices: Songs of Worship, Love and Comfort in Five Tongues"** features Canadian soprano Gaelyne Gabora, accompanied by Kirt Pavitt.
- 1 August (20:00) Ryerson United Church, 45th Avenue and Yew Streets. **"The Journey"** a special presentation of The Well/La Source. Canadian soprano Catherine Robbin and the Vancouver Cantata Singers under the direction of James Fankhauser present a musical interpretation of a woman's journey through life, composed by Canadian Nancy Telfer.
- 7 August (20:00) Music Building Recital Hall. The Assembly Choir, consisting of over 50 singers, assists daily in the worship services and highlights their participation in the Assembly by a concluding concert presentation.

Concerts in the Asian Centre Auditorium

26 July	15:00-16:00	Teresa Kobayashi-Marumoto— <i>koto</i>
27 July	13:30-14:15	Helen Yoon Kim— <i>violin</i> Vicki Wong— <i>piano</i>
28 July	15:00-16:00	Kathryn Hansen— <i>sitar</i>
29 July	13:30-14:15	Rena Ling— <i>piano</i> Carmen Roberts— <i>flute</i>
2 Aug.	13:00-14:15	Patricia Sun Woo— <i>violin</i> Xanthe Willer— <i>violin</i> Sophie Willer— <i>cello</i>
3 Aug.	13:30-14:15	Pritchard and Ehling <i>piano duets</i>
	15:00-16:00	Tai-Hing Chang— <i>sheng</i> Cheng-Hua Cheng— <i>flute and ch'in</i>
	20:00-22:00	"Songs for and About Women" Louise Rose

Concerts in the Music Building Recital Hall

23 July	20:00-21:30	Gaelyne Gabora— <i>soprano</i>
2 Aug.	12:30-13:30	Patrick Wedd— <i>organ</i>
3 Aug.	12:30-13:30	Dietrich Bartel— <i>organ</i>
4 Aug.	12:30-13:30	Darryl Nixon— <i>organ</i>
5 Aug.	12:30-13:30	Susan Driver— <i>organ</i>
7 Aug.	20:00-21:30	Assembly Choir

Concerts in the Worship Tent

26 July	13:30-14:15	Jim and Jean Strathdee <i>music makers</i>
30 July	13:30-14:15	Stan Elliotson— <i>trumpet</i>
1 Aug.	13:30-14:15	Louise Rose— <i>jazz pianist/vocalist</i>
10 Aug.	20:00-21:30	"Sing All Ye People"

Music in the Graduate Student Centre

25 July	21:30-23:00	Jim and Jean Strathdee, Patrick Wedd & the Christ Church Cathedral choir
27 July	22:00-23:00	Kin Lalat— <i>Guatemalan music</i>
28 July	19:00-20:00	Jim and Jean Strathdee <i>music makers</i>
29 July	22:00-23:30	Bob Bossin of Stringband
31 July	22:00-24:00	Louise Rose— <i>jazz pianist/vocalist</i>
2 Aug.	21:30-22:30	Louise Rose— <i>jazz pianist/vocalist</i>

Music in the Lutheran Campus Centre

28 July	16:30-18:00	Jim and Jean Strathdee
2 Aug.	16:30-18:00	Louise Rose
4 Aug.	16:30-18:00	Louise Rose

THE AGORA

Located in the Armoury, the AGORA is a place for special interest groups to present their particular concerns by way of display and multi-media presentations. Over sixty groups are present. Daily forums (14:00 and 18:00) provide opportunities for these groups to highlight their programs. Noon-hour performances (12:30-13:30) and an art gallery feature a variety of local artists. The AGORA is open from 11:00 to 20:00 from Monday 25 July to Wednesday 3 August.

Noon-Hour Performances (12:30-13:30)

25 July	—Peter Allen's Puppets
26 July	—"The Abbey-Yo-Yo Man"—Ian R. Johnston
27 July	—Marang (African/Latin Percussion)
28 July	—Jon Bartlett, Rika Ruebesaat (Canadian Folk Music)
29 July	—"Life Liturgical Dance Group"
30 July	—"Heavenly Minded Music"—Larry Brons
31 July	—Gagliano Chamber Ensemble (flute quintet)
1 Aug.	—Madrigal Singers
2 Aug.	—Praisemakers (Israeli Music)
3 Aug.	—Mike Absalom (Singing Satirist)

Daily Forum Presentations

25 July	14:00	Canadian Friends of the International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem —film “Where it all Began”
	18:00	Door of Hope (Vancouver) —film “Let our People Go”
26 July	14:00	Training and Rehabilitation in Asia Society (TRAS)—slide/tape “Twenty Years of TRAS in Asia”
	18:00	Canada China Program —film “Church Life in Shanghai”
27 July	14:00	Right to Life Society of Vancouver —film “Life is a Gift from God”
	18:00	AFFIRM (Gays and Lesbians of the United Church of Canada)—slide/tape
28 July	14:00	Door of Hope (International) —slide presentation
	18:00	Project North (Native Political Organization)—speakers, forum
29 July	14:00	United Nations Association in Canada —film “Coke Kill”
	18:00	TBA
30 July	14:00	TBA
	18:00	Committee for Medical and Refugee Aid to Palestinians—video “Human Rights and the Palestinians”
31 July	14:00	United Commission on Mass Media of Kansas (UNICOMM)—film “Causeway for Peace”
	18:00	Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society (EDCS)—filmstrip “Like an Inca Rainbow”
1 Aug.	14:00	Nishga Tribal Council—multi-media “Nishga Land Claims—the Right to Survive”
	18:00	Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada—slide/tape “A Choice for the Future: A Family Planning Resource for Native People”
2 Aug.	14:00	Education Action for Central American Refugees—theatre “Teatro Vivo”
	18:00	Central American Support Committee —film “Condition of the Ordinary People in Central America”
3 Aug.	14:00	TBA

Art Gallery Artists

Nora Blank	Judith M. Atkinson
Tom Knott	Lionel Doucette
Bill Rennie	Jeannie Mah
Patrick Sullivan	Jeannie Kamins
Keith Mitchell	Barbara Seamon
	Persimmon Blackridge

AGORA Exhibitors

AFFIRM—Gays and Lesbians of the United Church
of Canada
All-Africa Conference of Churches
American Theological Library Association Religion Indexes
Amnesty International
Arthritis Society of British Columbia
British Columbia Council for the Family
British Columbia Peace Council
Boy Scouts of Canada
Canada China Program
Canadian Catholic Organisation for Development and Peace
Canadian Crossroads International
Canadian Ecumenical Action
Canadian Friends of the International Christian
Embassy, Jerusalem
Canadian Universities Services Overseas
Central American Support Committee
Coalition for World Disarmament
Committee for Racial Justice
Committee for Medical and Refugee Aid to Palestinians
Creation Science Association of Canada
Crossroads Christian Communication Inc. (100 Huntley St.)
Dignity/Canada/Dignite
Door of Hope International
Ecumenical Forum of Canada
Ecumenical Development Co-operative Society
Education Action Program for Central American Refugees
Faith at Work (Canada) Inc.
Fellowship of the Least Coin
Food for the Hungry/Canada
Institute for Christian Studies
Interagency Committee on Central America
Interchurch Committee for Campaign Funds
Interchurch Uranium Committee
International Bible Projects (Kenya)
International Christian Federation for the Prevention of
Alcoholism and Drug Addiction
International Christian Youth Exchange
International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa
Mainstream Church and Society Inc.
Match International Centre
Nishga Tribal Council
Orthodox Church in America
OXFAM Canada
Pacific Association for Continuing Education
Pacific Conference of Churches
Pakistan Embroidery Project
Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada
Project North
Public Education for Peace Society
Rissho-Kosei-Kai
Searchers Christian Information Inc.
South American Missionary Society in Canada
Southern Africa Action Coalition
Training and Rehabilitation in Asia Society
United Bible Societies
United Church Observer
United Inter-Faith Commission on Mass Media
United Nations Association
UNICEF
Vancouver Right to Life Society
Women's Self-Help Network

VISUAL ARTS

A variety of outstanding handcrafted articles have been gathered for exhibit or presentation during the Assembly. These include two art exhibits, (one at the Lutheran Campus Centre, the other at the Robson Square Media Centre), banners especially prepared for the Plenary Hall, the Worship Tent, the Issue Groups and the small groups, clusters and discussion group rooms, and gifts for the delegates and accredited visitors of handmade cushion covers and tote bags.

Canadian Liturgical Art Collection Exhibit—Robson Square Media Centre, 26 July-9 Aug. 11:00-20:00 (closed Sundays)

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is providing this special collection of paintings, carvings, drawings and metal work which depict contemporary spiritual images. Commissioned several years ago by the C.C.C.B. it has been photographed and appears in the Sunday Mass Book. Its pieces are representative of the many geographical areas of Canada and the collection has been presented in many different centres throughout the country.

Ulli Steltzer Exhibit—Lutheran Campus Centre 23 July-10 Aug. 08:00-21:30 daily

The Well/La Source is pleased to present a display of 20 photographs by well-known artist, Ulli Steltzer. Her special subjects of interest are Canadian Natives and her work has appeared in three books, **Inuit: the North in Transition**, **Indian Artists at Work** and **Coast of Many Faces**. Ulli Steltzer will be present one day at The Well/La Source to discuss her life and her work.

Plenary Hall Banner—War Memorial Gymnasium

Fred Peter, Vancouver graphic artist has designed the hanging at the back of the stage of the Plenary Hall. Based on Biblical images of life, the banner provides a focal point for the Assembly deliberations.

Worship Tent Quilt—Worship Tent

Quilted hangings at the back of the platform area have been designed and fabricated by liturgical artist Mary Jane Muir and fabric artist Jennifer Tunner. The central panel features the Vancouver adaptation of the W.C.C. logo also designed by Mary Jane Muir.

Issue Group Banners

Eight issue banners displayed in rooms assigned to issue groups have been designed and constructed by Vancouver painter Catherine Wetmore. The banners symbolize the issues of the Assembly, the bonds of the Christian community and its brokenness. Catherine Wetmore will be participating in the Banner Workshop planned for Accredited Visitors during the Assembly.

Children's Banner

For the small groups, clusters and discussion group rooms, sixty-five banners using paint, crayon and applique have been made by children in the lower mainland as part of a Sunday School curriculum entitled "Rainbow of Churches".

Cushion Covers

People in Canada and the United States have made over 3000 cushion covers as gifts for the delegates and accredited visitors. A variety of techniques such as applique, weaving, knitting, crochet, embroidery, quilting and patchwork have been used to construct these covers.

Tote Bags

Twenty five hundred tote bags to be given as gifts to the delegates and accredited visitors have been designed by Vancouver fabric artist Julie Bauming and made and donated by church groups and individuals from the Vancouver area.

RELATED PROGRAM EVENTS

WCC Film Festival

Films are being shown daily for the first two weeks of the Assembly. Major features are scheduled from July 25-29, and films relating to the issues under discussion are scheduled from August 1-5, all in the Old Auditorium. An eight part series on "Women around the World" is being premiered.

Cafe Totem

A coffeehouse for Assembly participants only is scheduled each evening at the Totem Park Residence. Entertainment and/or discussions relevant to the concerns of the day are planned.

WCC Bookstore and Exhibit

The World Council of Churches Bookstore is located in the Student Union Building throughout the Assembly. A special exhibit of the Council is on display at the Robson Square Media Centre.

Reinhart Braun Exhibition

Thirty-seven posters by the Berlin designer Reinhart Braun are on display at the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Emily Carr College of Art and Design, Granville Island from 25 July to 10 August. These posters portray Christian concerns through contemporary graphic and advertising techniques.

Kwakiutl Art Exhibition

A collaborative event at the UBC Museum of Anthropology and co-sponsored with the B.C. Provincial Museum (Victoria), the Nuyambalees Society of Cape Mudge and the U'Mista Cultural Centre, this major exhibition opens 21 July and runs throughout the Assembly.

Italic Handwriting Society of B.C.

The Annual Show of the 135 member Society takes place 27 July-14 August at the Vancouver Public Library, Burrard and Robson. The presentations are on the theme of "Peace and Brotherhood" in line with the deliberations of the Assembly.

Marksong

This original production written in Vancouver plays at University Hill United Church, 5375 University Blvd., 25-29 July, 20:00. Tickets at AMS Box Office, SUB.

Vancouver Musical Theatre

The Vancouver Musical Theatre group presents "Jesus Christ, Superstar" at Malkin Bowl, Stanley Park, 3 August to 3 September, Tuesdays through Sundays (weather permitting) at 21:00. Tickets are available at Vancouver Ticket Centre, Concert Box Offices, Woodward's, Eaton's and the Bay; \$8.00 for adults, \$6.00 for children under 12 and for senior citizens. Special group rates for 15 or more are available by calling David Crawley at 669-3052.

Joel Kingston

Joel Kingston, artist, presents "A Question of Power", paintings of global concerns, at University Hill United Church, 5375 University Blvd., 11:00-21:00, 21 July to 12 August.

Michael O'Brien

Michael O'Brien, artist, displays his modern icons in the Chapel of the Epiphany, Vancouver School of Theology, 3 August to 10 August.

Pacific Interfaith Association

The Pacific Interfaith Association hosts a reception for invited representatives on 24 July, 20:00 in the Asian Centre.

Young Women's Christian Association

The Vancouver YWCA holds a reception 28 July, 18:00 to 20:00, at The Well/La Source (Lutheran Campus Centre) for Dame Nita Barrow, President and Ruth Sovik, General Secretary of the World YWCA. All YWCA members are welcome. Please pre-register at The Well/La Source.

Vancouver Society For Early Music

The Vancouver Society for Early Music holds its meetings at UBC during the Assembly. The following concerts are scheduled in the Music Building Recital Hall.

22 July 20:00

Music of the German Baroque

with Monica Huggett, Baroque violin; Sarah Cunningham, viola da gamba; and Doreen Oke, harpsichord.

24 July 20:00

Nigel Rogers in Recital

with Nigel Rogers, tenor; Robert Kohnen, harpsichord; Ray Nurse, lute; and Nan Mackie, viola da gamba.

27 July 20:00

Frescobaldi and his Time

with Bernard Lagace, organ

29 July 20:00

A Rameau Celebration: The Late French Baroque

with Janet See, Baroque flute; Monica Huggett, Baroque violin; Sarah Cunningham, viola da gamba; Robert Kohnen, harpsichord.

Preview of Sixth Meeting of World Council of Churches

By David E. Anderson
United Press International

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Elders from Indian tribes along Canada's west coast will light a ceremonial fire early tomorrow morning to mark the beginning of the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, one of the largest gatherings of Christian bodies ever held.

The fire, to burn throughout the July 24—Aug. 12 assembly, also will provide light for the candles for other more traditional forms of Christian celebration that will punctuate the debate as the council wrestles with its theme, "Jesus Christ, the Life of the World."

While much of the attention on the council is likely to be focused on the social and political pronouncements made by the 900 delegates, the real work of the 18-day assembly and its ultimate significance will be in the theological and spiritual message the delegates take back to their 303 member churches.

"Worship is the underlying flow" of the assembly, according to council officials, and there will be three worship services each day, including noon services featuring "great preachers of the world."

Equally important, the assembly, the first in North America since its second meeting

was held in Evanston, Ill., in 1954, will be a gauge of the degree of unity the world's Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant churches have achieved since the fifth assembly in Nairobi in 1975.

A year ago in Lima, Peru, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council—the group responsible for exploring the theological issues that divide the churches—issued historic consensus statements on baptism, the eucharist and ministry.

Although the statements have yet to be acted on by the council's member churches, they challenge in a quiet way the assumption of critics that the council has forsaken the quest for doctrinal unity in favor of social and political activism.

The Vancouver assembly also will be a dramatic demonstration of the changed nature of the world Christian movement since the council's first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, a gathering that was dominated by white males from the churches of Europe and the United States.

While the United States still will have the largest number of delegates, the rapid growth and independence of the one-time missionary churches of the Third World has greatly increased the number of delegates and participants from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Women, too, are participating in greater numbers, growing from 6 percent at Amsterdam to almost 30 percent for the Vancouver meeting.

That changing constituency, however, also has been the source of some of the criticism that the council has placed too much emphasis on justice issues for minorities and women and not enough on its original purpose of seeking Christian unity.

That criticism comes not only from those outside the council, such as the recent attacks in Reader's Digest and on CBS' "60 Minutes," but from some influential segments within the council: the Orthodox and some European Lutherans. One group, the Salvation Army, has withdrawn from the international body because of its perceived involvement in left-wing political activities.

The thorn in the side of the critics is "liberation theology," a view that has emerged primarily from Third World churches in Latin America and Africa. Those who subscribe to liberation theology filter their understanding of Christian doctrine through the idea that God has performed liberating acts for the people of Israel.

This has led churches to talk of God's bias for the poor and the oppressed and in many instances for both clergy and laity to identify with liberation movements—sometimes rev-

olutionary—in a number of Third World countries.

At the same time, the critics charge the World Council has been too often silent on human rights abuses in Communist-dominated countries.

Council supporters countered that the delicate nature of church-state relations in those countries demands a different, more behind-the-scenes approach. And they point to quiet interventions on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church and the World Council's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs on behalf of the "Siberian Seven," the group of Soviet Pentacostals who lived in the U.S. Embassy for five years in an attempt to win the right to immigrate to Israel.

Despite the criticisms, however, there is no indication the council's membership is ready to abandon its concern for peace and justice issues and the Vancouver assembly will have a heavy focus on both.

Even that could cause some internal problems in the council, according to some observers, as Third World delegates consider the nuclear war issue to be primarily a concern of the white Western churches of Europe and North America, taking precedence over the justice issues that dominate Africa and Asia.

As always, words, written and spoken, are one of the chief products of such gatherings and Vancouver will be no exception.

The 900 delegates and 1,000 visitors will hear a host of not only Christian leaders but Jews, Moslems, Buddhists and Hindus, as well as representatives of Christian groups that do not belong to the council, such as the Roman Catholic Church.

Meeting in a host of smaller groups, the delegates also will explore four subthemes of the assembly's overall theme of "Jesus Christ—the Life of the World": "Life, a Gift of God"; "Life, Confronting and Overcoming Death"; "Life in its Fullness"; and "Life in Unity."

Woven through the words and committee meetings will be many other events: a film festival, concerts, art exhibitions, as well as public forums that will feature such speakers as Coretta Scott King and Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Perez Esquivel.

But as the assembly ends and the 4,000 delegates, consultants, ecumenical visitors and guests disperse to their homes around the globe, the agenda of the World Council of Churches—still the most representative gathering of Christians in history—will have created an agenda that will affect the religious life of many of the 370 million people in churches affiliated with the council.

World Council. 'Do unto others . . .,' outsiders tell church meeting

by Carol Ostrom
Times religion reporter

VANCOUVER, B.C. — A quiet drizzle fell on the sacred flame lit by Native Canadians on the University of British Columbia campus.

As the World Council of Churches met in a gym just across the mall, a tall man with long black braids, one of many tribal members who will keep the flame alive throughout the council's 18-day meeting, stood guard over the fire.

Like others of non-Christian faiths, the man is an outsider, permitted to "dialog with" but not to join the world's second largest assembly of Christians, which is meeting here to set the agenda for its work over the next decade.

Yesterday, the council invited some of those on the outside, including Jews, Buddhists, Mus-

lims, Sikhs and Hindus, along with the native peoples, to address the council.

The invitation was accepted, and the messages were polite, but firm: Christians should curb their intolerance, respect the rights and beliefs of other religions, and learn from those of other faiths. And, a Native Canadian told them, they should begin to help right the historical wrongs of those whose arrogance led them to conclude that native peoples somehow had no rights.

"In negative terms," said Rodrick Robinson Sr., hereditary chief of the Nishga tribe, "our struggle is against 150 years of racism, oppression and injustice."

Even now, he told the assembly, his tribe is struggling with the government over its rights to land in Northern British Columbia, which to the tribe is holy land. "Our identity is inseparable from our land," he told them.

"By definition, a Nishga does not exist in the fullness of his being without a complete melding of his land, his language, laws, tribal system and spiritual values."

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, an official Jewish observer to the council, urged the adoption of a religious pluralism "which presupposes the right of each religious, racial and ethnic group to define itself in its own terms and to be accepted unconditionally by its own self-definition."

Both Christians and Jews, he said, should work toward reducing "the abrasive effects of 'differences' and to help teach others that differences can be an 'enrichment' rather than a threat."

Other speakers decried the exploitation of nature and urged respect for life. "Islam," said Shayk Yusuf Khan Shakhov, a Muslim guest from the Soviet

Union, speaking in Russian, "... is rightly 'called a life-asserting religion."

"It promotes in the souls of its believers the feelings or careful and respectful attitude towards life." In addition, he said, "Allah gives us not only life, but all means of its development and continuation. He gives us air to breathe and water to drink. ... We say that Islam is not only a religion, it is also a mode of life."

Shri Shrivatsa Goswami, a North Indian Renewal Movement leader, said the Hindu religion teaches that God may be found in all creation.

That religion's teachings, he said, acknowledge that "the truth is the same, but may be expressed or realized in different ways."

For many of the council's participants, including the 15 guests of other faiths who have been invited to attend this assembly, the chance to meet face-to-

face with those whose views are different is an opportunity and also a challenge.

The world itself has served as a lesson in the need for such discussion, said Dirk Mulder, moderator of the council's working group on dialog with people of living faiths. Though the council has been talking of unity for many years, he said, it has often met in the midst of religious wars and violence.

"The history of interreligious relations is a very sad history, indeed," he said.

The council itself hasn't yet come to a clear decision as to how wide a range of beliefs and "ideologies" to include, even as guests, said WCC staff member Dr. John Taylor. Marxists, atheists and humanists, for example, were not included among the guests.

But Taylor cautioned against making too much of the distinction between religion and "ideology."

"Too many churches are boxed in with this idea that here we are with our 'faith' and there they are with their 'ideology,'" he said.

Unlike other places where the council or its sub-groups have met, Canada, despite its language division, has no bloody internal wars as an on-going backdrop for this assembly.

In Vancouver, the Anglican and United Church of Christ have cooperated in assisting in developing a Native Indian Pastoral Ministry, said Jean Jeffries, a Mohawk who also works with the ministry.

Still, she said, Canadians as a whole have learned little from the native peoples.

"They haven't learned how to listen," she said. "They haven't learned that we have a great deal to give."

Despite "genocide, a psychological and physical genocide" of native peoples, she said, "the fact that we're still here in spite of it is a sign that the creator is saying you can't crucify these people over and over." Native spirituality runs too deep to be crushed, she said.

At the sacred fire, tended on land that once belonged to the Musqueam Tribe, the man with the long braids agreed. "I want people to learn that our way of life isn't gone yet, that no white man or race in this world can ever take it away."

He also wants others to learn that one religion isn't "bigger" or better than the other, he said. "The reason the old people accepted the clergy into our lands is because they spoke of the same things our ancestors did."

But then, native children were taken out of homes, raised in the white man's schools, and were punished for speaking their native languages or for their spiritualist religion, he said.

"If the white people really believed in their own religion, they would understand our way of life," he said.

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date July 28, 1983

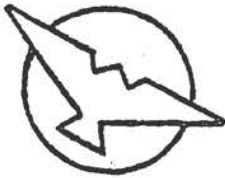
to Marc Tanenbaum

from Barbara Hurst/Seattle

subject

For your information -
Regards
Barbara





Canadian Ecumenical Action
ACTION OECUMENIQUE CANADIENNE

1410 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, B. C.
V6H 1M8
(604) 736-1613 or 736-6814

Dear Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum:

As members of Canadian Ecumenical Action we also are pleased to welcome you to Vancouver, as one of the supportive groups here in Vancouver.

Canadian Ecumenical Action is an "inter-person, inter-church, inter-faith and inter-community" fellowship headquartered in Vancouver. From here we seek to relate to ecumenical, including inter-faith, activities around the world.


We publish the Canadian Ecumenical News, copies of which are enclosed. We also are pleased to provide you with a subscription to the Ecumenical News sent to your home address. We welcome comments from you about inter-religious inter-action in your own countries.

Our Planning Board includes persons of the Baha'i, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Unitarian and Zoroastrian faiths and we are currently seeking a Buddhist member. Thus we share our concerns for the wholeness of our community.

We are happy to invite you to an informal evening home gathering on Sunday, August 7th, at 7:30 p.m. at my home, if this is convenient to you. If you are able to come and need a ride please contact me in the guest section of the W.C.C. in the gym or leave a message for me in the W.C.C. mail box.

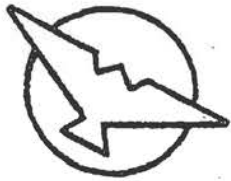
Again, we are very appreciative that you have taken the time to share in this meeting in Vancouver to encourage positive co-operation of persons of varied faiths.

Sincerely yours,


Rev. Val J. Anderson
Co-Ordinator of Canadian
Ecumenical Action

a fellowship to support the spiritual growth of persons as we live and work together in our communities.

