Hope for a Global Future:

Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development

Approved by the 208th General Assembly (1996) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

HOPE FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE:
TOWARD JUST AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
and
STUDY GUIDE

APPROVED BY
THE 208TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1996)
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

DEVELOPED BY THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL WITNESS POLICY

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November 1996

To: Pastors of Churches and Clerks of Sessions Where There is No Installed Pastor, Stated Clerks and Executives of Presbyteries and Synods, and Librarians of Theological Seminaries

President, Vice-President, and Members of the Congress of the United States of America, members of the President's Council on Sustainable Development, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization

Dear Friends:

The 208th General Assembly (1996) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in reliance upon the grace of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in exercise of its responsibility to witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in every dimension of life, has approved this policy statement. It is presented for the guidance and edification of the whole Christian Church and the society to which it ministers. It will determine procedures and program for the units and staff of the General Assembly. It is recommended for consideration and study by other governing bodies (sessions, presbyteries, and synods). It is commended to the free Christian conscience of all congregations and the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for prayerful study, dialogue, and action.

The policy statement reflects a development process of wide consultation and participation throughout the church, drawing upon biblical sources and insights from the Reformed Tradition in giving renewed definition to Presbyterian understandings of the way in which we are called to be stewards of God's creation, together with others throughout the world. The policy statement presents a theological understanding for our activities in the complex world of international economics, touching upon issues of economic justice for all persons, concerns about population, and ecological degradation. It calls for a renewed emphasis on the Reformed norm of frugality and presents the norm of sufficiency, so that all may participate with abundant living in caring communities that are less materialistic and more frugal.

The resolution comes to you with a study and action guide, designed for personal and class use, in the hope that we may all become more aware of our call to be God's people in our daily lives, and in our relations with others wherever they may live in the world.

In response to a request from the floor following the assembly's actions regarding 36.472 (Recommendation (5), pp. 151-52 of this report), Moderator of the 208th General Assembly (1996) John Buchanan requested that the availability of this document be made known to the women of the church. I appreciate whatever assistance you're able to provide towards ensuring that as many women of the church as possible are made aware of the availability of this publication.

Yours in Christ's Service,

Clifton Kirkpatrick
Stated Clerk

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HOPE FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE: TOWARD JUST AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

PRECIS

Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

With this definition of "just and sustainable human development," this policy statement addresses international issues in the economic structure. It is based on a biblical theology and Christian assumption of the mutual responsibility and equality of human beings in God's sight, stating that equitable distribution of goods and ecological constraints put moral limits on economic activity for the sake of human well-being, future generations, and nonhuman life. It calls for a renewed emphasis on the Reformed norm of frugality and lifts up the norm of sufficiency so that all may participate in the "good life," calling for abundant living in caring communities in a way that is less materialistic and more frugal.

The markers of this new way of life can be found in the subheadings of Chapter 7: Sufficient Production and Consumption, Full Respect for All Human Rights, Just and Effective Governance, Universal and Adequate Education, Population Stability, Environmental Sustainability and Food Sufficiency, Ethical Universality with Cultural and Religious Diversity, Dismantling Warfare and Building Peace, Equitable Debt Relief, Just and Sustainable International Trade, and More and Better Development Assistance.

Following an introductory "Call to a Renewal of Concern.... Humility . . . Hope . . . and Action," the statement presents background material to explain the complex and interconnected context

of concerns facing the entire world. The economic and ecological concerns culminate in Chapter 5 as the theological and ethical response to the problem is developed, thus giving shape, focus, and a firm underpinning to Chapter 6, which presents the new direction of the policy statement. The reader will find highlights of the principles and policies as a preface to the background paper.

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF CONCERN ... HUMILITY ... HOPE ... AND ACTION

> For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. (Jer. 29:1, NRSV)

Some prosper, others languish.
"Lazarus, full of sores,' desires to be fed,
but Dives does not look.
God in creation wills
for all to be filled with good things.
But the fruitful land becomes a desert, bonds
of community break,
the hungry and displaced
are scarcely noticed.
Those with much grow weary of charity,
oblivious to justice.
Those anxious before unsettling change turn inward,
resisting insight and compassion.
0 God, we care, help our unconcern!

