

69-GS-143 VOTED: The Seventh General Synod adopts the resolution on the abolition of capital punishment.

RESOLUTION TO ABOLISH CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

WHEREAS the Committee for Racial Justice, the Council for Christian Social Action, and the UCC Ministers for Racial and Social Justice are unalterably opposed to capital punishment and cannot remain silent regarding its continuance in our society, and

WHEREAS the human agencies of legal justice are fallible and

WHEREAS we are concerned about the disproportionate number of black and poor who occupy death row and, white or black, are victims of an evil which decent people of our society have too long endured and which violates categorically our Judea-Christian ethic, and

WHEREAS this outdated and barbaric practice has been found to discriminate on the basis of skin color and economic condition, and

WHEREAS the last-minute stay of execution of 17-year-old Marie Hill in the gas chamber of North Carolina reminds us that one of the gross injustices in our judicial system is the retention of this barbaric practice.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ commit itself to join in a nationwide campaign for the abolition of capital punishment and call upon other secular and religious institutions to join in a maximum effort for the abolition of capital punishment in the following:

- a. Enlisting the support of Conferences and of other denominations and agencies and co-operating with existing efforts to abolish capital punishment.
- b. Developing legislative and other political action for the abolition of capital punishment.
- c. Resisting efforts to reinstitute capital punishment in those states where it has been abolished.
- d. Testing the constitutionality of laws permitting capital punishment.
- e. Making available and assisting in the raising of funds to pursue the above.