Rev. Val J. Anderson, Co-ordinator



Canadian Ecumenical Action
ACTION OECUMENIQUE CANADIENNE

1410 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, B. C.
V6H 1M8
(604) 736-1613 or 736-6814

AN INVITATION

The Planning Board of Canadian Ecumenical Action invites you who are interested in ecumenical concerns, sharing "inter-person, inter-church, inter-faith and inter-community", to an evening of meeting and sharing

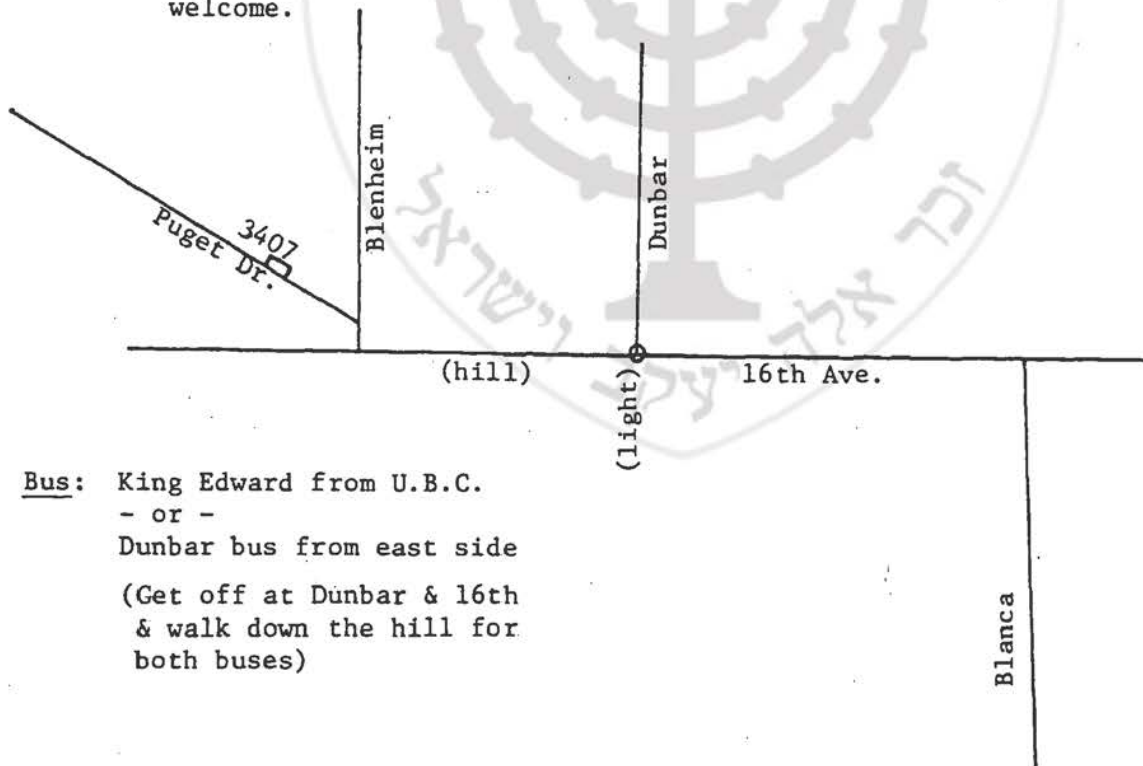
on

Sunday, August 7th at 7:30 p.m.

at

the home of Joyce & Val Anderson
3407 Puget Drive
Vancouver
Phone: 733-3436

If you wish to bring interested guests, they would be most welcome.



Bus: King Edward from U.B.C.
- or -
Dunbar bus from east side
(Get off at Dunbar & 16th
& walk down the hill for
both buses)

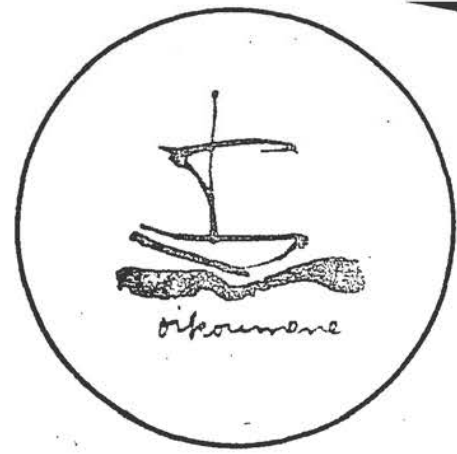
a fellowship to support the spiritual growth of persons as we live and work together in our communities.

Rev. Val J. Anderson, Co-ordinator

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

VANCOUVER 1983



July 13, 1983

Dear Friends,

It is our understanding that you will be attending the World Council of Churches Assembly in Vancouver this Summer. That provides an excellent opportunity to bring together those of us who have an expressed interest in Christian Jewish relations.

We are confident that matters of mutual concern will emerge at the Assembly about which we may want to have some advance discussion early in the meeting. All of us will be called upon to participate in many activities surrounding the regular program of the Assembly. With this in mind, I send you this brief note of welcome and encouragement.

As Moderator of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People of the WCC I would like to invite you to join me and some of our colleagues, both Christian and Jew, for a reception during the first week of the Assembly in Vancouver. We will meet on Wednesday evening, July 27, 1983 from 8:00 to 10:00 PM. at a place which is currently being determined by the WCC staff in Vancouver.

When you arrive in Vancouver, please check your mailbox at the Assembly for a note which will give you the location for the meeting. You may also contact Allen Brockway, Joan Campbell or myself if you have any questions.

A rare opportunity has presented itself and we hope you will be able to join us in Vancouver. Hoping to see you there,

Yours,

Krister Stendahl

A wine and cheese reception has been scheduled for us in the Totem Park Residence, Nootka Unit Lounge, main floor. We look forward to seeing you Wednesday night.

July 31, 1983

A JEWISH OBSERVER REPORTS ON WORLD COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES ASSEMBLY IN VANCOUVER

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

As an official representative of the world Jewish community attending the World Council of Churches Assembly last week in Canada, I found the experience enriching, stimulating -- and troublesome.

The enrichment came from the opportunity it gave me to meet religious leaders literally from every part of the world. I even met a black Anglican Archbishop from Botswana who spoke fluent Yiddish.

The stimulation came from the privilege of listening to a series of frequently brilliant papers on the threat to human survival posed by the nuclear arms race, poverty, hunger, world refugees, and rampant fanaticism in many parts of the world.

As the first Jewish spokesman ever invited to address a World Council plenary of 4,000 delegates and guests, I told the international gathering that the Jewish people share many of these concerns. Given Judaism's emphasis on the sanctity of human life, I stated that world Jewry is prepared to collaborate in the struggle to assure human survival.

But what I found troublesome was an approach to Christian unity that seemed to ignore the powerful reality of religious pluralism in the world.

It was also unsettling to see how Arab Christians were using their Christianity to mount blatant one-sided, anti-Israel campaigns among the WCC delegates.

Next week, the resolutions on world affairs -- including the Middle East -- will be introduced. We will then have a clearer idea as to whether the World Council will be a reconciling or a polarizing force between peoples and nations.

*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

August 7, 1983

SRI LANKA'S POGROM AGAINST THE TAMIL IGNORED
WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

His name is the Rev. Wesley Ariarajah. A small, dark-skinned man with a warm smile, he is a Christian minister from Sri Lanka who serves on the staff of the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

About ten days ago, we met again on the broad campus of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver where the World Council Assembly was in session. Wesley's face had become ashen, and he looked emotionally battered. That morning he had learned of the outbreak of religious-ethnic violence between members of the majority Sinhalese group and minority Tamil people.

While both the Sinhalese and Tamil came originally from India to Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese are mainly Buddhists and the Tamil are mostly Hindu. Because of their education and business prowess the Tamil are called "the Jews of Sri Lanka." Ancient religious prejudice and bitter economic rivalry have resulted in periodic violent group conflicts. Last week's was the worst yet.

Sinhalese soldiers, in reprisal for an earlier Tamil attack, launched a pogrom against the Tamil that left 267 people killed, a number of them burned alive. Tamil homes and businesses were scorched to the ground, and an estimated 150,000 people were left homeless. On that morning Wesley told me that his brother's home and business were completely destroyed.

I wondered why the World Council had not interceded to try to stop these terrible massacres. Had it been the Israelis, instead of the Sinhalese, God forbid, the pro-PLO forces at the World Council would have dominated the Vancouver Assembly and demanded that the world pay attention to them, and them alone.

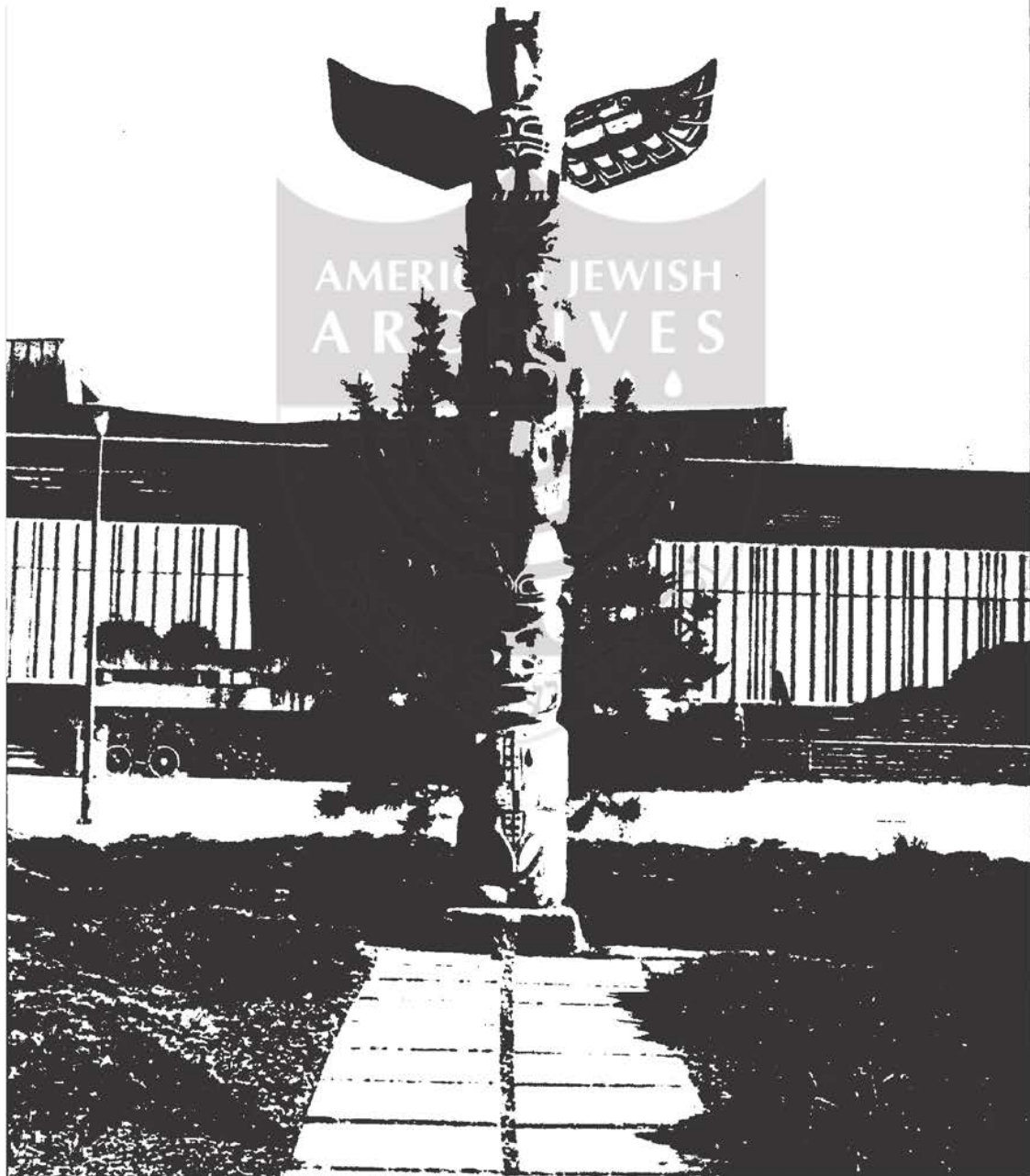
As is the case with so many other victims in the world, the Tamil tragically have become simply another 24-hour media event.

*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

rpr

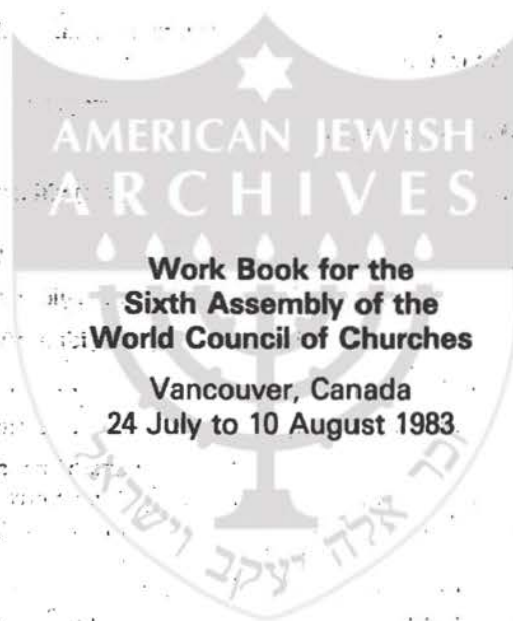
WORK BOOK

Vancouver 83



WORK BOOK

Vancouver 83



World Council of Churches, Geneva

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Cover design and photo: Michael Dominguez
Drawings by Claudius

ISBN No. 2-8254-0762-3

© 1983 World Council of Churches, 150 route de Ferney,
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Printed in Switzerland

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WHY A WORK BOOK?

Among the many publications sent to you during the last several months are four books on the Assembly theme, a dossier containing papers on the eight Assembly Issues, a book on the church in Canada where the Assembly meets, a book that tells the story of the World Council of Churches since the last Assembly, and Nairobi to Vancouver, the official report of the Central Committee on the WCC's work during the last seven years.

The Assembly Work Book is a different kind of publication. It is meant as a practical guide and a reference book for our time together in Vancouver. Its purpose is to prepare us to participate fully in the programme of the Assembly, to see that we contribute as much as we can to the Assembly and receive from it all that it can give us. The Work Book introduces the Assembly programme. It tells us what an Assembly is and how this Assembly will do its work. It gives us some idea of who the participants are and what the major events will be. It contains the annotated agendas for our discussion of the eight Issues. It reproduces the Constitution and Rules, and explains and illustrates how we may participate fully and intelligently in the total work of the Assembly.

We shall be together in Vancouver for 18 days, but we have a vast deal of work to do and our programme is a demanding one. There are over 3000 of us, and we come from widely different situations and with diverse expectations. For the majority of us this is the first exposure to a WCC Assembly, and for many it can be a strange, difficult and even daunting experience. That is why such a Work Book is so indispensable for our effective participation in the Assembly.

We have tried to make the Work Book as full and clear as possible. We urge you to go through it carefully before you come to Vancouver, and to refer to it -- and to the offices and people it directs you to -- whenever you feel the need at the Assembly itself.

This brings my personal greetings to you.

Philip Potter

Philip Potter
General Secretary, World Council of Churches

world council of churches
conseil oecuménique des églises



sixth assembly
sixième assemblée

VANCOUVER 1983

Whether you come from far or near, the church people in this province want to welcome you into our midst. We hope that your gathering here in Vancouver will be for you a time of great joy as you pray and worship together -- as you talk together -- and as you speak to us and to the whole world in the name of Jesus who is the life of the world. We are excited about your coming here and look forward to meeting you and hearing what you have to say.

The Vancouver Planning Committee has been working hard and long getting ready for your arrival. We want you to be comfortable and pleased with the arrangements we have made for your stay in Vancouver. But we don't want you to be too comfortable! We hope that you will enjoy your time here and that it will be a time of such challenge and stimulation that none of us will ever forget it.

So we pray that the Holy Spirit will fill us all with power and insight and bring us out of easy acceptance of old ways into the splendour and reality of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In his name I bid you welcome.

David Somerville

Archbishop David Somerville
Chairman, Vancouver Planning Committee

VANCOUVER PLANNING COMMITTEE • COMITÉ D'ORGANISATION DE VANCOUVER

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The Canadian Council of Churches
Le Conseil canadien des Églises

On behalf of the member churches in Canada we bid you welcome. Under the Canadian Coordinating Committee, and with the assistance of the Canadian Council of Churches, the member churches across the breadth of Canada have given their support to the Vancouver Planning Committee in the hosting activities that we trust you are already enjoying. It is the hope of every Canadian Christian that your time here will be fruitful not alone in taking, as an Assembly, one more step in the ecumenical journey, but that it will also be a time of growth and development in faith and understanding for each participant personally.

One half of Canada's Christians belong to a non-member church. Yet we welcome you on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church most surely, since its representatives have been involved in the planning from the start. One of the marks of ecumenism in Canada is the fine working relationship that exists nationally and locally between Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. The Canadian Coordinating Committee and the Vancouver Planning Committee have, from the start, included Roman Catholic members who have provided valued leadership. The exhibit of ecclesiastical art provided by the Council of Canadian Bishops is a symbol of our cooperation.

It is our hope that some of you will have the opportunity of visiting other parts of this highly diverse nation while you are here. Canada has a heritage of spirituality which we have attempted to introduce to you in exhibits, programmes, and activities surrounding the Assembly schedule,



and in the Canadian Plenary presentation. The traditions of the native population of Canada are steeped in a spirituality that has much to teach us of reverence for God in creation. Many of the earliest settlers in Canada, francophone and anglophone, were seeking religious freedom or the opportunity of creating community on a Christian base. More recent immigrants have brought traditional forms of worship and culture and have enriched Canadian life with patterns that will be, for many, familiar in an unfamiliar land. It is our hope that examining our struggle for faith in this particular context will assist you in seeing the relationship of faith to your own context in your local setting.

Canadians are pleased and proud to be your hosts. We urge you to make known to us any needs that may arise in our time together.

We join you in asking God's blessing on this gathering, and we pray that through our time together the world will be helped to believe that Jesus Christ is indeed the life of the world.



Robert H.A. Wallace
Chairman,
Canadian Coordinating Committee

Russel D. Legge
President,
Canadian Council
of Churches

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

It gives me great pleasure to welcome delegates and other participants to the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at The University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

The University, while it is by law non-sectarian in character, offers programs in Religious Studies leading to both undergraduate and graduate degrees in the Faculty of Arts. Five affiliated colleges offer degree and diploma programs leading to the ministry as well as continuing education programs for lay persons. Various clubs representing religious denominations have been a part of student life at UBC since the day it opened its doors in 1915.

You are meeting on one of the most beautiful campuses in the world, offering opportunities for a wide variety of cultural and leisure-time activities. I urge you to make full use of them.

I sincerely hope that the environment of The University of B.C. will contribute to the success of your meetings.

Leslie R. Peterson, Q.C.
Chairman of the Board

THE ASSEMBLY

WHAT IS AN ASSEMBLY?

An Assembly of the WCC is in the first instance the coming together of the member churches of the WCC to reaffirm their fellowship and take counsel with one another through their appointed delegates.

The Sixth Assembly at Vancouver will have begun to assemble long before the opening day of the Assembly itself -- 24 July. In fact, during the last 18 months, more than seventy small ecumenical teams have visited the vast majority of all member churches of the World Council of Churches in order to begin with them the process of preparing for the Assembly at Vancouver. Most delegates to the Assembly will have been involved in one or more preparatory meetings on regional, sub-regional or national level. Churches, congregations, church groups and theological seminaries and faculties will have studied the biblical and theological material and read the various papers and books which have been published in preparation for the Assembly. Thus it is hoped that, more than ever before, the delegates who come to the Assembly in Vancouver will come as representatives of their various churches and communities throughout the world.

There are three general features to any Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

First, as the most representative gathering of the member churches of the WCC in fellowship with one another, the Assembly is the occasion to reaffirm and to celebrate the covenant which the churches have made with one another. According to its Constitution, the WCC is "a fellowship of churches which confess Jesus Christ as God and Saviour..." The Assembly therefore is the time for the churches to renew their confession of Jesus Christ in the light of the challenges of the present day. The main theme of the Sixth Assembly -- "Jesus Christ -- the Life of the World" -- gives direction and orientation to this common act of confessing our faith. In smaller or larger groupings, the Assembly will reflect on the main theme, join in the Bible Study and worship, and celebrate the unity of God's people through its common witness to Jesus Christ the life of the world.

Secondly, the World Council of Churches has been constituted in order to serve the common calling and responsibilities of its member churches in the areas of unity and mission, service and renewal. The main activities of the WCC must promote these basic goals. An Assembly is the occasion when the member churches of the WCC receive an account of the work which the Council has done, together with them and on their behalf, during the period since the preceding Assembly. It will examine and appropriate the results, and formulate relevant recommendations both to the WCC and to member churches on further action to be taken. For the purpose of the discussion at this Assembly, the present activities of the WCC have been grouped around eight issues which reflect the major areas of concentration suggested by the Central Committee following the last Assembly at Nairobi.

Finally, the Assembly is the highest constitutional decision-making and governing body of the WCC. It receives and adopts the report of the Central Committee which has directed and supervised the work of the WCC since the previous Assembly. It chooses from among the delegates the members of the new Central Committee, as well as the members of the Presidium of the Council, who together will carry the responsibility in the years following the Assembly. It also receives and acts upon policy recommendations in the area of programme guidelines, finance, and public responsibility.

While these three features interact throughout the period of the Assembly, the three tasks correspond roughly with the three weeks during which the Assembly will be meeting.

HOW WILL THE ASSEMBLY CARRY OUT ITS TASK?

Participants at the Assembly will find themselves engaged in three distinct forms of gathering and working. Every day, the Assembly will begin with a common act of worship, and throughout the Assembly participants will be engaged in various forms of liturgical celebration, both eucharistic and non-eucharistic, as well as in Bible study. Secondly, the Assembly will meet in plenary sessions, particularly during the opening and closing days of the

meeting. Thirdly, participants will be engaged in a variety of groups and committees for discussion and reflection, as well as for the preparation of recommendations. The graphic programme design facilitates the identification of these various forms of work which are briefly introduced here.

WORSHIP

The Central Committee affirmed the centrality of worship to the life of the Assembly and requested that in planning the programme for the Assembly, worship should become the basis of its life.

Worship will take place in many different ways and various contexts, in large gatherings like plenaries and also in small groups, clusters and issue groups. It is therefore not one static part of the programme, but an integral part of the life of the Assembly.

The Assembly Worship Committee has prepared a Worship Book (to be distributed in Vancouver) which contains the order of daily worship, liturgical material on the four sub-themes, prayers for various occasions and a selection of musical acclamations and hymns to supplement our hymn book Cantate Domino. These are meant as resource material, and may be used whenever the participants feel the need to pray and praise God.

The daily morning worship will be held in a tent specially erected in order to give a focus to our prayer life and to serve as a sign of the pilgrim people among whom God "pitched his tent". Many worship events will take place in the tent. St Andrew's Chapel, just next to the tent, will be reserved as a place of silent prayer throughout the Assembly, and all are welcome to use it.

Within the official programme two eucharistic services are foreseen. The first will be an open celebration using the liturgy developed by the Faith and Order Commission. The second one will be celebrated according to the Orthodox tradition, using the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom.

Daily eucharistic services, following various traditions, will be celebrated in the several chapels available on the university campus. All such planned acts of worship will be announced in the daily news bulletin.

PLENARY SESSIONS

Given the size of the Assembly, only a limited number of matters can be handled in a plenary session of the whole Assembly. The Rules of the WCC (see p.90) provide for three categories of plenary session, i.e. General Sessions -- for ceremonial occasions, public acts of witness and formal addresses; Deliberative Sessions -- to consider substantive reports of a theological or general policy nature which do not lend themselves to detailed amendment; and Business Sessions -- for all matters on which specific and detailed decisions have to be taken, such as nominations, elections, matters regarding the Constitution or organization, as well as the budget and programme of the Council. The character of each plenary session will be determined by the Business Committee and clearly announced before the beginning of the session.

During the first week of the Assembly, four plenary sessions are reserved for the opening business of the Assembly. These include the presentation and discussion of the reports of the Moderator of the Central Committee and the General Secretary. In addition, the programme includes seven plenary sessions, during which presentations will be made on various aspects of the main theme. Starting from a biblical theological exposition of the theme, "Jesus Christ -- the Life of the World", an attempt will be made in the following four sessions to unfold the theme in terms of its intrinsic meaning as an act of confessing Christ today, and to study it in the context of a number of contemporary challenges. The four sub-themes provide the orientation for these plenary sessions.

Towards the end of the first week there will be two further plenary sessions: one prepared by the Canadian host churches, and the other focusing on the Pacific region, recognizing the geographical location of Vancouver.

These two sessions will provide an opportunity to relate the main theme of the Assembly even more directly to the challenges for Christian life and witness in a given social and cultural context. All seven plenary sessions will follow a prepared programme, including addresses, a number of brief statements or testimonies, and various audio-visual presentations. Discussion on these presentations will not take place immediately in the plenary, but in Small Groups and Clusters, in order to prepare participants for a full plenary discussion on the implications of the main theme later in the Assembly.

Beginning at the close of the second week and through the final days of the Assembly, most of the work will again be carried out in plenary sessions. These will be either deliberative sessions, when the reports from Issue Groups will be presented, or business sessions where formal action will be taken on the reports and recommendations coming from Committees. During these sessions delegates will have to be guided by the Rules of Procedure and Debate. A special introduction to these Rules is given in the section on "Resources" in order to facilitate the participation of delegates in the process of decision-making.

WORK IN GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

The graphic design of the Assembly programme distinguishes five groupings or sub-divisions in which the detailed work of the Assembly will be carried out:

Small groups and clusters

Small groups were among the most positive experiences of the Fifth Assembly which met in Nairobi. The Sixth Assembly, too, will break into some 65 small groups, each comprising about twenty persons. These small groups will serve as a "home base", a place where participants can belong, experience fellowship and share with one another their different backgrounds and traditions. In this way they are the place where participants can reflect together on the whole Assembly process and where first reactions on plenary presentations can be voiced.