The 208th General Assembly (1996) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls and prays for a renewal of concern.

The modern spirit falters,
confidence fades.
Technology and aid, trade and development
were dispatched to make all nations modern. Yet
poverty persists, disparities widen, nature revolts.
The Cold War ends in cold, fragmented peace.
Promise of progress and prosperity
extended to the world with pride
but without sacrifice, without sharing,
without acknowledgment of limits
turns to dust.
0 God, we repent of pride, help our continuing presumption!

The 208th General Assembly (1996)
calls and prays for a renewal of humility.

In light of the Resurrection
despair is always premature.
God has a project in today's events.
In paths we have not known God leads,
turning darkness into light.
We may follow, chastened but emboldened,
acknowledging the failures of development
but willing to reconceptualize it,
coming to terms with the radically new factor of sustainability,
realizing that the "developed" world does not have answers
for every "undeveloped" place,
but trusting that when justice is the central focus,
justice as a people's participation in sustainable
sufficiency,
we can remove some roadblocks
to a community's own development
and accompany struggling, hopeful people
with enabling resources.
0 God, we trust and hope, help our hesitation!

The 208th General Assembly (1996)
calls and prays for a renewal of hope and action
for the global future God intends.

BACKGROUND

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

The 208th General Assembly (1996) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commends to the churches this report on Just and Sustainable Human Development. Highlighted below are some of the declarations, recommendations, and directives in the policies set forth in Chapter 7.

Regarding sufficient production and consumption, the General Assembly

- denounces the increased reluctance by the United States and other northern countries to address the causes of impoverishment and suffering in their own midst and in the south;

- asks Presbyterians and other Christians to lead the way to a basic reconception of the "good life," one that, in accordance with our Christian and Reformation heritage, is less materialistic and more frugal; and

- calls on governments and international agencies to revise their measurements of success in development so that they will incorporate the true costs of production and consumption and reflect the priority of sufficiency and sustainability. Traditional measurements based on the Gross National Product include the monetary costs of health problems and environmental pollution as though they were benefits.

Regarding full respect for all human rights, the General Assembly calls attention to the essential place of women as participants in the development process—with primary roles in family health care and nutrition, subsistence agriculture, and the ecological management of local resources. Effective development strategies must take specific account of women's special roles and needs.

Regarding universal and adequate education, the General Assembly directs its own agencies in educational ministries throughout

the world to give strong support to education that liberates and empowers people, economically, socially, culturally, and spiritually.

Regarding population stability, the General Assembly declares that complacency about expanding human numbers, in rich countries as well as poor, constitutes defiance of the wisdom of God, who intends the interdependent components of creation to maintain harmony and balance.

Regarding environmental sustainability and food sufficiency, the General Assembly

- declares that the prices of the goods that we consume should reflect the full costs that their production levies on the poor, the general public, the creation, and the future;

- recognizes the problems that reduced consumption in the north would pose for an economy geared to growth and calls leaders, experts, and citizens to wrestle with the issues of fashioning economic arrangements that can accommodate frugality by comfortable people, together with participation by all people in sustainable sufficiency; and

- urges agricultural policy makers and practitioners to give priority to sustainable agriculture and increased food sufficiency within each region or country, as well as to increased yields, and to fairer distribution of land, the viability of small farms, and community-based programs for sustainable agriculture.

Regarding dismantling warfare and building peace, the General Assembly calls upon the United States government to reduce substantially the military component of foreign assistance programs and provide leadership internationally to bring the arms trade to an end.

Regarding equitable debt relief, the General Assembly declares that the repayment of international debts at the expense of the basics of life for the poor cannot be tolerated. The burden of debts must be shared equitably in ways that reduce poverty, protect the environment, and avoid perverse incentives in the future.

Regarding just and sustainable international trade, the General Assembly does the following:

- Holds that the international trading system must incorporate the basic norms of social justice and environmental sustainability, rather than depend solely on the norms and outcomes of free trade.

- In light of major global economic changes, directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to monitor and report on the implementation and consequences of the recent international agreements for expanding world trade—with special concern for the effects on the poor, the natural environment, local communities, and the distribution of power among the actors in economic development. The committee's reports will provide guidance to the church for further development of policy on trade.

- Urges that the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) develop guidelines whereby a country may use tariffs or subsidies to protect its environment from the unfair competitive advantage of a country that fails to adopt and enforce appropriate environmental standards. This should be an incentive to the negotiation of binding treaties for international environmental protection.

Regarding more and better development assistance, the General Assembly

- holds that the purpose of development assistance is to equip people and communities through financial and technical means to implement their own plans for just and sustainable development;

- calls upon the president and the Congress to make support for national sustainable human development strategies the primary mission of United States Aid for International Development (USAID);

- urges all agencies of development assistance to give high priority to partnership relationships with local communities, entailing mutuality and cooperation and aiming at increased self-reliance with respect to essential needs, broad-based local ownership, and control of productive resources;

- calls for substantially increased United States financial and technical support for sustainable development—at least a doubling

of the current level if prospects are good that funds can be well spent;

- urges recognition and support for the significant role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in community-based sustainable development; and

- commends the Presbyterian Hunger Program and the Self-Development of People program for their sensitivity when making development grants to the importance of local community initiative and partnership, and urges all Presbyterians to view these programs as a means of their support of just and sustainable development, not only at the time of the One Great Hour of Sharing but throughout the year.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A. THE CONFESSIONAL CONTEXT

The Presbyterian Confession of 1967 prophetically insists that because humans are reconciled through Christ, "enslaving poverty" is "an intolerable violation of God's good creation. . . The church cannot condone poverty, whether it is the product of unjust social structures, exploitation of the defenseless, lack of natural resources, absence of technological understanding, or rapid expansion of populations" *(The Book of Confessions,* 9.46).

Tragically, "enslaving poverty" persists as a prominent feature of the global economy. It remains "intolerable," a moral scandal of maldistribution and unsustainability, that disregards human dignity, solidarity, and equity, as well as ecological integrity. And it has been condoned by churches and societies! We have tolerated the intolerable by failing to stress the severity of the problem in our education and advocacy and by not promoting persistently the policies, programs, and patterns of living that can alleviate poverty. For Presbyterians, the task of ending global poverty is a matter of confessional status that requires action.

This report of the Task Force on Sustainable Development, the Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy echoes the disdain for economic and social disparities expressed in the Confession of 1967, and responds to its demands to eradicate degrading economic conditions whenever they occur. The report is a confession of our individual and social sins of omission and commission. It is also a call for fundamental reforms in the churches, United States government policy, and the international economic order.

B. THE TASK FORCE

The General Assembly Committee on Social Witness Policy created the Task Force on Sustainable Development in 1991. It was to examine the social, economic, and ecological effects of our country's

international economic policies on the world's poorest nations and peoples. Moreover, the task force was called to evaluate these policies and to propose appropriate directions for reform from the perspective of our prime framework of value, the Reformed Christian heritage. The task force chose to focus its attention, first, on the plight of impoverished peoples, whose ability to satisfy their basic needs has been weakened by the growing gap between rich and poor and by the increasing dangers of ecological degradation. Second, its focus was on how the United States can help secure a more just and sustainable international economic order that affirms the interdependence of the human community and accepts its ecological interdependence with the rest of nature. While the United States is by no means an omnipotent force in the global economy, the economic impacts of its actions on other nations are enormous. Thus, its potential to empower economic justice and sustainability is considerable. With this great economic influence comes great moral responsibility. Because the United States is the nation of our church members' citizenship, we need to learn how to hold our governments, businesses, and each other accountable for the policies and actions that do not accord with the standards of just and sustainable human development.