During the first week of the Assembly, the small groups will concentrate on reflecting on the Assembly theme and sub-themes and developing their own creative response to it. Insights arising in the small groups will be shared with a bigger formation, the clusters. Eight small groups will form a cluster, where major points emerging in the work of small groups can be identified and deepened.

In two plenary sessions in the second week, the main insights from these clusters will be shared with the Assembly. The discussions in the clusters and in the plenaries to which they report are the major input for the work of the committee that will have to formulate the Assembly's message to the churches.

During the second week the small groups will be free to focus on Bible study, to accompany the Assembly work on issues or reflect on some of the special events, such as the witness for peace and justice.

Each group will decide on its own work patterns; some groups may choose to use drama, mime, etc., on occasion.

Issue groups

Eight Issue groups are foreseen, with a membership of about 160 persons in each. The timetable makes provision for eight meetings, plus one introductory plenary session in which all issues will be presented to the Assembly.

The purpose of the Issue groups is to reflect upon, to receive or challenge the analyses and insights on current ecumenical issues which have engaged the churches in the years since Nairobi. In doing this they will:

- try to articulate the basic convictions shared among the churches;
- identify major differences of opinion;
- advise the Assembly on appropriate action to be recommended to the churches and to the WCC.

The method of work will vary according to the Issue under consideration. Provisional agendas and a proposal about how to use the available sessions are provided on page 24. The reports from the Issue groups will be presented to the Assembly in plenary session during the final days. The recommendations that are specifically addressed to the WCC will be considered by the Programme Guidelines Committee as it prepares proposals for the future work of the WCC.

Hearings

The purpose of the "programme hearings" is to enable Assembly participants to react to and discuss (1) the official report Nairobi to Vancouver, and (2) guidelines for the future work of the WCC. The Assembly programme provides for simultaneous hearings for the General Secretariat and Units I, II and III.

The two functions of the hearings correspond to the two aspects of the mandate of the Programme Guidelines Committee. That is why two distinct sessions are devoted to hearings. The first, scheduled for 28 July, will focus on the official report, and the second, to be held on 6 August, will deal with the perspectives and proposals for the future work of the Council emerging out of the total work of the Assembly and identified by the Programme Guidelines Committee.

A special form will be provided so that participants may indicate their preference for one of the four hearing groups.

Committees

Business decisions to be taken by the Assembly will be prepared in a number of committees. These committees will be appointed at one of the opening business sessions; the members will be nominated by the outgoing Executive Committee.

With the exception of the Worship Committee and the Press and Broadcasting Committee, all the committees will present their reports and recommendations during the final plenary sessions of the Assembly. The Credentials Committee will report to the plenary when necessary. It is anticipated that about 300 delegates will be sharing in the work of the various committees.

The following Committees are envisaged:

a) Nominations Committee (about 30 persons)
Proposes names from among the delegates for the new Central Committee, and submits names for the new Presidium.

b) Credentials Committee (about 10 persons)
Recommends action on problems arising from changes in the composition of delegations or any confusion about representation.

c) Finance Committee (about 30 persons)
Deals with the Finance Report, considers the World

Council's general financial situation, and recommends any action the Assembly may need to take in this regard.

d) Programme Guidelines Committee
Proposes formal action on the official report, Nairobi to Vancouver; takes careful note of proposals for future programmes that emerge at various points during the Assembly; and recommends general guidelines for the activities of the WCC during the period following the Assembly. The integration of its work with the discussion in Issue Groups will have to be considered carefully.

e) Two Policy Reference Committees
Policy Reference Committee I will deal with the reports of the Moderator and General Secretary, constitutional matters, applications for membership, issues of relationships with the Roman Catholic Church (Fifth Official Report), with Christian World Communions and with Regional Ecumenical organizations. Policy Reference Committee II prepares whatever statements the Assembly may want to make on public affairs/issues (see following page).

f) Worship Committee (about 15 persons)
Composed of a small number of Assembly delegates, the preparatory Committee for Assembly Worship, and advisers. Responsible for guiding the Assembly's daily worship life and for the preparation of the Closing Service.

g) "Message" Committee (about 15 persons)
Composed of delegates representative of the small groups and clusters, together with some advisers. Responsible for preparing a message/statement formulating the Assembly's response to the main theme and the sub-themes.

h) Assembly Business Committee (about 35 persons)
Composed of WCC Presidents, Executive Committee members, Moderators of Issue Groups and Committees, it will serve as Steering Committee for the Assembly's work as a whole.

i) Press and Broadcasting Committee (about 10 persons)
Deals with problems in the area of the Assembly's relations with the mass media.

Regional meetings

Three meeting periods within the Assembly programme are reserved for meetings of delegates according to regional groupings. The first of these sessions is meant to provide an opportunity for delegates from the same region to meet one another and to identify or clarify the common concerns of the churches in their region for this Assembly. The

second double session towards the latter part of the Assembly will provide an opportunity to consider the major proposals before the Assembly, and their implications for the churches in the region. Delegates will also want to discuss the follow-up of the Assembly in their churches and regions.

A NOTE ON PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Introduction

In the performance of its functions, the Council through its Assembly or through its Central Committee may publish statements upon any situation or issue with which the Council or its constituent churches may be confronted.

While such statements may have great significance and influence as the expression of the judgment or concern of so widely representative a Christian body, yet their authority will consist only in the weight which they carry by their own truth and wisdom, and the publishing of such statements shall not be held to imply that the World Council as such has, or can have, any constitutional authority over the constituent churches or right to speak for them.

(Rules of the WCC)

The Rules also provide for statements to be made by the Executive Committee, the Officers of the Central Committee, and the General Secretary.

It is worth mentioning that the public statement is only one form of action by the Council in responding to situations. Other forms of action include pastoral visits to churches in difficult or critical situations, discussions with governments or intergovernmental bodies, delegations which study and report on specific issues or situations, confidential representations to governments, support to and solidarity with action groups. All of them have to be seen against the background of a continuous monitoring of developments as they affect the life and witness of churches in particular situations and the fellowship of the churches as a whole.

Under the general title "public statements", the WCC has published assessments of situations, appeals to member churches, representations and appeals to governments and intergovernmental bodies, pastoral letters, etc. A public statement can thus take various forms.

Criteria

On the basis of the experience of the Council in making public statements, the Central Committee in 1976 attempted to make explicit some of the criteria used in selecting issues on which public statements are made. They are as follows:

- 1) areas and issues on which the WCC has had direct involvement and long-standing commitment;
- 2) emerging issues of international concern to which the attention of the churches should be called for action;
- 3) critical and developing political situations which demand the WCC to make known its judgment and lend its spiritual and moral voice;
- 4) expectations from the member churches that the WCC should speak;
- 5) to set a policy mandate for the WCC secretariat.

This list is not exhaustive; nor is it a set of hard and fast rules. Sensitive to the special nature of a situation, and taking into account other forms of action available, the Assembly or the Committee decides whether a public statement would be appropriate.

Procedure

At the Assembly, Policy Reference Committee II prepares the statements the Assembly may want to make on public affairs, in addition to dealing with other matters that may be referred to it. At an early stage the Committee may invite suggestions regarding the topics on which public statements may be made. Against the background of the experience of the Council, the actions taken up to that time and the urgency of the issues, and also considering the limitations under which the Assembly works, the Committee will have to make a careful selection of topics for public statements. Such selection will have to be in general conformity with the criteria mentioned above. The topics selected should be of considerable international significance and of ecumenical importance.

The Policy Reference Committee may not consider for public statements specific issues or situations which can be dealt

with in the normal course by the General Secretariat, one of the Programme Sub-units, the Central Committee or the Executive Committee. Draft statements prepared by the Committee will be brought before the plenary of the Assembly.

All public statements made by the WCC during the period from 1969-1982 have been published by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs in three volumes, in the series "The Churches in International Affairs".

WHO'S WHO AT THE ASSEMBLY

Over 3,000 persons are registered for the Assembly. A detailed directory of participants will be available in Vancouver. The following is intended to help you understand who these 3,000+ people are.

First of all there are the approximately 900 voting delegates of the WCC member churches, chosen by them to speak and vote on their behalf in the Assembly.

Among the participants who are not voting delegates, you will meet:

- the six Presidents of the WCC (elected by the Nairobi Assembly) and a number of other members of the retiring Central Committee;
- delegated representatives (approximately 30) of the associate member churches of the WCC;
- delegated observers (30) from the Roman Catholic Church and a few other non-member churches with whom the WCC has a working relationship;
- advisers (90) invited by the WCC Central Committee, because of their particular experience or expertise in special fields, to assist in the deliberations of the Assembly;
- delegated representatives of the associate councils of the WCC and of the CWME, both regional and national; of

world ecumenical organizations which collaborate with the WCC; and of the Christian World Communions;

- a number of guests who have been invited in a personal or individual capacity;
- observers representing other councils of churches, ecumenical or international organizations, churches or religious bodies;
- guest representatives of the host churches of Canada, especially in British Columbia.

In addition to these "official participants", there are also:

- 175 stewards, young people who are giving their time as volunteers to assist in a variety of tasks that need to be done to enable the Assembly to do its work (see p.116);
- members and volunteers of the Vancouver Planning Committee (see p.115) who have been responsible for local arrangements and who will help us in various ways;
- 150 members of the staff of the WCC;
- 150 persons coopted by the WCC to serve as staff at the Assembly, primarily as translators and interpreters and in the communication services, as well as in some other administrative and programme responsibilities;
- accredited visitors, who come because of their own interest and at their own expense to share full-time in the Assembly and the special Visitors' Programme (see p.21);
- other visitors and members of the public who come to take part in the programme for one or more days, from the Vancouver community or elsewhere in Canada and the USA;
- members of the press: journalists, radio and television reporters, technicians, etc.

In addition to all these Assembly participants, there are also those of three "related events" -- Vancouver School of Theology Summer Session, the Theological Students' Conference at the Sixth Assembly and the Bellingham Forum on the Sixth Assembly (sponsored by the USA churches in Bellingham, Washington) who will visit the Assembly.

PRE-ASSEMBLY EVENTS

Women's meeting

The meeting will be held at Totem Park, UBC, from 20 to 23 July 1983. It is mainly for women delegates and advisers at the Assembly, but will also include some other participants among whom will be a limited number of men.

Some 300 people are expected to attend the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to help the women participants to prepare themselves for the Assembly. They will reflect on the theme, and familiarize themselves with the decision-making processes. They will give special attention to the eight Assembly issues and discuss how these relate to the lives and concerns of women in our day.

The meeting will provide an opportunity for women from first, second and third world situations to share their experiences with one another, to exchange views and perspectives, and to develop a sense of solidarity among themselves.

Because women and youth are still a minority at the Assembly, one session of both pre-Assembly meetings has been planned as a joint meeting.

The study on the Community of Women and Men in the Church emphasized the truth that women and men together form the community which is the church. It is hoped that the pre-Assembly meeting will help the women to contribute to this community at the Assembly and afterwards.

Youth event

The meeting will take place at the Vancouver School of Theology, from 17 to 21 July. Some 320 people are expected to participate -- youth delegates and advisers, stewards, delegated representatives and observers from related youth organizations.

The purpose of the meeting is to prepare youth participants for meaningful and creative involvement in the Assembly itself. The meeting will provide an opportunity for stewards and delegates to be involved in the issues and to become acquainted with the Assembly procedures. Through the

sharing of the concerns and experiences of young people from national and regional contexts, especially in the areas of justice and unity, it should be possible to work towards a common vision, and a common understanding of the ways such a vision should be pursued in the years ahead.

The programme will include common worship, biblical-theological reflections on the theme and sub-themes, clarification of the issues and procedures, general reflection on ecumenical youth movement, exposure to Canadian issues and discussion of priorities and strategies for youth participation at the Assembly. The participants will themselves be the main resource, and they will contribute the major input at the event.

THE VISITORS' PROGRAMME

The Visitors' Programme is an integral part of the Assembly, woven into its fabric, yet with its own distinctive identity. Over 1,000 visitors are expected each day.

The programme has been planned by a team from Geneva, Toronto, New York and Vancouver. This team will work with a larger steering committee at the Assembly.

All visitors are invited to participate in the regular service of worship and to attend the plenary sessions of the Assembly. The latter will be in the Assembly hall and can also be seen on closed circuit television.

Special programmes for visitors are planned each morning and afternoon, except during plenary sessions or when free time is scheduled for all other participants. These programmes include special presentations on the work of the World Council, significant church situations in various parts of the world, issues of peace, justice and racism, a special series designed for the concerns of women, conversations with guests of other faiths and with key speakers at the Assembly. Accredited visitors will also have some small group experiences to explore together the development of the themes, sub-themes and issues. There will be music and drama workshops in the late afternoon for all who are interested.

All visitors are welcome to the Agora, Well, and Peace and Justice Centre, the film festival, and the public programme.

The Visitors' Programme will be an exciting way to experience the Assembly, to deepen one's understanding of the ecumenical fellowship and to watch the shaping of future ecumenical agenda.

THE PUBLIC PROGRAMME

The Vancouver Planning Committee has prepared a series of public programmes which will enhance the Assembly experience of participants. Through these, many people in the city of Vancouver and its churches will have an opportunity to share in some of the activities.

Among such programmes will be recreational and cultural activities and meetings dealing with substantive issues of the Assembly. They will include native Canadian activities and exhibits, three major evening public forums, a Peace and Justice Coffee-house/Discussion Centre, the Well/La Source -- a gathering place and hospitality centre for those concerned with women's issues -- noon hour sessions addressed by downtown speakers, noon hour and early evening concerts on campus, and the Agora -- a marketplace of ideas for special interest groups.

A brochure and schedule outlining the activities in these programmes will be distributed to participants on arrival in Vancouver.

OPENING DAY PUBLIC CELEBRATION

On the afternoon of Sunday, 24 July, the opening day of the Assembly, there will be a public celebration in Van-

couver at which the host churches of Canada will welcome the Assembly participants in a celebrative event of worship.

To be held in a large indoor arena in downtown Vancouver, to which participants will be taken by bus, about 15,000 people are expected to join in this public celebration.

The Vancouver Planning Committee is responsible for the planning of the event. The celebration will include liturgy, music, dance, symbolic actions, and a presentation by Dr Jean Vanier, a widely respected Canadian lay theologian and spiritual leader who is the founder of L'Arche community movement based in France.

This public event will be a joyous celebration of the faith and the unity which we share in Jesus Christ.

VISITATION SUNDAY, 7 AUGUST

The Vancouver Planning Committee, in conjunction with many churches in and near Vancouver, is planning a Visitation Sunday on 7 August. There will be no scheduled Assembly programme or activities at the UBC campus on this day. Instead, all Assembly participants will be invited to visit local congregations.

During the first week of the Assembly, participants will be informed of the various options available for Visitation Sunday. They will be invited to indicate their preference. The possibilities will include preaching, attending worship in a local church in the Vancouver area, on Vancouver Island or in Seattle, Washington (USA), worshipping with one's host family in their parish, or visiting in and around Vancouver.

It is the intention of this Visitation Sunday to provide opportunities for Assembly participants and Vancouver church people to meet across denominational and ethnic lines, in order to encourage the greatest possible ecumenical and international sharing.

Assembly participants who wish to spend the Visitation Sunday with their host family should mention it to them as soon as possible.

ANNOTATED AGENDAS FOR ISSUE GROUPS

The Issue groups meet during the second week of the Assembly. In these groups we discuss the eight Issues which have been for a long time part of the ecumenical agenda, locally and internationally.

It may be noted that these Issues are in many respects complementary and interdependent. Some of the concerns -- the search for unity, the concern for peace and the community of women and men, for example -- will be discussed in more than one of the groups. It is hoped that the presentations at the plenary sessions introducing the Issues will bring out these interconnections. Each Issue group works on a focused agenda, but the work of each group will eventually be complemented and completed by the work of the other groups.

The Issue papers, which have already been circulated, will remain an important resource; they prepare us for the necessary cross-fertilization of one issue with another. See page 13 for a note on the work of the Issue groups.

1. WITNESSING IN A DIVIDED WORLD

"The expression and communication of our faith in the triune God" has been one of the major programme thrusts for the period after Nairobi. The Council as a whole has articulated that faith in serious theological work, notably in the studies on "Giving Account of the Hope that is in Us", "The Churches in Solidarity with the Poor", "Your Kingdom Come", etc. The confession of Jesus Christ as the life of the world is yet another way of expressing and communicating this faith.

The work during these years has been sustained by the conviction that God is at work in the world and in human history, and that God's kingdom will surely come. It is this conviction that gives courage both to struggle and to hope in these almost apocalyptic times. "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5) -- the promise of renewal and the vision of the new humanity are the unfailing sources of strength and inspiration, and provide the basis of all the work done for God's kingdom. Underlying this work is the proclamation of the gospel, the invitation to choose to belong to the community of faith, the call to repentance, the offer of God's forgiveness and the vision of a new heaven and a new earth.

Through this theme of "witnessing" an attempt should be made to give an account of the lessons learned by Christians and churches as they tried to witness to the triune God and his kingdom during these past years. Secondly, the group should consider what it means to bear testimony to God, "who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18), in the times and in the places they live in.

Christian witness, thus, arises out of the conviction that God in Christ has reconciled us to himself and to each other. Such conviction leads to discipleship (witness in life) and to the desire to announce the good news of the kingdom in every place and at all times (proclamation). This message of the kingdom has to do with God's liberating will for the whole of creation; Christians should neither deny nor seek to escape their calling to witness to it in life, by proclamation and in standing by and with the forces that liberate people from the clutches of sin and evil (Rom. 8:19, Luke 19:40, Acts 1:18).

The primary question here, however, is: "What have we learned about witness during these past years?" The following are some of the kinds of questions that can help in seeking an answer, particularly in relation to the five specific areas that have been chosen for exploration: children, the poor, worship and service, witness among people of living faiths, and witness and culture:

- How can we effectively fulfill our calling to be witnesses to different human groups and in different religious and cultural situations?
- How does our approach to our neighbours show, or not show, the kind of approach that Jesus exemplified? In our relationship with our neighbours, what do we learn about the way of witnessing?
- Has our encounter with our neighbours helped us to deepen our understanding of the gospel? Since other persons extend their witness to us from different situations and

from different religious perspectives, has this encounter helped us better understand the gospel of Jesus Christ?

- What does all this mean to our continuous task of being witnesses to God's love in Christ?

Working style

Session 1: A small group will produce a short paper by carefully listening and following the proceedings during the first week of the Assembly. The emphasis will be on how the churches do, and can, witness to Jesus Christ as the life of the world. Small buzz groups to follow. The session could conclude with two or three actual testimonies from witnessing situations:

- one from a situation of people's struggle;
- another from an affluent situation;
- a third from the perspective of another faith -- how his/her religion wants and tries to give account of their own convictions.

Session 2: A witnessing church should also be willing to listen to others. People who are not Christians bear testimony to their own convictions and to those things that give meaning to their lives. Are there new perspectives of the gospel that come to light as a result of this witness? How does this listening attitude enrich and deepen the Christian witness? Five testimonies to be given, addressed to the five themes of the agenda mentioned above. These testimonies should arise out of actual, local and concrete situations in life.

Sessions 3, 4 and 5: Five sub-groups, all addressing the general question: "How can we witness to our Christian faith to different groups and how do we receive witness through them?"

1. Children: The child is a living parable of the way the kingdom is to be received and appropriated (Matt. 19:14, 18:3f., 21:16, 11:25). The Bible speaks of God's special concern for his "little ones", and Jesus once said that the kingdom "belongs to them".

- a) How did Jesus relate to children?
- b) What was his teaching regarding children?
- c) What is the general treatment given and attitude shown to children in churches and gatherings in your country?
- d) What can be done in your church to make use of the witness of the children in the local community?
- e) Do the church building and the order of service facilitate the participation of children in the congregation?

- f) How is the message of God's grace and love received through the children? How is it mediated to them in family life?

2. The poor: Jesus points to his proclamation of the Gospel to the poor as evidence of his own messianic vocation. God's own upholding of the rights of the poor, the outcast, the widow and the orphan, is a rebuke to complacent Christians and churches, and a summons to repentance and new commitment to the cause of justice.

A vast number of people lack the basic daily necessities of life and very often it is these same people who are also denied access to the gospel. In some cases they have rejected the gospel because it was offered to them by churches aligned with the rich and powerful oppressors; others have never had the opportunity of knowing God's promises to them in Jesus Christ. The justice to which the poor of the earth are entitled includes sharing with them the good news of God's liberating purpose through them and in them.

- a) How do churches receive the message of God's grace and God's call to justice through the poor of the earth?
- b) Where are the churches becoming churches of the poor and what is the nature of the witness given in this situation?
- c) How does the witness borne by the poor become a call to repentance, conversion and new life for those who cannot be described as poor?
- d) How do justice and evangelization belong together in the mission and witness of the church?
- e) What are the other dimensions of poverty? What is the nature of the poverty and deprivation of the affluent? What is the gospel witness to the affluent?
- f) Can an affluent church bear witness to the gospel? What does witnessing involve for the affluent?

3. Worship, service: Worship is the central act of the life of the church; it is the celebration of the presence of the triune God among the people. Since Christians have experienced this presence of God in love, forgiveness and grace in Christ, their worship is centred on the "unspeakable riches" offered them in Christ. Through liturgy, spiritual poetry, music, iconography and the celebration of the word, the community participates, body and soul (1 Cor. 6:20), in the gifts of God constantly offered to the community.

It is also the medium through which the community fulfills its vocation of bringing before God the needs and hopes of the whole human family of which it is a part.

Such intercession and the belief that the sanctification offered in worship not only reaches the individual, but through the individual the entire environment, provide the inspiration for service to the whole community.

Thus the gathering of the community for worship itself constitutes an act of witness to those around it.

In situations where state-church relations have made other forms of witness difficult, the act of worship, the life in anticipation of the kingdom to come and the preparedness of the Christians to give testimony to this hope even unto death have been the witness to the gospel.

- a) How does our worship bring forth before God the anxieties, needs, joys and dreams of the human community?
- b) Does our worship have a public witnessing character? How is the celebration of the eucharist an "announcement of the death of the Lord until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26)?
- c) In situations where state-church relationships forbid open witness, how far has worship been a witness to the gospel message?
- d) Do we organize the worship of the local Christian community so as to embrace and to facilitate the participation of the surrounding human community?
- e) How do we understand the concept of "liturgy after the liturgy"? What does it mean to give a "cup of water in his name"? Where does the witnessing character of our service lie?
- f) Do we know of contemporary martyrs, whose death has become a powerful testimony? What do we learn from them for our own witness?

4. Witness among people of living faiths: Today religious pluralism is not confined to a few parts of the world. Christians from all parts of the world raise questions about living with neighbours of other living faiths and convictions who have their own specific testimonies to offer. In such pluralistic situations witness can never be a one-way process. Even as Christians give witness they become aware of some of the deepest convictions of their neighbours.

- a) What does it mean to be witnesses in situations where others have their own witness to offer to us?
- b) What does it say to our own understanding of witness, and how we go about it?
- c) How do Christians, who confess God as the creator and Lord of the whole humanity, understand and evaluate the faith of neighbours who live by their own sacred scriptures, commitments and hopes?

- d) Our attitude to witness depends on how we theologically evaluate the place of living faiths in God's purpose. Are there dimensions to this question that need to be explored afresh at the present time?

5. Witness and culture: Religious belief takes concrete expression in a given culture in which the community of faith lives. Culture is often the cement that binds the community together, giving a common framework within which a community finds its unity and identity. It is preserved in language, thought patterns, ways of life, attitudes, symbols and presuppositions, and is celebrated in art, music, drama, literature and the like. It constitutes the collective memory of the people as also the collective heritage handed down to generations to come.

Witness even within the same culture poses important issues. When witness is offered across cultural lines, therefore, there are fundamental questions to be asked regarding the elements in both the articulation and reception of such witness and the style and content of the message.

- a) In what ways are the articulation and styles of communication of our witness influenced by our own cultures? What does an awareness of this do to our understanding of witness in our own cultures and in cross-cultural situations?
- b) Some churches living in cultures influenced primarily by other faiths have tended to retain for centuries liturgy, music and thought patterns that had their source in the "Western" culture. What has it meant for these churches? How do we evaluate this reality?
- c) How can witness be offered in ways that affirm the integrity of other cultures, and in ways that enable others to build on what they perceive to be the positive aspects of their culture?
- d) How do we make theological sense of a given culture and the religious experience within it? Are the tools used to make theological evaluation of cultures adequate?
- e) What has been the effect of cultures influenced by other faiths on Christian faith and practice? What has been the impact of the gospel on cultures influenced by other faiths?
- f) How do the different cultural expressions of the Christian faith inspire and correct each other? How can we help people of different cultures to live together in creative interaction?

A drafting committee will bring back, first to the sub-groups and then to the issue plenary, a single unified report of about eight pages, summarizing the common convictions and the insights gained in mutual sharing, and providing speci-

fic recommendations for the churches and for the future work of the WCC. It is hoped that the report would be an inspiring document which would involve the churches in a process of continuing discussion and study of the context in which witness takes place, the forms it takes and the lessons learned in the process of witnessing.

Session 6: Discussion of the draft in sub-groups.

Session 7: Plenary for first reading of the draft report.

Session 8: Plenary for second reading of the report.