The Task Force on Sustainable Development worked long and hard to fulfill its charge. Its membership reflected geographical, national, gender, ethnic, and vocational diversity (see Appendix A). The task force studied many relevant documents, engaged in theological and ethical reflection on economic issues, and consulted with a variety of knowledgeable parties—including business and labor leaders, officials of government agencies and international organizations, theologians, ethicists, and economists, as well as Presbyterian ministry units and ecumenical partners such as representatives of the World Council of Churches, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States, and other denominations. The task force met eight times for meetings of several days each. One of its meetings was seminal: nine days in Honduras in February 1993, to listen to and learn from representatives of peasant cooperative development projects, peoples' organizations, government and financial agencies, and large-scale enterprise—all of which have been directly affected by United States international policy. The Honduran experience profoundly shaped

the task force's perspective (see Appendix B), particularly in recognizing the importance of accompaniment, being with and for the poor.[1]

C. GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLICIES

The Task Force on Sustainable Development reviewed the relevant policies of Presbyterian General Assemblies. In a wide variety of statements over the past fifty years, the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessor bodies have regularly and consistently endorsed substantial economic and technical assistance and other policy objectives as national moral obligations to enhance human development in poor countries. The General Assemblies have supported, for example, reforming the international economic order and United States food policy to combat global hunger; the equitable distribution of planetary resources; the easement of debt burdens in poor countries; fair provisions for international trade; social, political, and economic rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and equality for women; trade and aid sanctions against oppressive regimes, including divestment from corporations in South Africa; population planning and stabilization; the priority of human needs over political and military considerations in the allocation of aid; and constraints on consumption by the prosperous for the sake of equitable sharing with the poor. Indeed, in a 1981 statement, "The Power to Speak Truth to Power," adopted by the General Assemblies of both the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the assemblies stated: "God calls Christians living in affluence to develop a lifestyle of frugality which assists human fulfillment while releasing scarce resources for use by the poor."[2] The task force interpreted its work as strongly consistent with the breadth of policy emerging from Presbyterian General Assemblies in recent decades. Moreover, the task force understood its work as presuming and complementing the 1990 General Assembly Policy Statement, *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justic.*[3]

The task force also developed a churchwide study document to prompt reflections by and to generate feedback from study groups in

local churches and other contexts. Responses to this study document contributed helpfully to the completion of the task force's

The final responsibility of the task force was to prepare a policy statement on just and sustainable human development, with programmatic recommendations for study and action in the church. This document includes the policy statement (Chapter 7) and a background paper (Chapters I–VI and VIII). The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy submits it without a true sense of finality. The subject is vast, complex, and filled with confusing dilemmas. The document necessarily probes only the surface, but sufficiently so to prompt deeper investigation and significant changes within church and society.

D. A VISION OF JUST AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The primary purpose of the policy statement is to envision what just and sustainable human development might look like, in light of our Reformed faith. For the task force, just and sustainable human development connotes a comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future, involving the integration of the economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

The term "human development" highlights the claim that the goals of development ought to be focused on advancing human well-being. It is more—much more—than economic growth. In its economic dimension, it is best described as just and sustainable sufficiency for all. "Justice" is required in order to ensure fair treatment for nonhuman as well as human life. "Sustainability" implies living within the carrying capacities of the planet. And just and sustainable human development suggests a just distribution of well-being between present and future generations by following policies that ensure the ecological conditions necessary for thriving in both the present and future.

No interpretation of justice and sustainability is complete without an emphasis on frugality as a norm for all, especially the prosperous. Frugality denotes moderation, temperance, thrift, cost-consciousness, efficient use, and a satisfaction with material sufficiency. It means morally disciplined production and consumption for the common good, now and in the future. It reflects "the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature" (Gen. 9:16).

This policy statement will interpret the meaning of just and sustainable human development in some detail in later chapters. But first, it is important to understand the problems in which the concept of just and sustainable development is a response.

E. GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE AND ITS LINKAGES

The world is becoming a holistic system of interdependent social, economic, and environmental systems. In various degrees, depending on the component considered, this interdependence has always been present, though it often has gone unrecognized. Today, it is obvious and intensifying. Though many social, economic, and ecological problems can still be resolved locally, regionally, or nationally, an increasing number are transnational in scope, and demand new expressions of human solidarity that defy the political realities of sovereign independence.

Global interdependence is so vast, complex, and dynamic that it is impossible to analyze as a whole; yet no particular problem such as pollution, poverty, or population, can be interpreted adequately in isolation, apart from its cause and effect connections with the multiple parts of the whole. The fragments are interwoven.

All nations, for example, have been drawn into a single global market, which offers both blessings and curses and contributes to prosperity in some places and poverty in others. Never before in human history has economic competition among nations been so intense and challenging. Major businesses no longer operate merely under national charters; they are multinational corporations, allocating capital among nations in accord with market advantages and often exercising economic power without adequate national or international accountability to their constituencies. International trade may increase significantly under new global trade rules administered by the new World Trade Organization, with advantages for labor in some countries while creating disadvantages for labor in others, and with environmental consequences that are similarly ambiguous.[4] Technological sophistication has enhanced productivity in some countries, but with the spread of markets, it has tended to marginalize other countries whose people lack the skills and capital to participate equally and fully.

Communications, transportation, industrial, and financial institutions have become increasingly globalized, not only enhancing international contacts and cooperation but also prompting cultural transformations and conflicts. As the United States has experienced the traumas and difficulties of striving to become a multicultural society, "Westernization"—indeed, "Americanization"—has created even greater tensions in smaller, poor nations trying to preserve their cultural identity. Despite the dramatic decline of East-West conflicts, ethnic strife and civil disorder (even genocide) have impoverished some countries and have had major international repercussions. The growing gap in income and economic power between and within rich and poor nations will almost surely intensify and contribute to further strife and civil disorder around the world.

Ecological interdependence is becoming more apparent with growing recognition of the depletion of the planet's single ozone layer, the threat of human-induced global climate change, the effects of pollution that cross international boundaries, the excessive use of renewable and nonrenewable resources on which many nations depend, and the declining populations of migratory species.

Thus, social, economic, and ecological interdependence on a global scale is confronting us with many contemporary problems, the solutions to which, many believe, depend on the quest for a just and sustainable human development.

In the midst of this rapid transformation of civilization, the task force discerned two strategic principles: (1) human solidarity is essential to an adequate response to interdependence. We are experiencing the moral reality of humanity's indivisibility. New levels of international cooperation and responsibility are necessary to deal with global social and environmental issues that threaten the safety and welfare of all nations. The "Earth Summit" (the United Nations' Conference on Environment and Development, or UNCED) in 1992 rightly stressed the need for a "new global partnership."

Second, interdependence places a premium on coordinated thought and action. Everything is connected with everything else. Major problems cannot be solved in isolation. Solutions to one social or ecological problem may aggravate other problems; but with

relational awareness and wisdom, they may also help to solve the others. New relational realities require new relational strategies. Concentration on particular concerns is still possible and necessary to avoid the arrogant folly of trying to solve all problems simultaneously. Nevertheless, such concentration must be done with awareness of the primary linkages with other concerns.

Thus, the primary focus of this policy statement is on human deprivation in the present and future, or, positively stated, just and sustainable human development. Even so, poverty cannot be interpreted or resolved apart from efforts to relieve ecological degradation, overpopulation, and excessive consumption by economic elites. Poverty is a significant cause as well as an effect of ecological degradation. Overpopulation can jeopardize both human development and ecological integrity by increasing stress on scarce resources and upsetting environmental balances. Overconsumption in a few nations can deprive late developing nations of scarce resources needed for development, as well as contribute to ecological decline at home and abroad. Thus, equity among nations is as much an issue of ecological ethics as social ethics. Likewise, population stability promotes both social justice and ecological responsibility.

The next three chapters examine successively the conditions of acute poverty, rapid population growth, and environmental decline, noting the connections among them and how they are related to overconsumption. These are not merely technical issues; they also are moral issues. Then in Chapter 5, these sobering "signs of the times" will be compared with the vision of an entirely different world—a world implied in the biblical message and confessional standards of our Reformed faith. It is only then that Chapters 6 and 7 can describe carefully what is meant by just and sustainable human development and individual Christians and the church can begin to make tentative choices among policy options that most fully reflect and define our theological-ethical values.