2. TAKING STEPS TOWARDS UNITY

Introduction

It is important to remember the crucial affirmations of faith on which this issue rests: We have been given a unity in Christ that links us like the branches of one vine or the members of a single body; the one God has sent the one Lord to create one body with one faith; and we, as followers of that Lord, are called to manifest our unity in order to convince the world that Jesus is truly sent by God and that God loves and seeks his scattered children everywhere. Our visible unity as living stones in the house of faith would bear witness, as little else can, to the reality of the Cornerstone -- Jesus Christ, the life and foundation of the world (cf. issue paper, p.2).

At Nairobi in 1975 the member churches declared that the first purpose and function of the WCC is "to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe". The unity we seek was further described as "a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united". This vision of conciliar, eucharistic fellowship has been widely affirmed since Nairobi (cf. issue paper, pp.2-3).

It is therefore appropriate, indeed imperative, that we turn our attention at Vancouver to "practical ecumenism", to the concrete steps which have been, and can be, taken towards

this goal. Several important unity developments have occurred during the past seven years, one of the most significant being the completion of work by the Faith and Order Commission on the document Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM) (cf. issue paper, pp.4-6). The BEM text is based on an attempt, carried out over many years by Faith and Order, to recover together "the tradition of the gospel" which has been revealed in scripture and transmitted in and by the church through the power of the Holy Spirit. At its Lima meeting (1982), the Commission voted unanimously to send the result of this work to the churches for official response as part of a long-term process of "reception" (cf. issue paper, pp. 10-11). This action signifies that basic convergence has been achieved by theologians, representing virtually all of the major church traditions, on many of the essential elements of faith over which Christians have long been divided.

The BEM text may well be the start of a new era in the ecumenical journey. A theological breakthrough has taken place; the question now is whether that breakthrough can be translated into concrete action for unity in the churches. Will the churches be able to embody this common understanding of the apostolic faith in their official relations, dialogues and union negotiations? Will they choose to incorporate this convergence on the ministry and sacraments in their worship, teaching, witness and service? And what concrete steps may now be taken to authorize the mutual recognition of their ordained ministers, the common acceptance of each other's baptism, and the extension of eucharistic hospitality? Vancouver is not the place for a revision of the actual BEM text, since the present document is already being considered by the churches. But our discussions at the Assembly can help the churches in this process of evaluation and reception.

There have been other notable achievements and developments since Nairobi. It will not be possible to give focused attention to all of them at Vancouver, but there are several which must surely inform our deliberations:

- The "grassroots" pressure for unity, represented by innumerable local ecumenical projects, is growing in many parts of the world.
- The observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the practice of mutual intercession are generally increasing.
- Several churches have united across confessional barriers since Nairobi, while many others continue to move towards union by "stages" (e.g. covenant agreements) which allow the churches to deepen their commitment to each other.
- Bilateral church conversations, at the national and international levels, have produced striking agreements that, like BEM, must now be translated into action in the churches.

- The study document on Common Witness, prepared on behalf of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, indicates that joint proclamation of the gospel is an emerging tradition in many parts of the ecumenical fellowship (cf. issue paper, pp.12-16).
- At its Bangalore meeting (1978), the Faith and Order Commission was able to give "a common account of Christian hope", an essential first step (along with BEM) towards our common confession of the apostolic faith.

One problem is that these efforts -- local and international, bilateral and multilateral -- often appear to be disparate, even competitive. Can the Assembly present an integrated picture of the search for unity within the one ecumenical movement?

There are other major tasks before this issue group at the Assembly. Nairobi, along with its discussion of conciliar fellowship, strongly affirmed that the unity we seek must be an inclusive community of women and men, black and white, disabled and able-bodied. Scripture teaches that the church is like a living organism which cannot thrive unless it is based on a full sharing of all its parts; it teaches that as human beings we are created together in God's image, redeemed together in Christ's church, and partake together in the gifts of the Spirit (cf. issue paper, pp.6-8). Ecumenical meetings have frequently declared, therefore, that the commitment to overcome racism, sexism and classism in the church must go hand in hand with the search for doctrinal agreement. (In fact, these "non-theological" barriers pose some of the biggest obstacles to any genuine unity of the Christian family.) Unity without such commitment would be untrue to the gospel of our Lord.

Since Nairobi, the WCC has contributed much new work to this ongoing discussion, especially through its study on "The Community of Women and Men in the Church" (cf. issue paper, p.7). This programme made clear that, while the churches may have affirmed the principle of inclusive community, they have often done little to implement new patterns of partnership and participation. This is not simply a sociological issue, but a theological question about the nature of the church and its unity. Are there practical steps which this issue group on unity can recommend to deal with the questions raised by this topic for the unity of the church?

The ecumenical movement has also offered crucial affirmations about the relationship of church unity to the search for peace, justice and reconciliation in the wider community. "The church is bold to speak of itself", said Uppsala, "as the sign of the coming unity of humankind." Our unity, in other words, can be an image of koinonia in a divided

world, a witness to the actuality of God's promise of reconciliation for the world. The WCC has also frequently affirmed that since the church is in the world, Christians cannot divorce their efforts to be a united community beyond racial, sexual and social barriers from their efforts to heal these same wounds in society. Even more, our sacramental unity in Christ compels us to engage in loving service on behalf of the human community. "The Lord whom we meet in the bread and wine is the same Lord whom we meet in the poor, the oppressed and the needy" (cf. issue paper, p.16). "All kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom are radically challenged when we share in the body and blood of Christ" (BEM).

Still, there are many challenges and questions to be faced. Some argue that church unity is irrelevant to the struggles against war and oppression; others contend that the church's sacramental unity takes precedence over (and, thus, can be separated from) the dense thicket of "humankind concerns", or that the church's role as eucharistic presence does not demand active intervention against the evils of history. Will Vancouver be able to show the necessary inter-relation of "the unity of the church" and "the renewal of human community" on the ecumenical agenda? What studies or projects should the WCC and the churches undertake in the years after Vancouver in order to clarify this relationship?

Outline of discussions

Session 1

1 August. Steps towards unity: What steps have been taken since Nairobi?

An introduction by the Moderator (Metropolitan John of Helsinki, Orthodox Church, Finland), followed by a major address on the theme, and two responses and discussion in plenary. The major address should set the framework for subsequent discussions by dealing with such questions as the following: What are the crucial advances towards unity since Nairobi? Can we see these steps (local and international, multilateral and bilateral, doctrinal convergence and social collaboration) as complementary parts of one ecumenical movement? What can we achieve together at Vancouver? What steps may need to be taken after the Assembly?

Session 2

1 August. The theological convergence on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: What are its implications for the ecumenical movement?

Discussion in eight small groups facilitated by persons familiar with the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry text. The aim is to familiarize participants with the material and the process by which it is developed, and to discuss its implications for different church situations, e.g: Can the text be incorporated into the teaching and worship life of the churches? How does it relate to the bilateral convergences achieved by various churches? What is the significance of this theological convergence for the struggles of Christians against racism, sexism, poverty, political oppression, and threats to peace? A member of the drafting committee will be present as recorder in each group.

Session 3

2 August. The theological convergence on baptism, eucharist and ministry: How can it be received by the churches?

Three case study presentations on how BEM is being (or can be) received by the churches, followed by discussion in plenary. A number of questions can be raised: What will "official response" mean for churches with a congregational polity? How can churches with a hierarchically-structured teaching authority involve the whole people of God in the process of reception? What can the WCC do further to facilitate the reception process? What is the role of national and regional councils, or of the Christian World Communions, in reception? The texts of the case studies will be sent in advance in order to reduce the time required for presentation and, thus, to allow more time for general discussion.

Session 4

2 August. The unity of the church and the renewal of human community: an assessment of the relationship.

A major address on the theme and one response followed by discussion in plenary. This plenary will address many of the issues outlined in the introduction (above).

Session 5

3 August

Discussion in eight small groups of the first draft of the report on this issue. This will be prepared by a drafting committee on the basis of the presentations and discussions of the first four sessions.

Session 6

4 August. The unity of the church and the renewal of human community: case studies from local churches.

Three case studies -- from places where churches have taken visible, concrete steps towards unity -- on the importance of unity for Christian witness and mission, followed by discussion in plenary. This session is intended to accomplish two things: (1) to lift up the many efforts being made, in different parts of the world, to achieve unity of the church "in each place", and (2) to explore what church unions and other local unity developments have meant for Christian efforts to promote peace and social justice in our wider communities. The case studies will be sent in advance to allow more time for discussion in Vancouver.

Session 7

4 August

Discussion in eight small groups of the second draft of the issue group report integrating the input of the previous sessions.

Session 8

5 August

Presentation and discussion of the report and recommendations prepared by the drafting committee on the basis of the week's discussions in plenary and in small groups.

3. MOVING TOWARDS PARTICIPATION

An African woman at the Sheffield consultation on the "Community of Women and Men in the Church" quoted: "I am because I participate." During a WCC team visit a Swedish youth said: "If there is nothing which we can take responsibility for and nothing we can suffer for, life is almost like death."

Participation gives meaning to life: the value of a person is affirmed only when she or he can participate meaningfully in life, in the church, in society.

Participation has been a major concern of the work of the WCC. The demand for just participation, often voiced by marginalized groups, was often looked upon as an emancipa-

tory or political claim; it was, and still is, hardly considered as a serious theological issue. And yet, the Bible is full of examples and images which point to the participatory character of God's kingdom.

Jesus' own life is an example of participation. The kingdom which he preached was for all people. He invited the children, the women, the sinners, the sick, the marginalized, the beggars, to participate in God's kingdom as equals with all others, and to share their gifts for the benefit of the whole community and for God's glory.

Paul offers the image of the body to express the participatory character of the church. The New Testament understanding of the church as koinonia is one that emphasizes the importance of participation. Koinonia means participation in one another's lives, sharing of joy and pain. The eucharist is the central act of participation in the Christian faith. The Holy Trinity expresses the inclusive and participatory character of the Christian understanding of God.

Why then are people who strive for full participation in church and society often ignored? Why are their claims refused? Dominating and unjust structures inhibit people, discouraging them from contributing to the full their gifts to society and preventing them from assuming the responsibility which is their due.

Participation must be looked upon not only from the perspective of those who strive for participation, but also from that of those who do participate in the power structures. People who participate carry a heavy responsibility and this can mean suffering, self-giving and even martyrdom.

1. The psychological effects of participation or non-participation can be observed at the personal level:

- a) The positive effect of participation is the affirmation of one's value as a person. It generates interest, creativity, joy and also the readiness to shoulder responsibility, the willingness to come to grips with difficult situations, especially in the area of politics.
- b) Non-participation has many negative effects on a person. He or she will feel ignored, denied personhood, unworthy, helpless, powerless. Non-participation leads to passivity and increasing indifference, unwillingness to take responsibility, and the tendency to drop out of the community.

2. We must enable the people of God to participate fully in the life of the church and in the ecumenical movement which is itself an instrument of the churches to facilitate participation in one another's life.

Many barriers limit the full participation of lay people, women, youth and children, disabled. There are church structures which tend to limit the expression of contemporary experiences of the Christian faith, and tend to perpetuate a hierarchical attitude. Power and responsibility are not shared. There are theological, cultural and traditional factors which inhibit full participation. What are these?

3. At the political, social and economic levels, people who strive to participate in the decision-making process and in the sharing of resources, work and wealth, are often suppressed by the power of existing systems and the mass media. Today people in many parts of the world are claiming for themselves the right to decide on their destiny. Peoples' movements and peace movements in many countries, self-help organizations of marginalized people, women's movements etc. are all clear signs that people want to participate in decision-making at all levels. Challenging the power structures and political systems of our day, people are struggling to secure their basic human rights. This situation calls for a serious debate within the churches on political ethics.

The discussion on participation may take place within the following framework:

1. Each person should have the right to participate in the decisions affecting the whole community, the church, and his or her personal life.
2. Each person should have the opportunity to speak for herself or himself, thus representing viewpoints and life-experiences different from one another.
3. Participation is not a goal in itself. It aims at the welfare of every single person and the wholeness of the human community.
4. Participation should enable people to contribute their individual gifts and to take on responsibility for the whole community.
5. Participation should involve the accountability and responsibility of every participator, because participation can lose its meaning and change into tyranny if the leaders lose contact with the people and are not accountable to them.
6. Participation is availability: it calls for readiness to take on responsibility and even to suffer if necessary.
7. Participation always depends on a choice: where, when, and how to participate. This can also mean not to participate at all in negative forces.

The sub-groups will deal with the following perspectives on "Participation".

1. Participation of the whole people of God

(especially laity and non-experts) How do the churches of the Reformation today understand the concept of the priesthood of all believers? And how do the Orthodox churches understand the role of the laity? What is the role of specialized ministries in a participatory church structure?

With the development of science and technology, experts have come to play a key role in our societies. How can they be conscientized so that their insights and know-how be used in a responsible and participatory way? Can those who have no expertise (and thus often become the non-involved majority) be enabled to become competent participants?

2. Participation of disabled people

The disabled constitute 10 percent of our population. What should the church do to break down our fear of the disabled and replace it with love and acceptance? How can the churches concretely affirm that all persons are created in the image of God? How can persons with disabilities be included with full dignity in the life of the church and in the decision-making bodies of the churches at all levels, and in the community?

3. Participation of elderly people

The elderly are a growing population in most societies today, but they are excluded from active participation and very often from responsible leadership positions.

What can the churches do to promote the rights and responsibilities of older people, women and men, their participation in the leadership and decision-making processes especially in society, and the involvement of the family in the effective care of the elderly?

4. Participation of the children

Children bring gifts to the community which are often ignored, e.g. spontaneity. How do we give space to children to bring their gifts into the church? How do we advocate for their rights? Can there be an inclusive community as long as children are excluded from the eucharist?

5. Participation of youth

What are the ways in which the churches and the society can be urged to pay more attention to the situation of youth (lack of education, poverty, unemployment, lack of hope for the future, drug-addiction, the burden of family responsibilities at an early age, etc.)?

How are young people involved in decisions affecting their future? What are their expectations of the ecumenical

movement? How can churches help to secure a place for young people and not force them into pre-fabricated structures?

6. Participation of women

How can sexist discrimination, and the double oppression which women still experience in many parts of the world (in spite of some progress made in recent years), be eliminated from daily life and from the structures of church and society? How can an awareness of their situation be better promoted and how can their struggles be supported? How can they make their contribution in a still male-dominated world? How can women develop their own authentic voice? Do women deal openly with their differences of opinion?

7. People's participation in the political process

How can people's participation in the exercise of power to create a just society be achieved? How can people's rights to initiate, create, choose and exercise control over issues pertaining to the life and wellbeing of society be secured? Do the present realities in the various existing political systems, all of which claim to be democratic, help or hinder people's participation? Do Christians, the churches and the ecumenical movement bear effective witness in this regard?

Working style

Session 1:

- General introduction on the issue and the procedures
- Biblical and theological perspectives on participation
- Discussion

Session 2: Introduction to group work

Presentations will be made on the seven aspects of "participation" as these relate to the concerns of their group, giving examples of participation:

- from the work of the Assembly so far and discussing the Assembly itself as a participatory model;
- out of their own life-context (case studies).

Sessions 3-5:

Work in sub-groups. All groups will pay attention to the following issues:

- the biblical and theological perspectives on participation;
- the socio-political and ecclesiological factors impeding participation;
- positive models of responsible participation;
- an evaluation of WCC programmes related to the issue and recommendation to the WCC and the churches for future work in the area.

These will also form the structure of the report to the plenary. Each group may decide for itself on the order in

which it wants to deal with the four aspects. But all groups will reflect on their own experiences of participation and non-participation.

Sessions 6 and 7:

Presentation and discussion of draft reports and recommendations from the sub-groups.

Session 8:

Discussion of the final draft.

4. HEALING AND SHARING LIFE IN COMMUNITY

Introduction

(Cf. issue paper introduction plus paragraphs 1-13)

For the first time in the history of the WCC Assemblies, the issues of healing and sharing are brought up comprehensively, with the aim of discerning their meaning for the life and witness of the churches.

In the past decade, we have become more and more aware of sickness and brokenness as symptoms of our time. Not only are individuals subject to disease and human failure, but the disorder of families, communities and whole societies is a sign of sickness. The broken and distorted relationships between men and women reveal our failure to understand what it means to be created male and female in the image of God. Increasingly, our community life is dislocated, losing its sense of togetherness and solidarity, excluding the weak, the disabled, the aged and those who are of different race or culture.

The images evoked by Revelation 22:1,2 of "the river of the water of life... coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb..." nourishing "the tree of life" which "bear fruit" and whose "leaves are for the healing of the nations", project a strong imperative for healing and sharing. This is made even more clear in the light of the picture of the new heaven and the new earth of Isaiah 65:17-25, where "babies will no longer die in infancy... people will build houses

and live in them themselves... they will plant vineyards and enjoy the wine... wolves and lambs will eat together..." The impulses for the healing of the nations, for an equitable sharing of what we have, seem to be slipping out of our grasp.

The lack of sharing is manifested locally as well as globally in the growing gap between the rich and the poor. In a world of plenty, masses of human beings are denied access to food and basic health care. Among them, women have the highest rates of poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy. Through unjust economic structures the resources of the earth are absorbed for the benefit of the affluent only. Nations are sick as they give in to the madness of the arms race and to technology beyond control. The disorder caused by injustice, oppression and discrimination of race or sex is a denial of the humanity of others and a sickness unto death.

The gospel is a message of healing and sharing. At the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus said that he was chosen "to bring good news to the poor,... to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed...." (Luke 4:18). In all of Jesus' action, the healing of the body and the good news to the poor were inseparable from the forgiveness of sins and his concern for the whole person, in its relationship to God and in the community. Paul teaches us that there is no community without sharing: "... since you have plenty at this time, it is only fair that you should help those who are in need. Then when you are in need, and they have plenty, they will help you. In this way both are treated equally" (2 Cor. 8:14). It is the affirmation of the prophets' call for righteousness in society and between nations (Isa. 42:1-7 and 58:6-10; Amos 5:24), the fulfilment of "shalom". The gospel enables us to overcome sickness in spite of death and to do righteousness in spite of the powers of evil.

The churches themselves are broken and divided. Only if they face their own sickness and seek to deal with it will they be able to participate in the healing of individuals, families, communities and nations. Seen in this perspective, ecumenical sharing of resources means that we begin creating equality and mutuality in the first place within and among the churches. Similarly, a new approach to health and well-being means for the churches to become communities of caring, healing and reconciliation. This will certainly begin with action for meeting the basic needs of all people and enabling all of us to be responsible for our own health. This cannot avoid the serious questions which bear directly on health -- poverty and economic injustice, oppression and discrimination. Dealing with our own ills also means readi-

ness to explore the implications of the changing roles of women and men for the churches' ministry of healing and sharing.

Objective conditions for healing and sharing, in church and society, are those which allow for equality and mutuality among individuals and communities. The divisions which separate us are divisions of power: power to control, to discriminate and to oppress. The central issue of healing and sharing is therefore to confront the misuse and abuse of power; the instrumentality for this will be discovered in terms of reconciliation, within church and community. In the light of the gospel, the fundamental criterion for the use of power is the good of the poor. That is the power of solidarity, the readiness to surrender all other forms of power and to enter into a new partnership, of interdependence and mutual support in commitment and action. To break out of our histories of injustice, our relationships need to be healed so that we may become able to share with all. We need to share so that healing may become effective for all. Healing and sharing belong together.

Working style

First, four witnesses will share their reflections on the brokenness and limitations of our lives out of their own situation (Session 1). Then two speakers will present the main issues of healing and sharing (Session 2). The discussions will continue in six groups focusing on different questions related to healing, sharing and community, with the aim of spelling out the common convictions, controversies, new possibilities and models of action (Sessions 3 and 4). The group will come together to hear from one another (Session 5) and then meet once more to formulate priorities and proposals for ecumenical action (Session 6). Finally, the group reports will be discussed together and the report on issue 4 will be composed so as to reflect the collective result of the discussion process (Sessions 7 and 8).

Discussing the issue (cf. issue paper paragraphs 14-22)

Sessions 1 and 2 plenaries: The testimonies will deal with:

- the socio-political and church contexts which stand in the way of our living together in a community of healing and sharing;
- the barriers to full participation and sharing which are experienced by aging persons and persons with disabilities;

- the limitations within the present healing ministries of the churches;
- the distorted relationships between women and men in church and society, and the possibilities for better spiritual and personal sharing.

Sessions 3 and 4 group discussions: For each group, the objective is to identify first the common convictions and controversies, and then the new possibilities and models of action. The focus of each group will be different:

1. Health questions: the healing ministry of the church

The fundamental goal here is to enable each person and each family to realize life to its fullness. What are the priority issues of healing and health care for the churches in our time? Are we ready to work for a new consensus on the continuing maldistribution of health resources? How can we deal with the fundamental threats to health which one sees in economic and social injustice? What can best serve to promote the equitable development of health care in poorer countries? What is the place of the primary health care model and of training in this concern? What is the force that heals in modern medicine? in spiritual healing? in traditional systems of healing? in the life of the community?

How can the churches more effectively enter the debate on some of the ethical issues in biology and medicine which so deeply divide them? What are the fundamental principles to guide the churches as they face the new and growing biomedical technologies? Do we recognize the need to come to grips with the idolatry of scientific medicine in all regions and countries? Is there a challenge for the churches -- for congregations -- to become caring and healing communities, and to come to grips personally and theologically with sickness and suffering and dying?

2. Health questions: disabled persons and aging persons; alcoholism and drug addiction

This group will separate for discussion in two sub-groups.

- Recent years have provided new opportunities to examine the life and witness of persons with disabilities and of aging persons and their role in family, church and society. How can we go beyond what has been achieved and work for removing the more deeply human and societal handicaps in truly liberating those with disabilities? in liberating aging persons for continuing fruitful lives?
- The rising human tragedy of alcoholism and drug addiction now afflicts all societies, all regions, and seriously

reflects the distress of our social environment, and the brokenness of our life-styles. How can the churches most effectively respond? What challenges to action and what models can be described for churches to meet the human and societal ills which these problems represent?

3. Sharing questions: the ministry of sharing; spiritual and human resources

The ministry of sharing centres around the understanding of the church as a eucharistic community. Every act of sharing is a commemoration of the crucified Christ sharing himself with a broken world, healing and redeeming. The Christian emphasis is on the giving of one's self; of bearing one another's burdens. What are some of the desirable qualities in such expressions of sharing life together that would lead us towards mutuality?

There is opportunity for both the materially rich and the poor churches to share their many gifts and talents with each other and amongst themselves. How can the churches more tangibly share the richness of their spiritual gifts and traditions? What models can be offered for more effective sharing of the human resources of the churches within and beyond Christian communities?

4. Sharing questions: equality and mutuality; use of money

The churches around the world are involved in many activities aiming at more equality and justice. For all this work, the availability and transfer of funds have become vital elements in their life and relationships. But money is often a cause of controversy because of the power it confers. How can Christian communities learn to use money as a tool of sharing? How are we to establish true relationships of mutuality and equality? How can churches promote global justice beyond their own financial involvement?

The Resource Sharing System is emerging, out of an intensive search for renewal in recent years. Does it have the potentiality to be a new model of ecumenical action? How can it be affirmed and strengthened so as to engage all the churches groups and communities committed to the ecumenical movement?

5. Community questions: identity and solidarity; changing roles and expectations of women and men

The discrimination against women in society and church is a negation of the God-given identity of women and men. How do we interpret anew scripture and tradition? What do the changing roles and expectations of women and men mean in family, work, church and society?

New findings about spiritual wholeness and the variety of ministry must be collected and transformed into ways for both women and men to realize their full human potential, to recognize the *imago dei*. How can the church help heal the brokenness between people and be a learning environment for shared leadership, family responsibility, peaceful development? How can we release the energy for the whole people of God in a healing and sharing community of women and men for the renewal of church and society?

6. Conscious integration of healing and sharing as a common imperative: theological elements

Healing and sharing have found the beginnings of common ground in models which promote the comprehensive approach to community development. It becomes more sharply focused in the concern for the poor and the oppressed, which is characterized by sharing and solidarity. How can healing and sharing become integral to the life of the church? What is our healing and sharing responsibility towards displaced and uprooted persons?

Where are the challenges to the churches to link these efforts in a common imperative? How does this challenge the WCC programme for the next period? Where are the broad lines for continuing biblical and theological scholarship to support our reflection and action?

Session 5 plenary: Panel presentation of group discussions. The purpose is to share the findings of the groups and to direct the discussion towards the emerging priorities and possibilities.

Session 6 group discussions: Same six groups as above. The objective is to formulate a sub-group report in terms of common convictions as well as priorities and proposals for ecumenical action.

Session 7 and 8 plenaries: Discussion of group reports and elaboration of the comprehensive report on issue 4. The report will deal with healing and sharing life in community as:

1. an historical experience and struggle of the churches, still marred by injustice and power-seeking, but seeking to be faithful to biblical and theological imperatives;
2. important for the witness of the churches and the ecumenical movement in their search for renewal;
3. relevant for reconciliation, justice and peace;
4. offering new challenges for action by the churches and the WCC. Specific proposals should be made for programme action with reference to resource sharing, the ministry of healing and the renewal of human community.

5. CONFRONTING THREATS TO PEACE AND SURVIVAL

Introduction

The topic of this group combines two urgent ecumenical concerns which have reached a new point of significance and intensity in the churches since the Nairobi Assembly: the struggle for peace and the struggle for human survival in a world of steadily expanding technological might. (The economic and political aspects of human survival (poverty, unemployment, economic justice, etc.) are dealt with in issue group 6.)