Endnotes

1. Developed by the Task Force on Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy, *Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith and U.S. International Economic Policy:*

Churchwide Study Document, (Louisville, Ky.: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, 1994), 1-7, 15-17.

2. Minutes, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, 298.

3. The Presbyterian Eco-Justice Task Force, *Keeping and Healing the Creation*, (Louisville: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy).

4. Hilary F. French, "Reconciling Trade and Environment," *State of the World 1993* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), 158-179.

5. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), *Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development* (New York: UN Publications, 1993), Chapter 2.1.

CHAPTER 2: MALDISTRIBUTION AND ACUTE GLOBAL POVERTY

A. How FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE WORLD LIVE

Radical disparities in income and resources are prominent features of the contemporary world. Less than a fifth of the world's human population, concentrated in the industrialized nations, live in relative economic comfort or luxury, consuming substantial portions of the world's economic goods and disproportionately polluting the planet. Yet another fifth of humanity lives in chronic and desperate poverty—on an average income of $1 per day per person. The *Human Development Report 1994* estimated that the lowest fifth of humankind, more than a billion people, received only 1.4 percent of the world's income in 1991, compared to almost 85 percent for the wealthiest fifth of the world's population. And these income disparities have more than doubled since 1960. In that year the richest 20 percent received a share of world income 30 times larger than the poorest 20 percent; in 1991, the share of the former was 61 times that of the latter!'

Not all poor people live in poor countries and not all people in poor countries are poor. Distinctions like First World-Third World, rich-poor, and North-South are convenient generalizations to be sure; but in all countries there are both rich and poor. Some relatively wealthy countries, such as the oil kingdoms of the Middle East contain many poor people and virtually all developing countries support rich elites.

For the developing nations as a whole, standards of living are rising at a faster rate than in the developed countries, but their levels are still far below those of the developed countries. Indeed, the absolute gap between per capita incomes in the developing and developed countries continues to widen, according to *World Resources 1994-95*.[2] Even more dismaying, the standards of living of the poorest of the poor are either stagnant or declining.[3]

Although the desperately poor are scattered among a great variety of countries, they are greatly concentrated in the poorest countries, particularly in most nations of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Measured by purchasing power parity, for example, the average 1991 gross domestic product per capita in the United States was eighteen times larger than in Haiti, nineteen times larger than in India, and thirty-nine times larger than in Tanzania.[4] Two billion people, particularly women, suffer from dangerous vitamin and mineral deficiencies.[5] Approximately one billion persons, mostly in the poorest countries, suffer from hunger and an overlapping one billion, mainly women, are unable to read and write.[6]

Major improvements in literacy, sanitation, primary health care, life expectancy, and other indicators of the quality of life have occurred worldwide over the past thirty years. These achievements, partly a consequence of international assistance, are impressive and promising for the future. Nonetheless, statistics on disparities remain startling. Life expectancy at birth is estimated for 1990-95 at an average age of fifty-three for all in Africa, compared with seventy-six for those in the United States and seventy-five for people in all of Europe.[7] Infant mortality rates (per one thousand live births) for 1990-95 average sixty-two worldwide, but are ninety-five in Africa as a whole, eighty-eight in India, eighty-six in Haiti, but only ten in Europe and eight in the United States.[8] Nearly eight million children die before their fifth birthday, usually from infectious and parasitic diseases related to malnutrition and environmental ills like contaminated water and severely polluted air. Many children are orphaned by diseases. With adequate nutrition, primary medical care, and basic sanitation, most of these ailments are preventable and curable.[9]

Neither statistics nor words can adequately picture the reality of poverty—primitive housing, illiteracy, dirty water, poor sanitation, debilitating but preventable and curable illnesses, high vulnerability to natural calamities like floods and epidemics, the lack of property and other essential personal goods, malnutrition, and, in many millions of cases annually, early death from hunger-related diseases. Poverty means powerlessness—subordination, humiliation, and manipulation by cultural, social, and economic powers. In short, massive numbers of humankind lack sufficient resources to satisfy

their essential needs and to enable them to participate as citizens of a nation and the world.

Chronic poverty also damages the environment. The World Commission on Environment and Development drew attention to the linkage between economic disparities and environmental degradation as a major theme of *Our* Common *Future:* "This inequality is the planet's main 'environmental' problem."[10] Without economic sufficiency, poor people and nations are forced to exploit their national resources beyond the point of sustainability simply to survive in the present—and the process is accentuated by rapid population growth bred partly by poverty. The intensive use of croplands causes nutrient exhaustion and soil erosion and the extension of agriculture to marginal lands contributes to desertification. Similar consequences arise from overgrazing on grasslands. Forests, water, fish, and other resources are jeopardized by excessive use for current demands.

Unfortunately, environmental damage usually increases as countries industrialize. In the early stages of industrialization, people tend to tolerate high and dangerous levels of pollution; they find the costs of remediation too high relative to their still modest income. Yet the added degradation contributes significantly to global damage, already high from the massive pollution of the already-developed economies. Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, China, and other newly industrializing countries are celebrated as models of economic growth. But their success has also significantly increased pollution, locally and globally, and contributed to unsustainable use of natural resources. The people of the developed economies will have to share the costs and technologies of pollution control with those of the developing countries, lest all—both rich and poor—suffer. Global environmental problems cannot be resolved satisfactorily unless economic disparities are remedied. A commitment to ending poverty entails a commitment to preserving ecological integrity—and vice versa.

B. CAUSES OF POVERTY

Acute poverty has many causes. It is in part a consequence of each country's history, such as colonial exploitation, sometimes compounded by domestic ethnic rivalry and the failure of unifying

national leadership. Even where adequate resources are potentially available to satisfy basic needs, such factors as corruption, political instability, tyrannical governments, economic mismanagement, control of economic resources by elite minorities, excessive military expenditures, ethnic conflicts, civil wars, high population growth, poor education, and cultural customs such as the subordination of women, have contributed significantly to impoverishment. In Myanmar, for example, the rulers of the military governments and their allies have greedily enriched themselves and spawned ethnic-based civil wars, while crippling the development of a country, whereas neighbors like Thailand and Malaysia have managed to grow rapidly. Also, a majority of the population in poor countries typically earns its living from farming and agricultural pursuits on land that is concentrated in the hands of a few who pay farmers little for their harvests. Thus, acute poverty is rooted at least partly in the domestic failures and governmental shortcomings of each country.

Nevertheless, external factors such as international trade, the patterns of aid, the policies of lenders, and questionable actions by multinational corporations also have contributed to the poverty of some developing nations. The opposite ends of the global economic spectrum—the rich and the poor, the north and the south—are separable neither empirically nor ethically. The connections between global prosperity and poverty are complex and ambiguous. The prosperity of the north offers benefits to some persons in nations of the south by providing economic assistance and markets for their export. Yet, some international connections are real liabilities for the south as noted below. Despite aid from the North, more wealth left developing countries between 1983 and 1991 through capital flight, interest on international loans, and profits of multinational corporations than entered from the north. [11]

C. DEBT BURDENS

The connections between prosperity and poverty are evident in the continuing international debt situation. The financial debt that the nations of the south owe the commercial, governmental, and multilateral institutions of the north is now estimated to be a staggering $1.5 trillion! Much of this debt was incurred during the 1970s when growth was encouraged and borrowing was easy. But oil

prices jumped at the end of that decade, causing the richer countries to fight inflation with monetary restraint. As a result, growth slowed, interest rates skyrocketed, and commodity prices fell. This meant that developing countries, particularly those with large commercial debt, found their debt service requirements shooting upward and their export earnings dropping fast at the very time banks were less willing to lend. The combination of slower growth, rising debts, and weakened assistance during the 1980s resulted in severe hardship for many developing countries. By the mid 1980s, interest payments on the debt they owed to foreigners more than offset inward flows to many countries, draining them of resources needed for development. Yet, in the absence of reforms in the international lending system, the debtor nations had to pay their debts in order to remain creditworthy and not become "economic pariahs."[12]

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank responded to the debt crisis by offering various kinds of debt relief, but only if the indebted countries agreed to adopt some combination of "stabilization" and "structural adjustment" policies. Seeking much-needed economic reforms, these policies generally required sharp reductions in government services, currency devaluations, lifting price controls, encouraging exports, freezing or reducing wages, and cutting some public subsidies—often with the added purpose of transforming indebted nations into "market-friendly" economies.