A. Threats to peace. The opposition to militarism and the arms race and the struggle to prevent a nuclear war are now seen as a necessity for human survival, not only a moral duty. Since Nairobi, an increasing number of churches have been active in support of disarmament, in particular of nuclear disarmament; a Christian peace movement has emerged as a force to reckon with in many countries. All churches today are agreed on the need to work for peace; yet there is no substantial agreement on how to state this theologically and ethically, and even less on how the churches should contribute to the political process to stop the arms race and achieve a measure of peace with justice. The issue group is asked to identify the positive things that Christians can do to further international understanding and peace.

B. Human survival. The nuclear and conventional arms race is one aspect of a much deeper and more complex problem: the tendency for modern science and technology to be used in ways that threaten human survival. While advances in science and technology can promote human welfare, the fruits of these developments are not reaching the whole world. Moreover, modern technically organized society is characterized by uncontrolled organization, large-scale environmental degradation, the manipulation of life. The very complexity and rapidity of technological change and its predictable consequences seem to outrun our capacity for its assessment and control. Examination of the theological and ethical implications of the contemporary technological worldview is therefore central to the peace and survival question.

Session 1: plenary (1 August) "Threats to peace"

Two or three plenary presentations on the theological and biblical basis for the Christian concern for peace with

justice, the key issues in the current discussion of threats to peace, the churches' response and the possible actions with they might take collectively if they are to assert a credible and realistic position in public life (35 minutes for presentations; 45 minutes for discussion in plenary).

Session 2: plenary (1 August) "Human survival"

Two or three brief opening presentations on the impact of science and technology on peoples and cultures and the theological issues posed for the churches. (35 minutes for presentations; 45 minutes for discussion in plenary)

Working style

For sessions 3-6 inclusive, it is proposed that the issue group divide into two sub-groups on topics A and B. The following is an outline of the specific points and questions suggested for the consideration of these sub-groups, as derived from issue paper V and subsequent reflection.

Sub-group A: Threats to peace

It is proposed that the peace sub-group focus its attention on four problems.

1. Towards a concept of common security: Prevailing concepts of national security are inadequate. Legitimate security means justice for all, protection and defence of life, the wellbeing of people, the maintenance of their rights -- common security. Under prevailing doctrines of national security (reinforced by strongly held ideological positions) preparation for war is becoming a permanent way of life involving military conditioning of the population. The major powers tend by military intervention to broaden spheres of influence even in distant parts of the world. As a result local wars often escalate into regional conflicts and pose a threat to world peace. How do Christians understand the meaning of security for nations? How can the churches help the nations to think about security in common rather than in national terms? How can the role of the United Nations and other international instruments be strengthened to ensure common security?

2. Relation between economic and military conflicts: The conflicts between the major powers threatens the economic development of the world because it siphons off resources for military purposes. Moreover, the global economic crisis is used as an excuse to reduce already modest aid programmes for third world countries, thus increasing economic instabi-

lity and injustice, further aggravating political and economic conflicts and producing new demands for military intervention. How can the churches help expose the roots of international conflict? What role can they play in search of peaceful solutions? What is their special task in building confidence in situations where apparently disputes about the meaning of justice cannot at present be resolved?

3. Challenging the growth of militarism and the arms race: Military values, ideology and patterns of behaviour have achieved a dominating influence on the political, social, economic and external affairs of many nations, irrespective of size, geographical position or ideology. In the period after the Nairobi Assembly the WCC has clarified and identified the main features of the contemporary phenomenon of militarism and the arms race. The development of new weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons, poses new threats. Is it possible to make a clear distinction between the legitimate needs of peoples defending their societies from aggression and the build-up of aggressive military power? What can Christians do to oppose the growing culture of violence where the means of repression become ever more vicious and sophisticated and also result in the indiscriminate killing of innocent and defenceless people, the extermination of ethnic groups, summary and extrajudicial execution, and widespread use of torture?

4. Ethical dilemmas of deterrence and the theological basis of the Christian task of peace-making: Deterrence, including nuclear deterrence, is the cornerstone of today's military strategic thinking. It means the dissuasion of an adversary by the threat of unacceptable retaliatory damage. But the credibility of nuclear weapons rests on the unquestioned determination to use them, so the issue arises whether the production and readiness to use nuclear weapons fall under the same moral condemnation as their actual use. The present "defence strategies" pose a number of theological and ethical questions which are being discussed widely in the churches. The peace sub-group needs to examine the various possible responses and attempts to formulate a common theological and ethical understanding of the Christian responsibility for peace with justice.

(Brief preparatory papers on each of the topics outlined above will be available to the peace sub-group to aid their consideration.)

Sub-group B: Human survival (in the context of the continuing technological revolution)

The technological revolution will continue. We cannot realistically envisage a world completely without computers,

genetically engineered seeds, large-scale bio-chemical processes, and the further challenges derived from the inner world of the atom. However, the world cannot accept unquestioningly all technological innovations. Difficult and sensitive political and economic choices will need to be made.

It is proposed that the survival sub-group focus attention on three topics:

1. Science and technology as power over societies and cultures: All societies are today increasingly shaped by the assumptions and perspectives of science and technology. They have changed our perceptions of ourselves as human beings, of our cultures, of our economic prospects for the future. The churches need to share their understanding of the promises and threats of such technological power. Some questions that the Assembly should consider: What can the churches say about the kind of science and technology which is appropriate to human development? How are the views and concerns of ordinary people to be heard in scientific circles? What can the churches do about the serious disproportions in the distribution of scientific and technological power between nations? What can the churches do to oppose the tendency to deploy such a large proportion of scientific and technological resources for military purposes? What are the churches doing to sustain and advance the dialogue with members of the scientific community on the challenge of science and technology and what problems do they encounter?

2. Theological critique of the scientific world-view: The power and prestige of science grew in a time of optimism about its potential. Today the assumptions of that world-view are being challenged in many situations, not least in the technologically developed countries. Yet the attraction of science and technology grows in spite of its increasing social and environmental costs and its apocalyptic possibility. What is the Christian critique of the scientific/technological world-view which inherently looks at the world (living and non-living) from a mechanistic and reductionist perspective? What is distinctive and what is similar in the ways faith and science interpret reality? Can the churches agree on some common theological affirmations which would serve as the basis for their ethical evaluation of particular technological developments? How do churches cope with educational systems which assume that empirical science provides an understanding of all reality?

3. Specific ethical issues: Important social and ethical issues arise in all countries from specific and technological developments. It is proposed that the sub-group

examine the results of studies undertaken by churches and the WCC in three or four areas: (a) genetic engineering, (b) energy options, (c) the impact of automation on work, (d) communication technology.

(Brief preparatory papers on each of the topics outlined above will be available to the survival sub-groups, and for their integration into a single report from issue group 5 to the Assembly.)

Sessions 7 and 8 will be in plenary for discussion of the draft reports of the two sub-groups, and for their integration into a single report from issue group 5 to the Assembly.

6. STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN DIGNITY

Introduction

The struggle for a more just and human society is not just a feature of contemporary history. It has in fact been a continuing reality of human existence. But it is particularly crucial now because structural injustice is more entrenched and the violation of human dignity is more systematic in our time than ever before. Christians have contributed to the establishment of unjust social systems, but they have also worked for justice, freedom, dignity -- life in its fullness -- believing that God's kingdom has come, and will come, in Jesus Christ.

Among the signs of the coming of God's kingdom are preaching good news to the poor, proclaiming release to the captives, recovery of sight by the blind, setting at liberty those who are oppressed, and proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19). As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to participate in the struggle for justice and human dignity, to manifest God's love through action and solidarity.

In the eight sessions, the group will focus on the analysis of the actual situation in the light of the foundation of the Christian faith. It will also reexamine the existing models of action. What concrete recommendations can we make for a more faithful and effective ecumenical witness?

How do we interpret the struggles of people? Why should churches be involved in them? How can we be witness to God's justice through solidarity and action? Are we prepared to pay the price for such action? What should be the short-term and long-term strategies for the churches and the ecumenical movement in this whole area?

Method of work

The issue paper and other resources will form part of the input for the work. The presentations and discussions at the Assembly and the experiences and insights of members of the group will also be valuable resources.

A. Opening plenaries (sessions 1 and 2)

Session 1: Introduction

Using the panel-interview format, the moderator of the issue group will pose some penetrating questions to four or five selected panelists, in order to focus on major aspects of the issue, e.g.:

- What are some of the worst manifestations of the "web of oppression" today? How are the people struggling against such oppression?
- What are the power structures behind the realities of oppression? What countervailing powers can we identify?
- Why and how should Christians and the churches be involved in this struggle?
- What are some of the effective models of ecumenical action and solidarity in relation to these struggles? What lessons have we learned from our experience so far?

After this panel-interview, one person will present a 15-minute paper on the basic biblical/theological perspectives on the issue, which will be followed by discussion.

Session 2: Testimonies/witnesses

In the second plenary, five or six selected testimonies/witnesses will be presented, this time dealing with specific, concrete stories of the struggle for justice and human dignity. Persons who have been deeply involved in struggles

of the refugees and migrant workers, in struggles for human rights, racial justice, economic justice and development, the full participation of women, and in peoples' movements for self-determination and nationhood will share their experiences and insights. These testimonies will be written up and sent to the group members in advance. Up to eight minutes will be allotted to each oral presentation. The next thirty minutes will be for questions and general discussion.

Then the moderator will sum up the discussion thus far and specify the working methods, especially for the groups, and indicate the expectations regarding the final report.

B. Working in groups (sessions 3, 4 and 5)

Four working groups are anticipated. (It is possible that some of these four groups may further sub-divide, to ensure fuller participation and more effective discussion). Each of the four groups will work on the whole issue, but by focusing on one of the following four aspects:

Group 1: Basic biblical and theological convictions

In the struggle for justice and human dignity, what are -- for Christians and the Churches -- the basic, non-negotiable affirmations? What are the biblical and theological insights which are rediscovered and affirmed through their involvement in the struggles? What are the points of general agreement and disagreement among the churches? Churches in the ecumenical movement have made numerous statements on this point. What is the substance of what we have said? Are there new elements which we should add to these now? How do we reaffirm our faith, once again, in today's world context? How do we respond to the crucial challenges, both at the level of faith and at the level of the realities of power, in our Christian witness to the kingdom of God?

Group 2: The web of oppression and injustice: racism and sexism

This group will discuss the open and hidden realities of racism and sexism, in order to expose the inter-linkages among the various manifestations of injustice and oppression. What are some of the most prominent and concrete forms of racism and sexism, and how are they intensified by other instruments, dynamics and structures of oppression domestically and internationally? How are they supported by militarism, which attempts to maintain the domination of one group over others? What are their root causes? How are they to be discerned and exposed? How are people struggling to

break these chains and to create a new world of justice and dignity? What are the sources of hope and power in these struggles? What insights have been learned, negatively and positively? What has been and should be the responses of Christians, the churches and the ecumenical movement, in faithfulness to the gospel?

Group 3: The reality and manifestation of power in oppressive situations

Systematic violations of human rights by those in power have become more widespread, massive and terrible. More and more people, including Christians, are struggling to regain their dignity and rights. They have identified and denounced the international, political and economic power structures which directly contribute to the denial of human rights. What are such realities and manifestations of power? How are they organized, controlled and exercised? When does power become corrupt and demonic? How is power exercised for justice and human dignity? More specifically, how does the power of the cross and the resurrection empower people in their struggles for human dignity? How may the churches and the ecumenical movement stand with people in their struggles?

Group 4: Models of ecumenical solidarity and action

On the basis of differing interpretations of the gospel message and different readings of the signs of the time, in response to different situations and contexts, the churches have been involved in all these through a variety of models of action. What are these models and their biblical/theological foundations? What are some of the basic factors which shape these models? What will constitute adequate criteria for ecumenical action and solidarity? In the face of oppression and injustice and based on our understanding of power, what basic guidelines should be developed for faithful and effective ecumenical witness and service in the struggle for justice and human dignity?

Common concerns for all working groups

While each working group is free to develop its own style of work, the following common concerns are to be kept in mind:

- a) The clearest possible analysis of the present situation, and articulation of our perceptions of it.
- b) The lessons which we have learned, both negative and positive.
- c) Recommendations for priorities and emphases in the work of the churches and the WCC in the coming period.

The leadership of each group will draft its own report, to be integrated by a drafting committee representing all groups.

C. Plenary to hear group reports (session 6)

- a) Discussion of reports from the working groups (two to three pages each).
- b) Discussion of a tentative outline of the final report which would have been worked out by the full drafting committee.

D. Working groups to refine the report (session 7)

Based on the discussion in session 6, the four working groups will now refine the respective sections. These will be further integrated by the drafting committee in order to produce the final common report (eight pages).

E. Final plenary (session 8)

This session will focus on the final, integrated report, concentrating especially on the recommendations. Concrete suggestions for revision could still be submitted. After final revision by the combined drafting committee, the report will be submitted to the Assembly plenary.

7. LEARNING IN COMMUNITY

Through the discussion of the issue, the Assembly should be able to set goals for learning in community and suggest new methods for pursuing them. Churches and Christians have in recent years been taking a critical look at their institutions of learning. It is hoped that the Assembly will come up with criteria to assess our institutions.

Two main questions must be kept in mind:
-- What are the goals of learning?
-- What kind of community are we seeking?

The following may provide a possible starting point for discussions in this issue group.

a) The context in which learning takes place

We face in our day the threat of extinction of life itself. Because we face it together, we are increasingly becoming aware of a new dimension to the learning process -- a dimension of mutuality. Teachers and students, parents and children, men and women, governments and people, church authorities and the laity are together involved in learning. Since collective life is threatened, collective reasoning is demanded. The process of learning is no longer isolated from the struggles of living. In the sixties young people were looking for freedom, in church and society; today they are also concerned over the chance of survival and they seek a meaningful life. In learning, life itself is the stake.

b) The contents and methods of learning in community

This new context calls for a radical re-examination of the goals, methods and institutions of learning. Education, being a sub-system of the society, was often found to domesticate people, to impose and reinforce elitism, to lead to passive behaviour and negative self-images in those being educated. Our task is to develop ecumenical learning processes, by which we learn to share our different heritages and to relate our different cultural traditions to the present conditions of life. It will entail greater cooperation between people, much more involvement with one another and the emergence of creative leadership from among the people.

Through life in community, through linking local realities to global challenges, through learning in action and participation, we have had first-hand experience of such educational processes.

c) The educational significance of the Christian community

We have been discovering anew that the Christian community, in its worship, liturgy and its entire life, can provide an important structure for such ecumenical learning. Living through tensions and conflicts, suffering and celebrating together -- these are themselves a process in which people learn to share, to help, to serve, to forgive and to love. In this way ecumenical learning tries to help churches to witness more fully to the gospel's redeeming and liberating power amidst the socio-economic and political realities of our world. So the community of the churches can contribute to the whole community of the world.

d) Biblical background of ecumenical learning

The call of Abraham to leave his country and his father's household to become a blessing for all peoples on earth

(Gen. 12:1-3) represents a decisive point in the history of biblical faith. When his descendants were slaves in Egypt, God freed them through Moses. The exodus from slavery thus became the point of reference in the process of learning for the people of God. The Ten Commandments begin recalling this fact (Ex. 20:2; Deut. 5:6). Children have to remember the deliverance God wrought for them (Deut. 6:20). The prophets continually reminded the people of God to be a new community based on the covenant God made with their ancestors.

This new community of the people of God is essentially what God wants for all of humankind from the very beginning of creation. In Noah God made a covenant with the whole of creation, and thus with all peoples, binding them to the Creator and to each other in an intimate relationship. Breaking this covenant is doing injustice, as the Bible teaches us.

In the New Testament Mary lives this covenant, from this tradition (see Luke 1:49), and Jesus dies for it, giving communion with God and community with the family of disciples priority over the demands of the natural family (Mark 3:31-35) and the teachings of the religious and political leaders of his time. Jesus himself becomes the teacher of the new covenant by his deeds, words and parables. He becomes by his death and resurrection the basis of a new community of free people who live, die and celebrate together, learning to be an instrument of God's will to renew his world. They have a distinct life-style, but they do not live separate and isolated lives. In fact they overcome the barriers of race, class and sex (Gal. 3:28). In this community women play an equal role, as do the poor and the children.

The Bible often describes the repeated refusal of the church to be such a community. At the same time it proclaims the restoring power of the Spirit of Christ who revitalizes the church, being its source of life. This process of revitalization might be called ecumenical learning.

Along these lines, then, the task of the issue group will be to answer the question: How can we become a community that learns to witness, to participate, to heal and to share, to make peace and work for justice, and to communicate credibly?

Method of work

We come from different backgrounds, with a variety of experiences, hopes and frustrations in learning. We should be prepared to learn from each other, in order that the church may itself become a learning community. This means that the participants in this issue discussion understand

themselves as partners in a learning community and have the experience of a learning community during the different sessions. We cannot discuss "learning in community" without being ourselves a learning community.

Session 1: Learning in community -- four case studies

In plenary, four case studies on learning in community will be presented and analyzed (10 minutes each). They will be from different geographical regions and the following contexts of learning: family life -- liturgical life -- action experiences -- formal education. (Among other possible contexts are congregational life, training for ministry, participation in development, etc.). Presented in different forms (story telling, role play, testimonies, etc.) they will illustrate the achievements, conflicts and setbacks encountered in the process of becoming a learning community.

Questions raised in smaller ad-hoc groups will help us to analyze such case studies, and to find out the major theological and pedagogical implications (keeping in mind the two major questions: What are the goals of learning? What kind of community are we looking for?).

Sessions 2-4: Doing learning in ecumenical community

In several groups, divided according to the different contexts of learning mentioned above, the participants will:

- share their own experiences in the field of community learning (advance preparation required);
- evaluate the community learning experiences made during the first week of the Assembly;
- do learning in community by choosing a limited project (e.g. drafting a letter, a prayer, designing a service, drawing a picture, designing a new type of school or new forms of theological education) which they carry out together.

No report is required from these group sessions, but an internal evaluation should give some tentative answers to the two main questions. These would be fed into the preparation for the session which will deal with the goals and guidelines.

Session 5: Ecumenical learning -- goals and guidelines

In plenary, two presentations from the different regions (15 minutes each) are given, which try to answer the two basic questions regarding the goals of learning and the kind of community we are looking for.

Discussions in small ad-hoc groups and later in the plenary should lead to a vision and a definition of the new goals and guidelines we are seeking in the church.

Sessions 6 and 7: Implications for the on-going educational activities of the church

Return to the original groups. Participants are invited to reflect on the implications of the goals and guidelines of ecumenical learning for the ongoing learning activities of our churches. The churches' learning ministry will be evaluated in terms of how well it meets these goals and principles. What kind of ministries have to be reinforced or changed? Which issues challenge the churches to develop new contents and new methods for educational programmes? What are the new learning priorities? Which strategies have to be developed, which structures changed?

These discussions will lead to group reports which should include recommendations for the churches' learning ministry and new programme priorities for the World Council of Churches.

Session 8: Discussion of the final issue group report

In plenary a final report is presented and discussed (prepared by a drafting committee on the basis of the week's work, especially the group discussions in the sixth and seventh sessions). The report should bring forth clear recommendations for the educational policy of the churches and of the World Council for the post-Vancouver period.

The report should contain:

- an analysis of traditional and new learning activities conducted by the churches;
- a description of the goals and guidelines of ecumenical learning;
- a listing of educational priorities for the churches and the WCC;
- guidelines for the training of leadership;
- models of learning processes and of learning communities;
- suggestions as to how such learning communities may be developed within congregations.

8. COMMUNICATING CREDIBLY

Introduction

The Uppsala Assembly issued a statement on communication. It was entitled The Church and the Media of Mass Communication, and dealt with the role of the media and the church's re-

sponsibility in the whole issue of communication. The statement contained a specifically theological section, and reminded the churches that "in Christ we are invited to unmask all pseudo-communication which divides rather than unites, points to ourselves rather than others, sows enmity rather than reconciles, imprisons rather than liberates." The statement closed with a series of recommendations for study and action.

That was in 1968, when people still looked at the future of the whole communication enterprise with considerable optimism. Such optimism is no longer evident. Today the churches are more critical, more sceptical, and more afraid of the future of communication. They are no longer in a mood to accept the use of the media unquestioningly or to see the kingdom in terms of the technological revolution in communication. Such reservations came out clearly in a three-year study in which many churches and Christian communicators have been involved.

It is against this background that we go back to the fundamentals of our faith for a perspective on communication.

Rationale

Much of what happens today in the name of credible Christian communication -- Sunday sermons or TV dramas, human rights campaigns or evangelistic crusades, pastoral counselling or the renovation of church buildings, Christian literature or radio ministry -- lacks credibility because of what is being said and shown and how it is done.

This communication-without-credibility happens at a time when talk about and technology for communication have become a major growth industry, and the politics and ideology of communication provide a bitter international debate.

In such a context, churches are faced with hard choices for sustaining, regaining, even earning credibility. We need new eyes for seeing, new ears for hearing how communication is understood and practised.

The purpose of this issue group is to look more carefully at the factors which limit the credibility of our communication, and to devise new ecumenical strategies to challenge and overcome them.

But first, what happens when we take the term "communication" -- the basic common act of imparting and sharing information to animate life and build community -- and qualify that process with the adjective "Christian"? Are we limiting or expanding the scope of what and how we communicate?

If by "Christian" we point to Christ, then our scope is expanded because of whom we speak. ("It was there from the beginning: we have heard it; we have seen it with our own eyes; we looked upon it, and felt it with our own hands; and it is of this we tell" -- 1 John 1:1.)

"Our theme is the word of life", John's letter goes on to say. That which we seek to share is the fullness of life offered in Jesus Christ, experienced ecumenically in the power of the Spirit by the people of God, and is shared in order to bring renewal, liberation, new life. It is the same claim that is echoed in the assembly theme -- "Jesus Christ -- the Life of the World". Every choice of communication technology, media, method and motivation must then be toned, tempered and judged by that claim.

The first four verses of Luke's Gospel offer a similar rationale for Christian communication. Luke has closely studied the narratives, which many people have compiled, "of the things that have been accomplished among us". These narratives are based on the testimony of "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word". What he is writing is not something entirely new; he will only try to present an "orderly account" of what John and others have seen with their own eyes and touched with their own hands. And his purpose is that "you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed".

Here indeed is an indication of the "why", "what" and "how" of the kind of communication in which Christians are called to be involved. These are clearly inter-related. To take seriously who we communicate does give some sharp answers to what we are to communicate as Christians. It indicates how our commitment to the person of Christ provides an obligation and framework for analyzing the structures of injustice, a space for appreciating the beauty of God's kingdom, a way of holding together some awkward partnerships (between justice, participation and sustainability, for example), and a reason for offering the Good News of Jesus Christ amidst very different understandings of what is good and what makes news.

Communication is a harder, larger option when we add the adjective "Christian". It leads us to challenge the conventional wisdom of what real significance or newsworthiness is, to find criteria which will ensure that communication is for human beings and not human beings for communication, to affirm communication as a human right rather than a commercial commodity for buying and selling.

In this issue group we will attempt to spell out such implications in a regionally appropriate way, clearly and

concretely, so that our churches and councils and the programmes of the WCC can offer suitable support and resources.

Methodology

A pattern of regional experience-sharing and proposal-building is suggested, once the common issues and challenges have been defined. Such a pattern would help to ensure recognition of the enormous variety of cultural, theological, social and political understandings about communication within our constituency.

Sessions 1 and 2

The issue will be introduced through a series of short presentations on themes already defined by the churches in the preparatory study. A synopsis of each theme would be shared with all participants at the beginning of the Assembly. The group of advisors will act as a panel to respond after each presentation and stimulate plenary debate. Themes to be covered include:

- a) Communication and theology -- criteria for credibility and authenticity. What does the gospel offer in seeking such criteria and setting standards of newsworthiness? How and where does Christian theology and conviction shape communication practices, both outside and inside the churches' own media?
- b) Communication and witness for justice and peace -- the connection between communication and commitment. How and where do communicators build community, serve human development, promote dialogue and the cause of justice and peace? What communication policies best serve such causes?
- c) Communication and culture -- analysis of the influence of language and art, form and symbol; male and female, racial and cultural identities. How does communication credibility depend on a recognition of these realities? How can cultural differences be recognized in ecumenical communication? How do we develop a communication style that respects listening as much as speaking?
- d) Communication and technology -- the myth of value-free technology and the search for appropriate media. How far does communication technology help or hinder truth telling? What are the electronic opportunities -- and dilemmas -- in the area of communication? What are the implications of the new technology for personal freedom, family structure, national identity and human community?

e) Communication and professional media -- the self-understanding of the professional journalist, the importance of and limits to communication expertise. Does professionalism help or hinder the building of ecumenical community and understanding? What are the points of entry for non-professionals in developing an understanding and critique of mass media and their profound effect on contemporary life.

f) Communication and the ecumenical movement -- the special challenge of communicating ecumenism as movement, fellowship and organization. What is distinctive about ecumenical communication and how do we define its constituency(ies)? What are the obstacles and opportunities for communicating the work and witness of the WCC? What communication learnings are found in the pre-Assembly visitation and in the Assembly event itself?

Session 3

Introduced in plenary to the regional groups that now become a focal point of the process. Short presentations will be made by the moderator of each regional group summarizing the churches' understanding of and engagement in the themes outlined in sessions 1 and 2, and focusing these themes in the form of common questions for all regional groups. How are themes a to e reflected and responded to in the experience of each region?

Moderators and rapporteurs for each regional group would be selected and briefed during the first week of the Assembly. Special attention will be given to the assessment, region by region, of the Assembly so far, and to the case studies provided in the book "Opening Eyes and Ears" from the Philippines, GDR, Italy, Brazil, USA, Dominican Republic, South Africa and India. These case studies describe projects that provide communication access to groups and constituencies normally denied voice and visibility.

The illustrated brochure on "Credible Christian Communication" and the issue paper "Communicating with Conviction" both provide one (but not the only) model for the eight-page summary. The proposals for strategy, study and action should be as short and direct as possible.

The context for these proposals is ecumenical. What and how can we communicate together as churches that we cannot attempt or understand alone? Some of the recommendations should be addressed to the churches and councils we represent. Others should speak directly to the WCC as it plans its programmes and priorities for the period after Vancouver.

Session 4

Work in regional groups with focus on contributions to 8-page summary statement.

Session 5

Plenary session, to share progress and direction of regional groups, test assumptions, priorities and tentative framework of summary statement.

Session 6

Work in regional groups with focus on recommendation for future action.

Session 7 and 8

These two final plenaries will seek consensus on an eight-page summary of the debate for sharing with the churches and a list of proposals for communication strategy, study, services, training, advocacy and action to be taken up by the ecumenical movement.

Session 7 will begin by focusing on the summary statement to allow time for further revision as required. Then regional groups will report with their recommendations to the plenary, continuing into session 8 and allowing time for participants to test, challenge and refine the proposals from the various regions.

RESOURCES

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE AND DEBATE

(For the complete rules, see the WCC Rules, Section XIV)

There are three categories of plenary sessions in the Assembly. The presiding officer will announce at the beginning of each session which it is -- General, Deliberative or Business (see p.11 for details).

No special rules of procedure are defined for general sessions, which are under the responsibility of the presiding officer.

The rules for business and deliberative sessions are the same, except as noted below.

1. Moderator's role: It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to grant the right to speak and to determine the order of speakers, to ensure order in debate and observance of the rules.
2. Right to vote: Only the delegates of full member churches have the right to vote in the Assembly.
3. Right to speak: In addition to the voting delegates, the following also have the right to speak in discussion: the WCC Presidents, members of the retiring Central Committee, Advisers, Delegated Observers and Delegated Representatives. Other persons may speak only if invited by the presiding officer. Persons wishing to speak must give notice to the presiding officer and may speak only when recognized.

4. Motions: Only voting delegates have the right to propose or second motions. All motions are to be presented to the presiding officer in writing, except "privileged" motions (see below) or those dealing with procedural matters. A motion which has been seconded may be withdrawn only by the general consent of the delegates.

5. Amendments: When an amendment is proposed and seconded, debate is limited to the amendment. An amendment that negates the original motion is not acceptable.

An amendment to an amendment is acceptable. When moved and seconded, debate is limited to the amendment to the amendment.

An amendment to an amendment to an amendment is not acceptable.

If an amendment is defeated, new amendments with essentially the same intent are not acceptable.

6. Debate: The presiding officer seeks to allow different positions and viewpoints to be expressed. The person who proposes the motion has the right of reply at the end of the debate. No one may speak for more than five minutes.

A delegate who thinks the debate should be terminated may make a motion "to close debate" or "to move the question" under discussion (i.e. the motion or the amendment). If two-thirds of the delegates present and voting agree, an immediate vote is taken on the motion or amendment.

7. Order of voting: Motions and amendments are voted on in the following order:

- a) amendment to the amendment (if any);
- b) amendment (if any);
- c) original motion.

8. "Privileged" motions: It is possible to make certain motions which take priority over other motions and which serve to postpone action or drop the item under consideration from the agenda (see the Rules XIV.5.j):

- a) to recess or to adjourn the session;
- b) that the question not be put (to go on to the next item of business without voting);
- c) to postpone indefinitely (or to take up again in the Assembly);
- d) to postpone to a time specified (when it will be taken up again);
- e) to refer to a committee (for a report later).

9. Point of order or procedure: A delegate may make a "point of order" at any time if he/ she feels that the Rules are not being followed. The presiding officer shall then rule on the point of order. If this decision is challenged, the delegates shall be asked to vote on whether they agree with the decision.

10. Sense of the meeting: The presiding officer may declare the "sense of the meeting" on a matter under discussion and announce it without calling for a vote. If this decision is challenged, a vote shall be taken.

11. Voting: Voting is normally by a show of hands. The presiding officer shall first ask for those in favour to vote; then those opposed; then those who abstain.

If the presiding officer so decides, or a delegate requests, there shall be a count on a show of hands or by standing.

A secret written ballot shall be taken if a majority of delegates present and voting agree.

A majority of delegates present and voting shall suffice for a decision except in the following instances where a two-thirds majority is required:

- motion to close;
- motion to reconsider a decision;
- motion to take up a matter which had been "postponed indefinitely";
- amendments to the Rules;
- suspension of the Rules.

The number of abstentions does not affect the result of a vote. Any delegate voting with the minority or abstaining may have his/her name recorded on request. If there is a tie vote, the matter is defeated.

If the presiding officer is a delegate, he/she may vote with the delegates, or in the event of a tie vote, but not both.

12. Reconsideration: Any two members who voted with the majority on a matter which has been decided may propose to the Business Committee that it can be reconsidered.

13. New business or change in the agenda: If the Business Committee does not agree to a change proposed by a delegate, it shall explain its reasons. The delegate may then give reasons for the change. A vote shall be taken

without discussion on whether to accept the item of business.

14. Amendments: Amendments to the Rules may be moved at any session provided that 24 hours' notice has been given in writing. No amendments to the Constitution may be made at this Assembly since six months notice has not been given of any proposals.

15. Languages: A person may speak in a language other than English, French, German, Spanish, Greek or Russian if he/she provides for interpretation into one of these languages.

In a deliberative session, the same rules as above apply, but only the following motions are permitted:

- 1) to approve the substance of a report or document and commend it to the churches for study and appropriate action;
- 2) to refer the matter back to the group which reported it with instructions to consider different emphases;
- 3) to instruct the group reporting to provide for an open hearing on the matter before reporting again;
- 4) "privileged" motions (as noted above);
- 5) to close debate.

HOW CAN YOU EFFECTIVELY
PARTICIPATE IN THE
ASSEMBLY PLENARY?

1. Be clear in your mind as to what you want to say.
2. Organize your ideas.
3. There is a time limit for every speaker,
so speak to the point.

HOW DO YOU GET TO SPEAK IN PLENARY?



1. Write your name on a piece of paper, indicating your church, country, sex, your position on the issue (for or against), and whether you are attending a WCC Assembly for the first time or not.
2. Give it to a steward who will take it to the moderator of the session.

HOW DO YOU RAISE A CONCERN AT THE ASSEMBLY?

1. First find out from friends whether the concern you want to raise is already covered by the agenda. You can check with delegates from your own region, or with those members of the retiring Central Committee who have been requested to give advice and answer questions regarding Assembly procedures.
2. If you are convinced that the concern has not been covered, share it with as many groups as you can -- small groups, regional groups, denominational groups, youth, women, etc. You need to get as much support for the concern as possible.
3. Make your written proposal, supported by other delegates, and give it to the Business Committee.



HOW DO YOU PROPOSE A MOTION?

I MOVE...



A motion introduces a subject to the Assembly for consideration or action.

A motion needs to be seconded by another delegate before it can be considered by the Assembly.

In a debate on the motion, no one can speak more than once, except the proposer.

Example of a motion:

Proposer: "I move that we send a delegation to Lebanon to study the situation."

Another delegate: "I second the motion."

AMENDMENTS

An amendment is normally made to modify
a motion in order to clarify it,
or make it more precise,
or perhaps to change its intent.
This may be done either by inserting words or phrases,
or by striking out words or phrases.

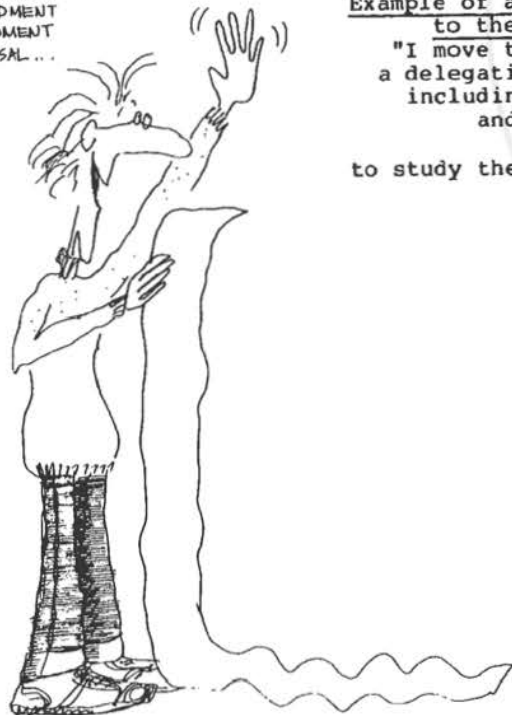
Example of an amendment:

"I move that we send a delegation of four,
including one youth,
to Lebanon to study the situation."

One does not introduce a new idea through an amendment.

An amendment, like a motion,
needs to be seconded.

I HAVE
AN AMENDMENT
TO THE AMENDMENT
TO THE AMENDMENT
TO THE AMENDMENT
TO THE AMENDMENT
TO THE PROPOSAL ...



Example of an amendment to the amendment:

"I move that we send
a delegation of four,
including one youth
and one woman,
to Lebanon
to study the situation."

OTHER WAYS OF CHANNELLING A CONCERN



It is not always necessary to introduce
a concern as a motion:

A vital concern can be channelled
through the
Programme Guidelines Committee,
Message Committee,
or Policy Reference Committee.

Make your written proposal,
supported by other delegates,
and submit it to the moderator of the appropriate committee.

LANGUAGES

Provisions for a multi-lingual Assembly

Translation and interpretation services will be organized by the WCC Language Service.

All official documents will be translated into the working languages (English, French, German, Russian and Spanish).

In all plenary sessions, simultaneous interpretation is provided into and from the working languages, as well as Greek. Simultaneous interpretation will also be provided in the clusters and Issue groups, and committees if it is absolutely necessary.

Note: In all these meetings and sessions, any other language may be used provided that the speaker makes arrangements for consecutive interpretation into one of the WCC working languages. Sufficient additional time is allowed by the Rules when consecutive interpretation is needed.

At Vancouver, for the first time in an Assembly, language stewards will be available, to assist informally, especially for other than the working languages (e.g. from Africa, Asia, Latin America). The main task of these stewards will be to help, for example, in small groups and in matters of personal communication.

A group of language consultants will observe, reflect and if necessary intervene on language use and communication problems during the Assembly. The group may wish to prepare a report, with recommendations on language policy and communication in the ecumenical fellowship for the Central Committee.

Recommendations to all participants

The WCC is a multilingual fellowship and not an English-speaking organization. Please express yourself, or draft your speech or report, in that working language in which you feel most at home. Do not hesitate to make the most of the provision for interpretation and translation.

Remember that many people are not used to your language, or the way you speak it. So, please:

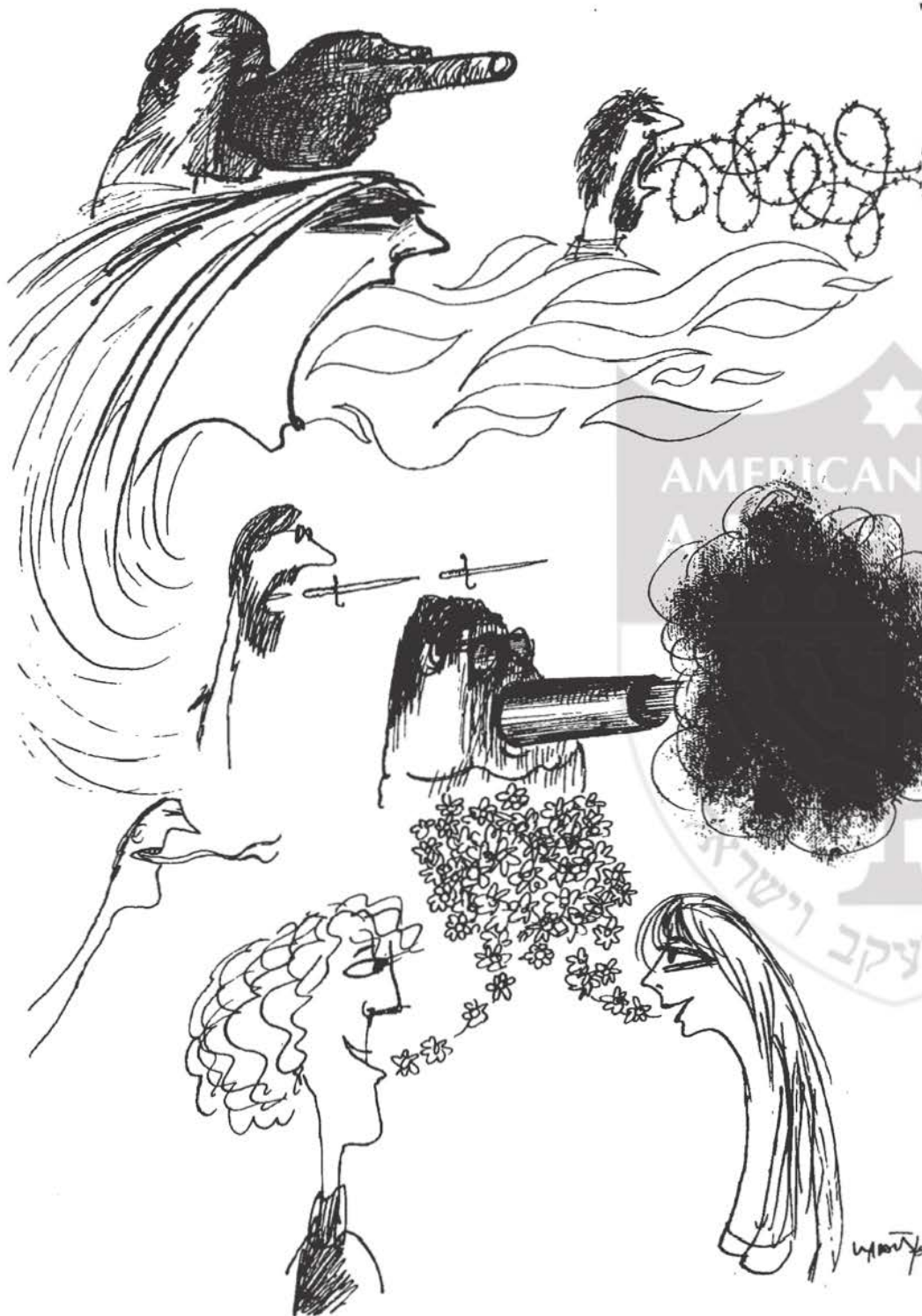
- speak clearly, distinctly and slowly;
- keep your sentences short and simple;
- try to avoid anything too idiomatic and therefore not easily translatable.

If your intervention is in the form of a written text, remember that a written text is difficult to understand when only heard and not read. Therefore, compose and deliver your speech in the style and rhythm of an oral communication. Whenever possible, provide the interpreters with a copy of your speech or intervention.

If you are a member of a drafting group, remember that there is no obligation to draft in English: any of the five working languages can be used.

The drafted text should avoid sentence structures that are too complex, a phraseology that is too idiomatic and jargon which is too technical. Remember also that the way of reasoning, the cultural background, and/or the level of knowledge are not the same for all.

Should problems arise due to language or communication in general (ways of moderating, a too fast delivery of speeches or interventions etc.), remember that you may raise a point of order. You may also register a point of complaint to the language consultants (c/o the Language Service Office) or to the language stewards (c/o Stewards' Office).



TOWARDS AN ECUMENISM OF MANY TONGUES

Introduction

The skill and sensitivity with which we listen and speak to each other determines the quality of life in the ecumenical movement.

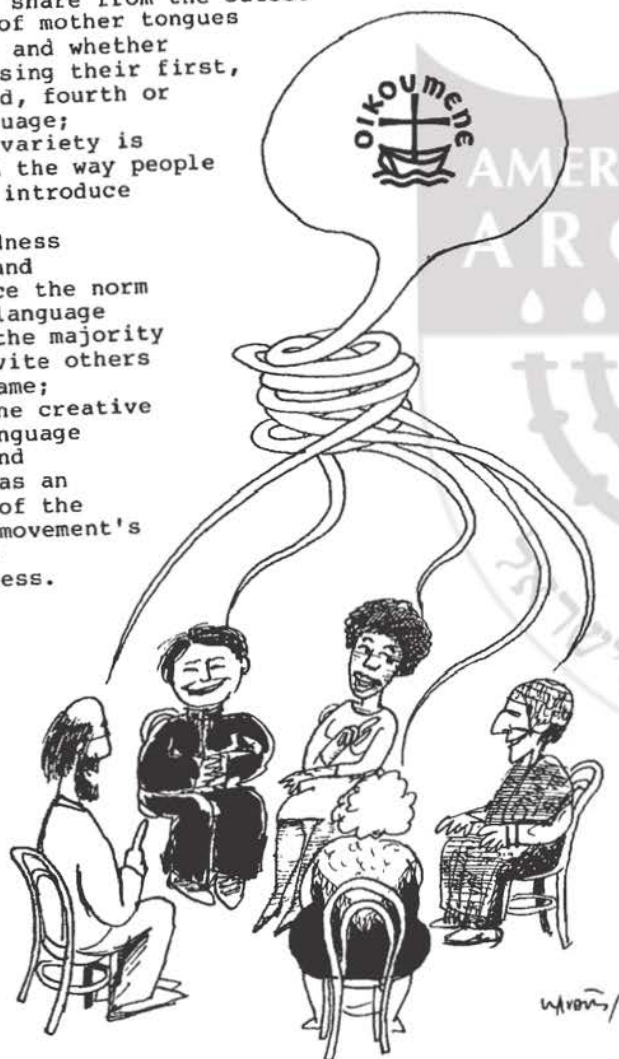
Through language we can inflict great pain or share great joy. We can signal awareness and respect, or blindness and disregard of each other. We can express honour, or exercise oppression.

How we use words and understand them is therefore a profoundly ethical concern, a measure of our faith and our commitment. We work in a multilingual setting, and what follows is meant to help us do our work well and sensitively.

MOTHER AND OTHER TONGUES

We are most receptive when we can hear and be heard in our mother tongue but few ecumenical occasions afford that luxury, so:

- discover and share from the outset the variety of mother tongues represented, and whether people are using their first, second, third, fourth or seventh language;
- ensure this variety is respected in the way people are able to introduce themselves;
- make awkwardness acceptable and inconvenience the norm by using a language other than the majority one, and invite others to do the same;
- emphasize the creative value of language diversity and difficulty as an expression of the ecumenical movement's breadth and incompleteness.



LANGUAGE AS A SIGNAL

- In our own language group, language is a closely watched barometer of mood, meaning, character etc.
- In multilingual ecumenical settings, new ways of interpreting language use is needed
 - less intense, more relaxed, so that precision is not assumed as a virtue.

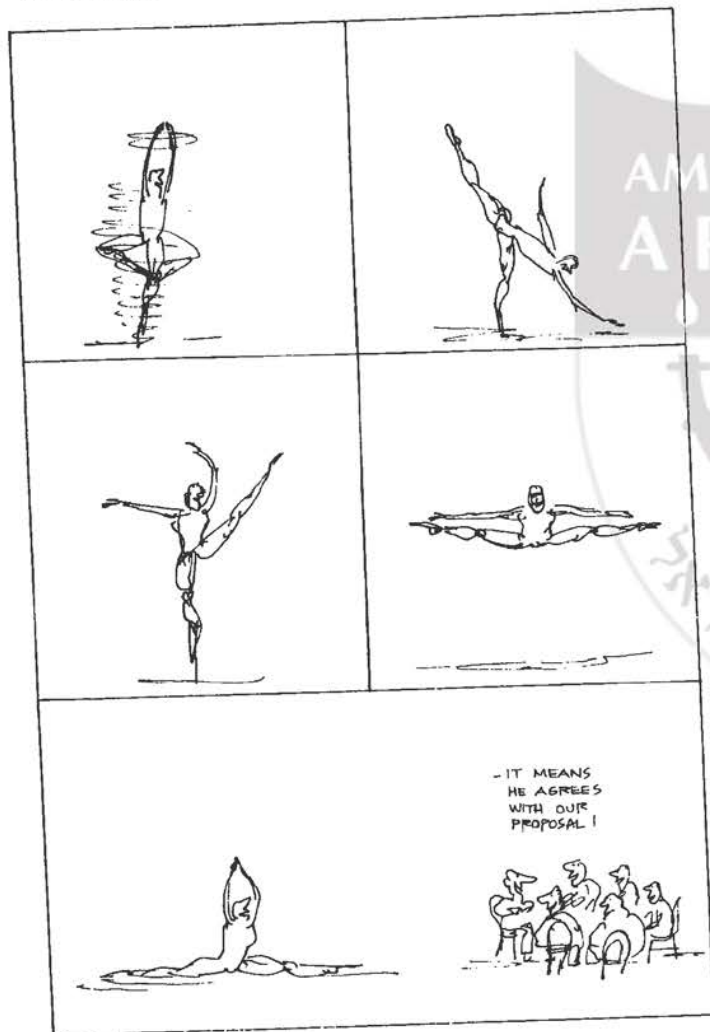


- Volume, tone, speed, rhetorical style -- these don't translate easily cross-culturally.
- Cultural understandings of the use of language also differ. Some prefer the language of silence. Non-speakers are not always non-contributors.
- Body language speaks loudly (standing close together, head movements, hand shaking and gestures) and therefore needs interpretation.
- Use of language is also affected by role differences
 - male/female, age, seniority, experience, rank etc.
- Language sometimes explains behaviour. For example, people with a common language may choose to eat together.

ALTERNATIVES TO LANGUAGE

Non-verbal resources are important:

gesture	•	movement
song	•	dance
posters	•	diagrams
handicraft	•	films
	•	photographs etc.
	•	mime
	•	liturgy



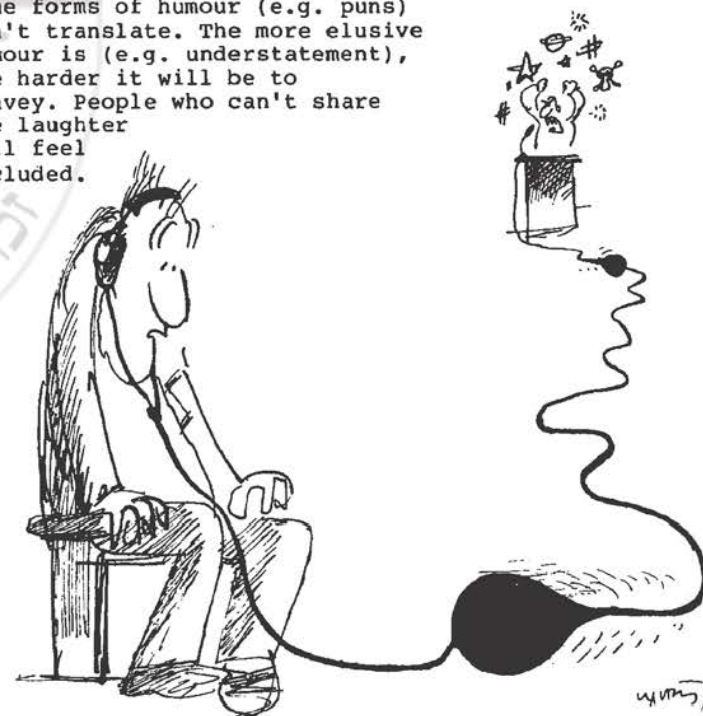
PRACTICAL ADVICE

When listening:

Familiarize yourself with the use of the headphone.
Do not hesitate to seek the help of stewards
if the reception is not clear
or you cannot get the channel you want.

When speaking:

- Speaking too fast guarantees exclusion and confusion.
- Simplicity, clarity, and brevity of vocabulary and sentence structure make communication easier.
- Clear articulation, especially of consonants, is crucial.
- Personal and concrete expressions communicate better than abstract and general ones.
- Avoid culturally bound images e.g. idioms, trade names.
- Sexist and racist formulations (however familiar) will anger and offend.
- Keep chronologies simple.
- Avoid double negatives and rhetorical questions.
- Humour needs patience and delicacy. Some forms of humour (e.g. puns) don't translate. The more elusive humour is (e.g. understatement), the harder it will be to convey. People who can't share the laughter will feel excluded.



LANGUAGE FOR MONOLINGUISTS

- Be sensitive to political and cultural charges of linguistic imperialism, conference oppression etc.
- Invite non-mother tongue English speakers to monitor your vocabulary, images etc.
- Acknowledge that monolingual ecumenism inevitably results in a decreasing circle of participants.
- Let others set the style and pace of the dialogue.
- Take initiative in ensuring that the drafting process is multilingual.
- Respect the variety of different English languages, that English English is not the measure of worth.



CONCLUSION

Language is a gift, dependent on grace.
Reflect on Acts 2, and the miracle
of each hearing in his or her own language.
The communication question
is always how much is received,
not how much is spoken.

ASSEMBLY REFERENCE ROOM

The Assembly Reference Room is located in the Vancouver School of Theology Chancellor Building. It is open throughout the Assembly, every day, all day.

In the Assembly Reference Room, you will find a team of trained library-archives-documents people who can:

- provide you with, or direct you to, the reference materials you need for any special task you are called upon to do;
- help you with your research;
- answer your questions in Arabic, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish... and even some Latin and Greek (if the whole team is there!)

CONSTITUTION

I. BASIS

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Those churches shall be eligible for membership in the World Council of Churches which express their agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded and satisfy such criteria as the Assembly or the Central Committee may prescribe. Election to membership shall be by a two-thirds vote of the member churches represented at the Assembly, each member church having one vote. Any application for membership between meetings of the Assembly may be considered by the Central Committee; if the application is supported by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Committee present and voting, this action shall be communicated to the churches that are members of the World Council of Churches, and unless objection is received from more than one-third of the member churches within six months the applicant shall be declared elected.

III. FUNCTIONS AND PURPOSES

The World Council of Churches is constituted for the following functions and purposes:

- 1) to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe;
- 2) to facilitate the common witness of the churches in each place and in all places;
- 3) to support the churches in their worldwide missionary and evangelistic task;
- 4) to express the common concern of the churches in the service of human need, the breaking down of barriers between people, and the promotion of one human family in justice and peace;

- 5) to foster the renewal of the churches in unity, worship, mission and service;
- 6) to establish and maintain relations with national councils and regional conferences of churches, world confessional bodies and other ecumenical organizations;
- 7) to carry on the work of the world movements for Faith and Order and Life and Work and of the International Missionary Council and the World Council on Christian Education.

IV. AUTHORITY

The World Council shall offer counsel and provide opportunity for united action in matters of common interest.

It may take action on behalf of constituent churches only in such matters as one or more of them may commit to it and only on behalf of such churches.

The World Council shall not legislate for the churches; nor shall it act for them in any manner except as indicated above or as may hereafter be specified by the constituent churches.

V. ORGANIZATION

The World Council shall discharge its functions through: an Assembly, a Central Committee, an Executive Committee, and other subordinate bodies as may be established.

1. The Assembly

- a) The Assembly shall be the supreme legislative body governing the World Council and shall ordinarily meet at seven year intervals.
- b) The Assembly shall be composed of official representatives of the member churches, known as delegates, elected by the member churches.
- c) The Assembly shall have the following functions:
 - 1) to elect the President or Presidents of the World Council;
 - 2) to elect not more than 145 members of the Central Committee from among the delegates which the member churches have elected to the Assembly;
 - 3) to determine the policies of the World Council and to review programmes undertaken to implement policies previously adopted;
 - 4) to delegate to the Central Committee specific functions, except to amend this Constitution and to

allocate the membership of the Central Committee granted by this Constitution to the Assembly exclusively.

2. The Central Committee

- a) The Central Committee shall be responsible for implementing the policies adopted by the Assembly and shall exercise the functions of the Assembly itself delegated to it by the Assembly between its meetings, except its power to amend this Constitution and to allocate or alter the allocation of the membership of the Central Committee.
- b) The Central Committee shall be composed of the President or Presidents of the World Council and not more than 150 members.
 - 1) Not more than 145 members shall be elected by the Assembly from among the delegates which the member churches have elected to the Assembly. Such members shall be distributed among the member churches by the Assembly giving due regard to the size of the churches and confessions represented in the Council, the number of churches of each confession which are members of the Council, reasonable geographical and cultural balance, and adequate representation of the major interests of the Council.
 - 2) Not more than 5 members shall be coopted by the Central Committee at its first meeting from among the representatives which the associate member churches have elected to the Assembly.
 - 3) A vacancy in the membership of the Central Committee, occurring between meetings of the Assembly, shall be filled by the Central Committee itself after consultation with the church of which the person previously occupying the position was a member.
- c) The Central Committee shall have, in addition to the general powers set out in (a) above, the following powers:
 - 1) to coopt not more than 5 members of the Central Committee from among the representatives which the associate member churches have elected to the Assembly;
 - 2) to elect its Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators from among the members of the Central Committee;
 - 3) to elect the Executive Committee from among the members of the Central Committee;
 - 4) to elect Committees and Boards and to approve the election or appointment of Working Groups and Commissions;
 - 5) within the policies adopted by the Assembly, to approve programmes and determine priorities among them and to review and supervise their execution;
 - 6) to adopt the budget of the World Council and secure its financial support;

- 7) to elect the General Secretary and to elect or appoint or to make provision for the election or appointment of all members of the staff of the World Council;
- 8) to plan for the meetings of the Assembly, making provision for the conduct of its business, for worship and study, and for common Christian commitment. The Central Committee shall determine the number of delegates to the Assembly and allocate them among the member churches giving due regard to the size of the churches and confessions represented in the Council; the number of churches of each confession which are members of the Council; reasonable geographical and cultural balance; the desired distribution among church officials, parish ministers and lay persons; among men, women and young people; and participation by persons whose special knowledge and experience will be needed;
- 9) to delegate specific functions to the Executive Committee or to other bodies or persons.

3. Rules

The Assembly or the Central Committee may adopt and amend Rules not inconsistent with this Constitution for the conduct of the business of the World Council.

4. By-Laws

The Assembly or the Central Committee may adopt and amend By-Laws not inconsistent with this Constitution for the functioning of its Committees, Boards, Working Groups and Commissions.

5. Quorum

A quorum for the conduct of any business by the Assembly or the Central Committee shall be one-half of its membership.

VI. OTHER ECUMENICAL CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS

1. Such world confessional bodies and such world ecumenical organizations as may be designated by the Central Committee may be invited to send non-voting representatives to the Assembly and to the Central Committee, in such numbers as the Central Committee shall determine.
2. Such national councils and regional conferences of churches, other Christian councils and missionary councils as may be designated by the Central Committee may be invited to send non-voting representatives to the Assembly and to the Central Committee, in such numbers as the Central Committee shall determine.

VII. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates to the Assembly present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been reviewed by the Central Committee, and notice of it sent to the member churches not less than six months before the meeting of the Assembly. The Central Committee itself, as well as the member churches, shall have the right to propose such amendment.

RULES

I. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL

Members of the Council are those churches which, having constituted the Council or having been admitted to membership, continue in membership. The term "church" as used in this article includes an association, convention or federation of autonomous churches. A group of churches within a country or region may determine to participate in the World Council of Churches as one church. The General Secretary shall maintain the official list of member churches noting any special arrangement accepted by the Assembly or Central Committee.

The following rules shall pertain to membership.

1. Application

A church which wishes to become a member of the World Council of Churches shall apply in writing to the General Secretary.

2. Processing

The General Secretary shall submit all such applications to the Central Committee (see Art. II of the Constitution) together with such information as he or she considers necessary to enable the Assembly or the Central Committee to make a decision on the application.

3. Criteria

In addition to expressing agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded (Art. I of the Constitution), an applicant must satisfy the following criteria to be eligible for membership:

- a) A church must be able to take the decision to apply for membership without obtaining the permission of any other body or person.
- b) A church must produce evidence of sustained independent life and organization.
- c) A church must recognize the essential interdependence of the churches, particularly those of the same confession, and must practise constructive ecumenical relations with other churches within its country or region.
- d) A church must ordinarily have at least 25,000 members.

4. Associate membership

A church otherwise eligible, which would be denied membership solely under Rule I.3(d) may be elected to associate membership in the same manner as member churches are elected. A church applying for associate membership must ordinarily have at least 10,000 members. An associate member church may participate in all activities of the Council; its representatives to the Assembly shall have the right to speak but not to vote. Associate member churches shall be listed separately on the official list maintained by the General Secretary.

5. Consultation

Before admitting a church to membership or associate membership, the appropriate world confessional body or bodies and national council or regional conference of churches shall be consulted.

6. Resignation

A church which desires to resign its membership in the Council can do so at any time. A church which has resigned but desires to rejoin the Council must again apply for membership.

II. PRESIDIUM

1. The Assembly shall elect one or more Presidents but the number of Presidents shall not exceed six.
2. The term of office of a President shall end at the adjournment of the next Assembly following his or her election.

3. A President who has been elected by the Assembly shall be ineligible for immediate re-election when his or her term of office ends.
4. The President or Presidents shall be ex officio members of the Central Committee and of the Executive Committee.
5. Should a vacancy occur in the Praesidium between Assemblies, the Central Committee may elect a President to fill the unexpired term.

III. THE ASSEMBLY

1. Composition of the Assembly

a) Persons with the right to speak and to vote

The Assembly shall be composed of official representatives of the member churches, known as delegates, elected by the member churches, with the right to speak and with the sole rights to vote and to propose and second motions and amendments.

- 1) The Central Committee shall determine the number of delegates to the Assembly well in advance of its meeting.
- 2) The Central Committee shall determine the percentage of the delegates, not less than 85 per cent, who shall be both nominated and elected by the member churches. Each member church shall be entitled to a minimum of one delegate. The Central Committee shall allocate the other delegates in this part among the member churches giving due regard to the size of the churches and confessions represented in the Council, and the number of churches of each confession which are members of the Council, and reasonable geographical and cultural balance. The Central Committee shall recommend the proper distribution within delegations among church officials, parish ministers and lay persons; and among men, women and young people. The Central Committee may make provision for the election by the member churches of alternate delegates who shall serve only in place of such delegates who are unable to attend meetings of the Assembly.
- 3) The remaining delegates, not more than 15 per cent, shall be elected by certain member churches upon nomination of the Central Committee as follows:
 1. If the Moderator or any Vice-Moderator of the Central Committee is not elected a delegate within the provisions of paragraph (2) above, the Central Committee shall nominate such officer to the member church of which such officer is a member. Paragraphs 5. and 6. below apply to such nominees.

2. The Central Committee shall determine the categories of additional delegates necessary to achieve balance in respect of:
 - a) the varied sizes of churches and confessions;
 - b) the historical significance, future potential or geographical location and cultural background of particular churches, as well as the special importance of united churches;
 - c) the presence of persons whose special knowledge and experience will be necessary to the Assembly;
 - d) proportions of women, youth, lay persons and local pastors.
3. The Central Committee shall invite the member churches to propose the names of persons in the categories so determined whom the churches would be willing to elect, if nominated by the Central Committee.
4. The Central Committee shall nominate particular individuals from the list so compiled to the member church of which each individual is a member.
5. If that member church elects the said nominee, he or she shall become an additional delegate of that member church.
6. The member churches shall not elect alternate delegates for such delegates.

Member churches are encouraged to consult regionally in the selection of the delegates described in paragraphs (2) and (3) above, provided that every delegate is elected by the church of which he or she is a member in accordance with its own procedures.

b) Persons with the right to speak but not to vote

In addition to the delegates, who alone have the right to vote, the following categories of persons may attend meetings of the Assembly with the right to speak:

- 1) Presidents and Officers: Any President or Presidents of the Council or Moderator or Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee who have not been elected delegates by their churches.
- 2) Members of the retiring Central Committee: Any members of the retiring Central Committee who have not been elected delegates by their churches.
- 3) Representatives of Associate Member Churches: Each associate member church may elect one representative.
- 4) Advisers: The Central Committee may invite a small number of persons who have a special contribution to make to the deliberations of the Assembly or who

have participated in the activities of the World Council. Before an invitation is extended to an adviser who is a member of a member church, that church shall be consulted.

- 5) Delegated Representatives: The Central Committee may invite persons officially designated as Delegated Representatives by organizations with which the World Council maintains relationship.
- 6) Delegated Observers: The Central Committee may invite persons officially designated as Delegated Observers by non-member churches.

c) Persons without the right to speak or to vote

The Central Committee may invite to attend the meetings of the Assembly without the right to speak or to vote:

- 1) Observers: Persons identified with organizations with which the World Council maintains relationship which are not represented by Delegated Representatives or with non-member churches which are not represented by Delegated Observers.
- 2) Guests: Persons named individually.

2. Presiding Officers and Committees

- a) At the first business session of the Assembly the Central Committee shall present its proposals for the moderatorship of the Assembly and for the membership of the Business Committee of the Assembly and make any other proposals, including the appointment of other committees, their membership and functions, for the conduct of the business of the Assembly as it sees fit.
- b) At the first or second business session, additional nominations for membership of any committee may be made in writing by any six concurring delegates.
- c) Election shall be by ballot unless the Assembly shall otherwise determine.

3. Agenda

The agenda of the Assembly shall be proposed by the Central Committee to the first business session of the Assembly. Any delegate may move to amend the agenda by including an item or items of new business or by proposing any other change, which he or she may have previously proposed to the Central Committee or to the Business Committee after its election. New business or any change may be proposed by the Business Committee under Rule III.5 (b) or by a delegate under Rule XIV.7.

4. Nominations Committee of the Assembly

- a) At an early session of the Assembly, the Assembly shall elect a Nominations Committee, on which there shall be appropriate confessional, cultural, and geographical

representation of the membership of the Assembly and representation of the major interests of the World Council.

- b) The Nominations Committee in consultation with the officers of the World Council and the Executive Committee shall make nominations for the following:

- 1) the President or Presidents of the World Council of Churches;
- 2) not more than 145 members of the Central Committee from among the delegates which the member churches have elected to the Assembly.

- c) In making nominations, the Nominations Committee shall have regard to the following principles:

- 1) the personal qualifications of the individual for the task for which he or she is to be nominated;
- 2) fair and adequate confessional representation;
- 3) fair and adequate geographical and cultural representation;
- 4) fair and adequate representation of the major interests of the World Council.

The Nominations Committee shall satisfy itself as to the general acceptability of the nominations to the churches to which the nominees belong.

Not more than seven persons from any one member church shall be nominated as member of the Central Committee.

The Nominations Committee shall secure adequate representation of lay persons -- men, women and young people -- so far as the composition of the Assembly makes this possible.

- d) The Nominations Committee shall present its nominations to the Assembly. Additional nominations may be made by any six delegates concurring in writing, provided that each such nominee shall be proposed in opposition to a particular nominee of the Nominations Committee.
- e) Election shall be by ballot unless the Assembly shall otherwise determine.

5. Business Committee of the Assembly

- a) The Business Committee of the Assembly shall consist of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee, the General Secretary, the Presidents of the Council, the moderators of sections and committees (who may appoint substitutes), and ten delegates who are not members of the outgoing Central

Committee, who shall be elected in accordance with Rule III.2.

b) The Business Committee shall:

- 1) coordinate the day-to-day business of the Assembly and may make proposals for rearrangement, modification, addition, deletion or substitution of items included on the agenda. Any such proposal shall be presented to the Assembly at the earliest convenient time by a member of the Business Committee with reasons for the proposed change. After opportunity for debate on the proposal, the moderator shall put the following question to the Assembly: Shall the Assembly approve the proposal of the Business Committee? A majority of the delegates present and voting shall determine the question;
- 2) consider any item of business or change in the agenda proposed by a delegate under Rule XIV.7;
- 3) determine whether the Assembly sits in general, business or deliberative session as defined in Rule XIV;
- 4) receive information from and review the reports of other committees in order to consider how best the Assembly can act on them.

6. Other committees of the Assembly

- a) Any other committee of the Assembly shall consist of such members and shall have such powers and duties as are proposed by the Central Committee at the first business session or by the Business Committee after its election and accepted by the Assembly.
- b) Any such committee shall, unless the Assembly otherwise directs, inform the Business Committee about its work and shall make its report or recommendations to the Assembly.

IV. CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. Membership

- a) The Central Committee shall consist of the President or Presidents of the World Council together with not more than 145 members elected by the Assembly and not more than five members coopted by the Central Committee (see Constitution, Art. V.2 (b)).
- b) Any member church, not already represented, may send one representative to the meetings of the Central Committee. Such a representative shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- c) If a regularly elected member of the Central Committee is unable to attend a meeting, the church to which the ab-

sent member belongs shall have the right to send a substitute, provided that the substitute is ordinarily resident in the country where the absent member resides. Such a substitute shall have the right to speak and to vote. If a member, or his or her substitute, is absent without excuse for two consecutive meetings, the position shall be declared vacant, and the Central Committee shall fill the vacancy according to the provisions of Article V.2 (b) (3) of the Constitution.

- d) Moderators and Vice-Moderators of Committees and Boards who are not members of the Central Committee may attend meetings of the Central Committee and shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- e) Advisers for the Central Committee may be appointed by the Executive Committee after consultation with the churches of which they are members. They shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- f) Members of the staff of the World Council appointed by the Central Committee as specified under Rule VIII.3 shall have the right to attend the sessions of the Central Committee unless on any occasion the Central Committee shall otherwise determine. When present they shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- g) The newly elected Central Committee shall be convened by the General Secretary during or immediately after the meeting of the Assembly.

2. Officers

- a) The Central Committee shall elect from among its members a Moderator and a Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators to serve for such periods as it shall determine.
- b) The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches shall be ex officio secretary of the Central Committee.

3. Nominations Committee of the Central Committee

- a) The Central Committee shall elect a Nominations Committee which shall:
 - 1) nominate for possible cooption as members of the Central Committee not more than five persons from among the representatives which the associate member churches have elected to the Assembly;
 - 2) nominate persons from among the members of the Central Committee for the offices of Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee;
 - 3) nominate a person for the office of President to fill the unexpired term should a vacancy occur in the Praesidium between Assemblies;
 - 4) nominate members of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee;

Committee, who shall be elected in accordance with Rule III.2.

b) The Business Committee shall:

- 1) coordinate the day-to-day business of the Assembly and may make proposals for rearrangement, modification, addition, deletion or substitution of items included on the agenda. Any such proposal shall be presented to the Assembly at the earliest convenient time by a member of the Business Committee with reasons for the proposed change. After opportunity for debate on the proposal, the moderator shall put the following question to the Assembly: Shall the Assembly approve the proposal of the Business Committee? A majority of the delegates present and voting shall determine the question;
- 2) consider any item of business or change in the agenda proposed by a delegate under Rule XIV.7;
- 3) determine whether the Assembly sits in general, business or deliberative session as defined in Rule XIV;
- 4) receive information from and review the reports of other committees in order to consider how best the Assembly can act on them.

6. Other committees of the Assembly

- a) Any other committee of the Assembly shall consist of such members and shall have such powers and duties as are proposed by the Central Committee at the first business session or by the Business Committee after its election and accepted by the Assembly.
- b) Any such committee shall, unless the Assembly otherwise directs, inform the Business Committee about its work and shall make its report or recommendations to the Assembly.

IV. CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. Membership

- a) The Central Committee shall consist of the President or Presidents of the World Council together with not more than 145 members elected by the Assembly and not more than five members coopted by the Central Committee (see Constitution, Art. V.2 (b)).
- b) Any member church, not already represented, may send one representative to the meetings of the Central Committee. Such a representative shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- c) If a regularly elected member of the Central Committee is unable to attend a meeting, the church to which the ab-

sent member belongs shall have the right to send a substitute, provided that the substitute is ordinarily resident in the country where the absent member resides. Such a substitute shall have the right to speak and to vote. If a member, or his or her substitute, is absent without excuse for two consecutive meetings, the position shall be declared vacant, and the Central Committee shall fill the vacancy according to the provisions of Article V.2 (b) (3) of the Constitution.

- d) Moderators and Vice-Moderators of Committees and Boards who are not members of the Central Committee may attend meetings of the Central Committee and shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- e) Advisers for the Central Committee may be appointed by the Executive Committee after consultation with the churches of which they are members. They shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- f) Members of the staff of the World Council appointed by the Central Committee as specified under Rule VIII.3 shall have the right to attend the sessions of the Central Committee unless on any occasion the Central Committee shall otherwise determine. When present they shall have the right to speak but not to vote.
- g) The newly elected Central Committee shall be convened by the General Secretary during or immediately after the meeting of the Assembly.

2. Officers

- a) The Central Committee shall elect from among its members a Moderator and a Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators to serve for such periods as it shall determine.
- b) The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches shall be ex officio secretary of the Central Committee.

3. Nominations Committee of the Central Committee

- a) The Central Committee shall elect a Nominations Committee which shall:
 - 1) nominate for possible cooption as members of the Central Committee not more than five persons from among the representatives which the associate member churches have elected to the Assembly;
 - 2) nominate persons from among the members of the Central Committee for the offices of Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee;
 - 3) nominate a person for the office of President to fill the unexpired term should a vacancy occur in the Praesidium between Assemblies;
 - 4) nominate members of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee;

- 5) nominate members of Committees and Boards and where appropriate their Moderators;
- 6) make recommendations regarding the approval of the election of members of Commissions and Working Groups;
- 7) make recommendations regarding the election of persons proposed for staff positions under Rule VIII.3.

In making nominations as provided for by (1) to (5) above the Nominations Committee of the Central Committee shall have regard to principles set out in Rule III.4. (c), and in applying principles 2, 3 and 4 to the nomination of members of Committees and Boards, shall consider the representative character of the combined membership of all such committees. Any member of the Central Committee may make additional nominations, provided that each such nominee shall be proposed in opposition to a particular nominee of the Nominations Committee.

- b) Election shall be by ballot unless the Committee shall otherwise determine.

4. Meetings

- a) The Central Committee shall ordinarily meet once every year. The Executive Committee may call an extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee whenever it deems such a meeting desirable and shall do so upon the request in writing of one-third or more of the members of the Central Committee.
- b) The General Secretary shall take all possible steps to ensure that there be adequate representation present from each of the main confessions and from the main geographical areas of the membership of the World Council of Churches and of the major interests of the World Council.
- c) The Central Committee shall determine the date and place of its own meetings and of the meetings of the Assembly.

5. Functions

In exercising the powers set forth in the Constitution the Central Committee shall have the following specific functions:

- a) In the conduct of its business, the Central Committee shall elect the following committees:
 - 1) Finance Committee (a standing committee);
 - 2) Nominations Committee (appointed at each meeting);
 - 3) Reference Committee or Committees (appointed as needed at each meeting to advise the Central Committee on any other questions arising which call

for special consideration or action by the Central Committee, except that recommendations from Committees of the Programme Units may be considered by the Central Committee without prior consideration by a Reference Committee).

- b) It shall adopt the budget of the Council.
- c) It shall deal with matters referred to it by member churches.
- d) It shall organize Programme Units and Specialized Units and regional offices or representations as may be necessary to carry out the work of the World Council of Churches. It shall elect a Committee for each Programme Unit, a Board for each Specialized Unit, and approve the election or appointment of a Commission or a Working Group for each Sub-Unit of the Programme Units and receive reports from them at each of its meetings. It shall determine the general policy to be followed in the work of each Programme Unit, each Specialized Unit, and the Department of Finance and Central Services.
- e) It shall report to the Assembly the actions it has taken during its period of office and shall not be discharged until its report has been received.

V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Membership

- a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the President or Presidents of the World Council ex officio and the Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee ex officio and of not less than fourteen nor more than sixteen other members of the Central Committee. Substitutes shall not be permitted to attend in place of elected members.
- b) The Central Committee shall elect an Executive Committee at each of its meetings. Elected members of the Executive Committee shall hold office until the next meeting of the Central Committee and shall be eligible for re-election.
- c) The Moderator of the Central Committee shall also be the Moderator of the Executive Committee.
- d) The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches shall be ex officio the secretary of the Executive Committee.
- e) The officers may invite other persons to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee for consultation, always having in mind the need of preserving a due balance of the confessions and of the geographical areas and cultural backgrounds, and of the major interests of the World Council.

2. Functions

- a) The Executive Committee shall be accountable to the Central Committee.

- b) Between meetings of the Central Committee, the Executive Committee shall carry out decisions of the Central Committee and implement policies adopted by it. The Executive Committee shall not make decisions on policy except in those matters specifically delegated to the Executive Committee by the Central Committee and in circumstances of special emergency when it may take provisional decisions. The Executive Committee's power to make public statements is limited and defined in Rule IX.5.
- c) The Executive Committee may make provisional appointments to those staff positions specified in Rule VIII.3 subject to confirmation by the Central Committee.
- d) The Executive Committee shall supervise the operation of the budget and may, if necessary, impose limitations on expenditures.

VI. PROGRAMME UNITS, SPECIALIZED UNITS AND DEPARTMENTS

1. There shall be three Programme Units:
- Programme Unit I : Faith and Witness
- Programme Unit II : Justice and Service
- Programme Unit III: Education and Renewal

The Central Committee shall determine the size and composition of the Committee for each Programme Unit (so that at least two-thirds of the members of each Programme Unit Committee are also members of the Central Committee) and elect the members of each Committee and its Moderator. Each Committee shall propose, for consideration by the Central Committee, by-laws for the conduct of the work of the Programme Unit, including a statement of the aim and functions of the Unit, a description of the Sub-Units into which the Unit will be divided, if any, and the allocation of functions among them, provision for a Working Group or Commission related to each Sub-Unit, and such other materials as it deems desirable.

2. There shall be two Specialized Units:

- a) Library
- b) Ecumenical Institute, including its Graduate School.

The Central Committee shall determine the size and composition of the Board for each Specialized Unit and elect the members of each Board. Each Board may propose for consideration by the Central Committee by-laws for the conduct of the work of the Specialized Unit.

3. There shall be a Department of Finance and Central Services and a Department of Communication. The Central Committee shall determine the size and composition of the Committee for the Department of Communication and shall elect the members of it.

VII. FINANCE COMMITTEE OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. The Finance Committee of the Central Committee shall consist of not less than nine members, including:
- a) a Moderator, who shall be a member of the Executive Committee;
- b) five members, who shall be members of the Central Committee, two of whom shall also be members of the Executive Committee;
- c) three members, one of whom shall be designated by each Programme Unit Committee from the membership of said Committee. Each Programme Unit Committee may designate an alternate who may attend if his or her principal is unable to be present.
2. The Committee shall have the following responsibilities and duties:
- a) To present to the Central Committee:
- 1) in respect of the expired calendar year, an account of income and expenditure of all operations of the World Council of Churches and the balance sheet of the World Council of Churches at the end of that year and its recommendation, based on review of the report of the auditors, regarding approval and granting of discharge in respect of the accounts of the World Council of Churches for the completed period;
 - 2) in respect of the current year, a review of all financial operations;
 - 3) in respect of the succeeding calendar year, a budget covering all activities of the World Council of Churches and its recommendations regarding the approval of that budget in the light of its judgment as to the adequacy of the provisions made for the expenditure involved in the proposed programme of activities and the adequacy of reasonably foreseeable income to finance the budget; and
 - 4) in respect of the year next following the succeeding calendar year a provisional budget prepared on a similar basis together with recommendations thereon as in (3) above.
- b) To consider and make recommendations to the Central Committee on all financial questions concerning the affairs of the World Council of Churches, such as:

- 1) the appointment of the auditor or auditors who shall be appointed annually by the Central Committee and shall be eligible for reappointment;
- 2) accounting procedures;
- 3) investment policy and procedures;
- 4) the basis of calculation of contributions from member churches;
- 5) procedures and methods of raising funds.

VIII. STAFF

1. The Central Committee shall elect or appoint or provide for the election or appointment of persons of special competence to conduct the continuing operations of the World Council. These persons collectively constitute the staff.

2. The General Secretary shall be elected by the Central Committee. He or she is the chief executive officer of the World Council. As such he or she is the head of the staff. When the position of General Secretary becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall appoint an acting General Secretary.

3. In addition to the General Secretary, the Central Committee shall itself elect one or more Deputy General Secretaries, one or more Assistant General Secretaries, and the Directors of the Programme Units, the Specialized Units and the Departments.

4. The Staff Executive Group shall consist of the Deputy General Secretary or Secretaries, the Director or Moderator of the staff of each Programme Unit, the Directors of the Departments and of the Ecumenical Institute, the Assistant General Secretary or Secretaries; and two or three additional executive staff members from each Programme Unit chosen by that Unit. Care shall be taken that there is confessional, cultural and geographical balance in this group and that women and junior staff members are adequately represented. Additional places shall be available if needed to achieve balance. The possible need for rotation of the members who do not serve ex officio shall be examined at least annually, and in any event following each meeting of the Central Committee. The General Secretary shall be Moderator of the Staff Executive Group; in his or her absence a Deputy General Secretary shall act as Moderator. The Staff Executive Group shall advise the General Secretary on the implementation of policy established by the Central and Executive Committees and may, with his or her approval, establish regular and ad hoc coordinating groups for particular programme activities under the moderatorship of the General Secretary or of a person appointed by him or her.

5. The normal terms of appointment for the General Secretary and for a Deputy General Secretary shall be five years and for a Director of a Programme Unit, of a Specialized Unit or of a Department, three years. Unless some other period is stated in the resolution making the appointment, the term of office of other members of the staff of the World Council shall be three years from the date of the appointment. All appointments made for a term exceeding one year shall be reviewed one year before expiring.

Retirement shall be at sixty-five for both men and women or not later than the end of the year in which a staff member reaches the age of sixty-eight.

IX. PUBLIC STATEMENTS

1. In the performance of its functions, the Council through its Assembly or through its Central Committee may publish statements upon any situation or issue with which the Council or its constituent churches may be confronted.

2. While such statements may have great significance and influence as the expression of the judgment or concern of so widely representative a Christian body, yet their authority will consist only in the weight which they carry by their own truth and wisdom and the publishing of such statements shall not be held to imply that the World Council as such has, or can have, any constitutional authority over the constituent churches or right to speak for them.

3. Any Programme Unit or Sub-Unit may recommend statements to the Assembly or to the Central Committee for its consideration and action.

4. A Programme Unit or Sub-Unit may publish any statement which has been approved by the Assembly or the Central Committee. When, in the judgment of a Programme Unit or Sub-Unit, a statement should be issued before such approval can be obtained, it may do so provided the statement relates to matters within its own field of concern and action, has received the approval of the Moderator of the Central Committee and the General Secretary, and the Programme Unit or Sub-Unit makes clear that neither the World Council of Churches nor any of its member churches is committed by the statement.

5. Between meetings of the Central Committee, when in their judgment the situation requires, a statement may be issued, provided that such statements are not contrary to the established policy of the Council, by:

- 1) the Executive Committee when meeting apart from the sessions of the Central Committee; or
- 2) the Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee and the General Secretary acting together; or
- 3) the Moderator of the Central Committee or the General Secretary on his or her own authority respectively.

X. ASSOCIATE COUNCILS

1. Any national Christian council, national council of churches or national ecumenical council, established for purposes of ecumenical fellowship and activity, may be recognized by the Central Committee as an associate council, provided:

- a) the applicant council, knowing the Basis upon which the World Council is founded, expresses its desire to cooperate with the World Council towards the achievement of one or more of the functions and purposes of this Council; and
- b) the member churches of the World Council in the area have been consulted prior to the action.

2. Each associate council:

- a) shall be invited to send a delegated representative to the Assembly;
- b) may, at the discretion of the Central Committee, be invited to send an adviser to meetings of the Central Committee; and
- c) shall be provided with copies of all general communications sent to all member churches of the World Council of Churches.

3. In addition to communicating directly with its member churches, the World Council shall inform each associate council regarding important ecumenical developments and consult it regarding proposed World Council programmes in its country.

XI. REGIONAL CONFERENCES

1. The World Council recognizes regional conferences of churches as essential partners in the ecumenical enterprise.

2. Such regional conferences as may be designated by the Central Committee:

- a) shall be invited to send a delegated representative to the Assembly;
- b) shall be invited to send an adviser to meetings of the Central Committee; and

- c) shall be provided with copies of all general communications sent to all member churches of the World Council of Churches.

3. In addition to communicating directly with its member churches, the World Council shall inform each of these regional conferences regarding important ecumenical developments and consult it regarding proposed World Council programmes in its region.

XII. WORLD CONFESSIONAL BODIES

Such World Confessional Bodies as may be designated by the Central Committee shall be invited to send delegated representatives to the Assembly and advisers to meetings of the Central Committee and the World Council will take steps to develop cooperative working relationships with them.

XIII. LEGAL PROVISIONS

1. The duration of the Council is unlimited.

2. The legal headquarters of the Council shall be at Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland. It is registered in Geneva as an association according to Art. 60ff. of the Swiss Civil Code. Regional offices may be organized in different parts of the world by decision of the Central Committee.

3. The World Council of Churches is legally represented by its Executive Committee or by such persons as may be empowered by the Executive Committee to represent it.

4. The World Council shall be legally bound by the joint signatures of two of the following persons: the President or Presidents, the Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators of the Central Committee, the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretaries and the Assistant General Secretary. Any two of the above-named persons shall have power to authorize other persons, chosen by them, to act jointly or singly on behalf of the World Council of Churches in fields circumscribed in the power of attorney.

5. The Council shall obtain the means necessary for the pursuance of its work from the contributions of its member churches and from donations or bequests.

6. The Council shall not pursue commercial functions but it shall have the right to act as an agency of inter-

church aid and to publish literature in connection with its aims. It is not entitled to distribute any surplus income by way of profit or bonus among its members.

7. Members of the governing bodies of the Council or of the Assembly shall have no personal liability with regard to the obligations or commitments of the Council. The commitments entered upon by the Council are guaranteed solely by its own assets.

XIV. RULES OF DEBATE

1. Categories of session

The Assembly shall sit either in general sessions (see Rule XIV.4), in business session (see Rule XIV.5), or in deliberative session (see Rule XIV.6). The Business Committee shall determine the category of session appropriate to the matters to be considered.

2. Presiding Officers

The presiding officers shall be proposed by the Central Committee at the first business session and by the Business Committee after its election.

- a) In general session one of the Presidents or the Moderator of the Central Committee shall preside.
- b) In business session the Moderator or a Vice-Moderator of the Central Committee or some other member of the Central Committee shall preside.
- c) In deliberative session one of the Presidents, the Moderator or a Vice-Moderator of the Central Committee or a delegate shall preside.

3. Formal responsibilities of the Moderator

The Moderator shall announce the opening, suspension or adjournment of the Assembly, and shall announce at the beginning of every session, and at any point where the category changes, that the Assembly is in general or business or deliberative session.

4. General session

The Assembly shall sit in general session for ceremonial occasions, public acts of witness and formal addresses. Only matters proposed by the Central Committee or by the Business Committee after its election shall be considered.

5. Business session

The Assembly shall sit in business session when any of the following types of business are to be considered: adoption of the agenda presented by the Central Committee, any proposal for change in the agenda, nominations, elections, proposals with reference to the structure, organization, budget or programme of the World Council of Churches, or any other business requiring action by the Assembly, except as provided in paragraphs 4 and 6 of this Rule.

The Rules of Debate applicable to a business session are:

a) Moderator

The Moderator shall seek to achieve the orderly and responsible despatch of business. He or she shall seek so far as possible to give fair and reasonable opportunity for differing views to be expressed. He or she shall ensure good order and the observance of the appropriate Rules of Debate and shall seek to ensure relevance and prevent repetition. To those ends the Moderator may request a speaker to move to another point or cease speaking. The Moderator shall grant the right to speak and determine the order of speakers. His or her decision is final in all matters except as to his or her decision on a point of order under paragraph (u) below or his or her announcement as to the sense of the meeting on an issue, under paragraph (l) below or as to the result of voting under paragraphs (n) and (o) below.

b) Speaking

Any person desiring to speak shall stand in his or her place and speak only when granted the right to do so by the Moderator. The speaker shall state his or her name and church, and address his or her remarks to the Moderator. A delegate may speak only to propose or second a motion or amendment, to engage in the debate or to state a point of order or procedure, and any other speaker only to engage in debate or to state a point of procedure. Any speaker may give notice of his or her desire to speak to the Moderator, and the Moderator shall have regard to such notice, but the Moderator remains free to grant the right to speak and determine the order of speakers under paragraph (a) of this Rule.

c) Proposing a motion

A delegate who desires to propose any motion arising from business on the agenda shall state it orally and, except in the case of a privileged motion or motion under paragraphs (j) or (k) of this Rule, shall furnish a written copy to the Moderator. A delegate who desires

to propose an item of new business shall follow the procedure set out in Rule XIV.7.

d) Seconding a motion

A motion shall not be considered by the Assembly until it is seconded by a delegate. When a motion has been seconded it may not be withdrawn except with the general consent of the delegates present and voting. If general consent is given for withdrawal any delegate may then require the motion to be put in his or her own name.

e) Debate

When a motion has been seconded, the debate upon it shall be opened by the delegate who proposed the motion. That delegate may speak for not more than five minutes. That speech shall be followed by a delegate speaking in opposition to the motion who may speak for not more than five minutes. After that the speakers shall alternate as far as the nature of the business allows between those who favour and those who oppose the motion. Each may speak for not more than five minutes. When the debate is closed, the delegate who proposed the motion may reply, but shall speak for not more than three minutes. No other speaker may speak more than once on the motion.

f) Amendment

Any delegate may propose an amendment to a motion in the same manner as a motion. Paragraphs (c), (d) and (e) of this Rule shall apply to an amendment as they apply to a motion. The debate on an amendment shall be limited to the amendment. The proposer of the motion shall be given the opportunity to speak in the debate on a amendment. The Moderator shall rule out of order and not receive an amendment which is substantially the negative of the motion being debated.

g) Amendment to an amendment

Any delegate may propose an amendment to an amendment in the same manner as an amendment, but the Moderator shall rule out of order and not receive an amendment to an amendment. Paragraphs (c), (d), (e) and (f) of this Rule shall apply to an amendment to an amendment as they apply to an amendment.

h) Debate and voting on amendments

The debate and vote shall be first upon the amendment to the amendment then upon the amendment, and finally upon the motion. When an amendment to an amendment or an amendment has been voted upon, an additional amendment to the amendment or an amendment may be proposed, but the Moderator shall rule out of order and not receive an amendment to an amendment or an amendment substantially to the same effect as one already voted upon.

i) Rights of Moderator to take part in a debate

The Moderator shall not propose a motion or amendment or participate in debate without handing over his or her duties to another presiding officer and shall not, after that, preside again until that matter of business has been decided.

j) Privileged motions

Any delegate who has not previously spoken on a motion or amendment may move at any time, but not so as to interrupt a speaker, one of the following privileged motions, which shall take precedence over pending business, and shall have priority in the order listed, the motion with the highest priority being listed first:

1) To recess or to adjourn

If the Assembly decides to recess or adjourn, the matter pending a recess or adjournment shall be taken up when the Assembly reconvenes, unless there is an "order of the day" at that time, in which event the matter pending at recess or adjournment shall be taken up at the conclusion of the "order of the day" or at such time as the Business Committee proposes.

2) That the question not be put

If the Assembly agrees that the question shall not be put, it shall pass to the next business without taking a vote or decision.

3) To postpone indefinitely

When a matter has been postponed indefinitely, it may not be taken up again at the entire meeting of the Assembly, except with the consent of two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

4) To postpone to a time specified

When a matter is postponed to a time specified, it becomes the "order of the day" for that time and takes precedence over all other business.

5) To refer to a committee

When a matter is referred to a committee, the committee shall report on it during the meeting of the Assembly unless the Assembly itself directs otherwise.

Once a privileged motion has been seconded, a vote on it shall be taken immediately without debate.

k) Motion to close debate

Any delegate may propose a motion to close debate at any time out not so as to interrupt another speaker. If seconded, a vote shall be taken immediately without

debate on the following question: Shall debate on the pending motion (or amendment) be closed? If two-thirds of the delegates present and voting agree, a vote shall be taken immediately without further debate on the pending motion (or amendment). After the vote on a pending amendment to an amendment, or on a pending amendment, the debate shall continue on the amendment or on the main motion as the case may be. A further motion to close debate can be made on any business then pending. If a motion to close debate is proposed and seconded on the main motion, before the vote is taken on that motion, the Assembly shall be informed of the names of delegates wishing to speak and any amendments remaining and the Moderator may ask the members of the Assembly for a show of hands of any wishing to speak.

1) Sense of the meeting

The Moderator shall seek to understand the sense of the meeting on a pending matter and may announce it without taking a vote. Any delegate may challenge the Moderator's decision on the sense of the meeting, and the Moderator may then either put the matter to the vote under paragraph (n) below or allow further discussion and again announce the sense of the meeting.

m) Moderator to put question

The Moderator shall put each matter not otherwise decided to a vote.

n) Voting -- by show of hands

At the end of a debate, the Moderator shall read the motion or amendment and shall seek to ensure that delegates understand the matter upon which the vote is to be taken. Voting shall ordinarily be by show of hands. The Moderator shall first ask those in favour to vote; then those opposing; then those who abstain from voting. The Moderator shall then announce the result.

o) Voting -- by count or secret written ballot

If the Moderator is in doubt, or for any other reason decides to do so, or if any delegate demands it, a vote on the matter shall be taken immediately by count on a show of hands or by standing. The Moderator may appoint tellers to count those voting and abstaining. Any delegate may propose that the Assembly vote on any matter by secret written ballot, and if seconded and a majority of the delegates present and voting agree, a secret written ballot shall be taken. The Moderator shall announce the result of any count or secret written ballot.

p) Results of voting

A majority of the delegates present and voting shall determine any matter unless a higher proportion is required by the Constitution or these Rules. If the vote results in a tie, the matter shall be regarded as defeated. The number of those abstaining from voting however numerous shall have no effect on the result of the vote.

q) Voting by Moderator

Any Moderator entitled to vote, may vote in a secret written ballot, or any vote by show of hands or standing, or may vote if the vote results in a tie, but in no case shall he or she vote more than once.

r) Reconsideration

Any two delegates who previously voted with the majority on any matter which has been voted upon may request the Business Committee to propose to the Assembly that that matter be reconsidered. The Business Committee may agree with or refuse that request, but if they refuse, those delegates may follow the procedure set out in Rule XIV.7, except that a matter shall not be reconsidered unless two-thirds of the delegates present and voting concur in the reconsideration.

s) Dissent and abstention

Any delegate voting with the minority or abstaining may have his or her name recorded.

t) Point of order or procedure

Any delegate may raise a point of order or procedure and may, if necessary, interrupt another delegate to do so. As a point of order, a delegate may only assert that the procedure being followed is not in accordance with these Rules. As a point of procedure, a speaker may only ask for clarification of the pending matter.

u) Appeal from Moderator's decision

Any delegate may appeal the decision of the Moderator concerning a point of order, as defined in paragraph (t). If such an appeal is made the Moderator shall put the following question to the Assembly without further debate: Shall the Assembly concur in the decision of the Moderator? A majority of the delegates present and voting shall determine the appeal.

v) Time limits

The Moderator may, at his or her discretion, allow extra time to any speaker if the Moderator believes

that injustice may be done to a member through difficulty of language or translation, or for any other reason, or because of the complexity of the matter under debate.

6. Deliberative session

The Assembly shall sit in deliberative session when the matters before it are of such a theological or general policy nature that detailed amendment is impracticable. Reports of sections shall be discussed in deliberative session. Any committee or other body reporting may recommend to the Business Committee that its report be considered in deliberative session.

The Rules of Debate applicable to a deliberative session are the same as those for a business session, except that the following additional rules shall apply:

a) Motions permitted

In addition to privileged motions or the motion to close debate, under paragraphs 5 (j) and (k), the only motion which may be proposed regarding matters to be considered in a deliberative session are:

- 1) to approve the substance of the report and commend it to the churches for study and appropriate action;
- 2) to refer to the body reporting with instructions to consider whether a new or different emphasis or emphases shall be incorporated in the report;
- 3) to instruct the body reporting to provide, in consultation with the Business Committee, for an open hearing on the report before reporting again.

b) Matters concerning ecclesiological self-understanding

Where a matter being raised is considered by a member to go against the ecclesiological self-understanding of his or her church, he or she may request that it not be put to the vote. The Moderator will in such a case seek the advice of the Business Committee or the Executive Committee in consultation with this member and other members of the same church or confession present at the session. If there is consensus that the matter does in fact go against the ecclesiological self-understanding of the member, the Moderator will announce that the matter be dealt with in deliberative session without vote. The materials and minutes of the discussion will be sent to the churches for their study and comment.

c) Speaking

Any person presenting a report may also speak in the debate for purposes of clarification or explanation if the Moderator allows him or her to do so.

7. New business or change in the agenda

When any delegate desires to have an item of business included on, or any change in, the agenda and the Central Committee or Business Committee after its election has after consideration not agreed to its acceptance, he or she may inform the Moderator in writing. The Moderator shall at a convenient time read the item of business or proposed change and a member of the Business Committee shall explain the reasons for its refusal. The delegate may then give the reasons for its acceptance. The Moderator shall then without further debate put the following question to the Assembly: Shall the Assembly accept this item of business/proposal? A majority of the delegates present and voting shall determine the question. If the Assembly votes in favour of the acceptance of the item of business or change, the Business Committee shall make proposals as soon as possible for the inclusion of the item of business or for the change, in the agenda.

8. Languages

The working languages in use in the World Council of Churches are English, French, German, Russian and Spanish. The General Secretary shall make reasonable effort to provide interpretation from any one of those languages into the others. A speaker may speak in another language only if he or she provides for interpretation into one of the working languages. The General Secretary shall provide all possible assistance to any speaker requiring an interpreter.

9. Suspension of rules

Any delegate may propose that any Rule of Debate may be suspended. If seconded, the rule shall be suspended only by vote of two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

10. Central Committee

The Central Committee shall sit in business session, unless it decides to sit in general or deliberative session, and shall follow the appropriate Rules of Debate for that category of session as are applied in the Assembly, except insofar as the Central Committee may decide otherwise.

XV. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Rules may be moved at any session of the Assembly or at any session of the Central Committee by any member and may be adopted by a two-thirds majority

of those present and voting, except that no alteration in Rules I, IV and XV shall come into effect until it has been confirmed by the Assembly. Notice of a proposal to make any such amendment shall be given in writing at least twenty-four hours before the session of the Assembly or Central Committee at which it is to be moved.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

THE VANCOUVER PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Vancouver Planning Committee has been working on behalf of the Canadian host churches for over three years on matters related to local arrangements, interpretation, hospitality and local programming for the Assembly. It is an interchurch group especially created to carry out this responsibility, and officially represents nine churches in the Vancouver area:

Anglican Church of Canada
Greek Orthodox Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada
Lutheran Church of America (Canada Section)
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Religious Society of Friends
Roman Catholic Church (Archdiocese of Vancouver)
Salvation Army
United Church of Canada

In addition, three ecumenical agencies have also contributed to the work: the Vancouver School of Theology, the Vancouver Council of Christian Churches, and Canadian Ecumenical Action.

Funding for the operating costs of the Vancouver Planning Committee has been provided mostly from the Canadian member churches of the WCC. Smaller amounts have been received from a few foundations, the Province of British Columbia, and individuals. The Vancouver Planning Committee is chaired by Archbishop David Somerville, and includes in its network about 120 chairpersons, convenors and active committee members, as well as over 3,000 volunteers and hosts associated with Vancouver Planning Committee projects.

The Vancouver Planning Committee has also exercised responsibilities on behalf of the World Council of Churches at the Assembly site over the period of preparation in matters relating to the University of British Columbia, the provision of equipment and facilities for the Assembly, and local arrangements with respect to media services.

The Committee has been served by two staff persons through the two years preceding the Assembly: Rev. Dr Gordon How, Executive Director, and Mr Lorne Mann, Secretary.

THE HOST PROGRAMME

The Vancouver Planning Committee has extended an invitation to full-time Assembly participants to take part in the Host Programme. Some 1,000 families in Vancouver will provide personal hospitality at the Assembly.

Those Assembly participants who have chosen to have hosts will be met at the airport in Vancouver by their hosts and taken to their place of accommodation at the University of British Columbia or at downtown hotels. If arranged in advance, some hosts will be able to accommodate those arriving a day or two earlier at the Assembly. Some of the hosts may also be able to invite guests to stay on in their homes for a day or two after the Assembly.

Hosts have been alerted not to impose themselves upon their guests nor to intervene in any way in the Assembly deliberations. However, they will be available for a reasonable amount of time to assist guests in discovering the city of Vancouver and its environs and perhaps to share Visitation Sunday together.

All the hosts will be attending the Opening Day Celebration, and they can be reached by telephone in case the guests need their assistance.

Because this matching of so many hosts with guests is a complex hospitality programme, it may not work perfectly in every case. However, it does promise to provide both the Christian community of Vancouver and participants at the Assembly an opportunity for personal and meaningful meetings.

STEWARDS

There will be some 175 stewards at the Assembly. These young men and women will help the participants in a great

variety of ways. They will distribute documents, usher delegates into the meeting rooms, give information and answer telephone calls, and provide informal translation for some who are not served by the official interpretation services.

They are students, pastors, workers in many fields. Some of them are unemployed. They come from 82 countries. They belong to a host of different church traditions ranging from the Orthodox to the Quaker and the Roman Catholic to the Pentecostal. Their age is between 18 and 30.

About 25 per cent of the total number of stewards are from Canada. The others were carefully chosen, through a long and difficult process of selection, by the WCC's Youth Sub-unit.

The stewards are an integral part of the Assembly. Their contribution to the Assembly is of crucial importance. They participate in its work by enabling the delegates to participate. In the process they gain ecumenical experience and commitment.

PRESS

Over 500 journalists, editors, radio and TV producers, from both the church and secular press, have been accredited by the WCC to cover the Assembly, working from the press room on the second floor of the Student Union Building. This international press corps will report on the public Assembly events and plenary sessions and, for background information, follow the work of clusters and Issue groups.

The work of radio and TV journalists will be assisted by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. CBC will act as host broadcaster, providing live coverage of the Assembly and making it available to other broadcasters. This service simplifies the work for journalists and delegates alike. For example, one set of television cameras operated by CBC will provide all the coverage of plenary sessions and worship services, thus reducing the distraction of many different lights and cameras.

The WCC's Communication Department is responsible for accrediting and servicing the Assembly press corps. The Department staff will arrange daily press conferences and briefing sessions, set up interviews and other contacts with delegates on request, provide press releases, liaison services. If you wish to learn more about the Assembly press operation or how the media from your region are represented at Vancouver, please contact a member of the Communication Department staff.

Responsibility for the daily Assembly newspaper is also part of the WCC Communication Department's job. The Department will also help with a range of other resources that Assembly participants can order during the meeting (colour slides, black and white photos, audio and video tapes, news and feature stories in English, French, German and Spanish).

DIRECTORY

You will get your copy of the Assembly Directory at the time of registration. It will provide detailed information about the programme -- time and place of meetings, a guide to the campus, details of practical arrangements, office location, telephone numbers, general services, etc.

DISPLAYS

The major WCC exhibit entitled "Acting in Faith -- Nairobi to Vancouver" highlights the Council's work since 1975 through photographs, art, texts and changing colour slides. It is located in the entrance hall of the Student Union Building. WCC staff will be on hand to answer questions and provide more detailed information about WCC programmes. Among the elements featured in the exhibit are the ecumenical team visits with the member churches and the varied work of the Programme Sub-units.

A comprehensive range of WCC and other publications will be available in the bookshop near the exhibit.

The display continues outdoors where information corridors will carry changing images and statements about the theme and issues of the Assembly and the work of the WCC.

In downtown Vancouver's Robson Square a further WCC display will be located, similar in design to the ones on campus, along with the liturgical art collection on loan from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Apart from the official exhibits, the locally organized Agora in the Armory building will offer a great variety of displays from ecumenical groups and other agencies.



AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



**Work Book for the
Sixth Assembly of the
World Council of Churches**

Vancouver, Canada
24 July to 10 August 1983