In conjunction with a variety of internal and external economic conditions, the results of public austerity were often disastrous for the poor: rising unemployment, falling incomes, higher costs of living, declining levels of already low basic health care[13] and increasing deteriorations in living standards. The "modernization laws" enacted in 1993 by the Honduran legislature to implement adjustments worked out with international lenders, for example, caused drastic cuts in public services, especially those targeted on rural and urban poor people. Not surprisingly, policies that help poor people but impose costs on the non-poor usually encounter resistance. Since the non-poor are more likely to be politically powerful, most governments cut services for the poor while implementing required adjustment programs. Economist Hilary French describes the decline as follows:

> According to an internal [World] Bank review in 1992, two-thirds of the countries with adjustment programs under way were experiencing declines in both

public- and private-sector investment, and poverty was on the rise in many of them. .. .

During the eighties, increases were registered not only in the absolute number of poor people in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, North Africa, and Latin America, but also in the proportion of the population that is poor. Moreover, in both Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, poverty deepened during the decade, meaning that the poor fell farther and farther below the poverty line."

Whatever the intentions of the policy makers in the IMF and the World Bank, as well as in the U.S. government, their responses to the debt crisis preserved a dominant-subordinate relationship among rich and poor nations. To many in the debtor countries, it revived memories of the injustices of colonialism and recreated a dependency that endangers the equal dignity and solidarity of peoples.[15] Poor nations are already too dependent on the dominant lenders of the north not only for loans but for the terms of loan repayment.

Critics of the handling of the debt crisis argue that justice as well as economics should be a guide to policy. They ask if debt service should not be limited to a reasonable percentage of foreign exchange earnings or national product?[16] Should the presumptive obligation to repay loans be overridden or adjusted for the sake of a higher moral obligation, to prevent further harm to the poor and to advance their well-being?[17] Should particular debts be canceled or rescheduled, as has occurred in some cases, or should the interest rates be reduced? Should not the creditors share more equitably the excessive burdens with the debtors when both were responsible for the miscalculations leading to the debts or when both have been victimized by the conditions that created the debt crisis?

Whatever policies are implied by answers to these questions; whatever reforms are necessary for the policies and practices of international lending institutions; and whatever structural adjustments are required to strengthen the economies of poor nations—a fundamental criterion for moral acceptability must be that poor people are not harmed in the process of adjustment and reform.

D. QUESTIONS OF TRADE

Prosperity and poverty are affected by the enormous volume of goods and services that is traded internationally. International trade

in goods now exceeds four trillion dollars annually, an amount almost equal to the American national income. It also is growing very rapidly, almost twice as fast as the increase in goods being produced worldwide. For many of the least developed countries, moreover, international trade accounts for half or more of what is produced or consumed—surely an important influence on their economies.

The nations of the south frequently complain that the rules of international trade are stacked against them—and many in the north concur. Through discriminatory trade barriers established by economically powerful nations, southern nations argue that they have been denied fair access to northern markets and fair prices for their commodities.

Yet, in recent years, a strong international movement for "free" trade has emerged, which has united the vast majority of southern and northern hemisphere governments and is heartily supported by commercial interests. Trade restrictions such as tariffs, quotas, embargoes, and public subsidies to protect domestic products, are seen as "market distortions" preventing creation of a "global free market." The purposes of the movement are to "halt and reverse protectionism in order to bring about further liberalization and expansion of world trade, to the benefit of all countries, in particular the developing countries," and to "provide for an equitable, secure, nondiscriminatory and predictable international trading system." The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), revisions in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the new World Trade Organization (WTO) are partial results of this international initiative.

The conventional economic case for unrestricted international trade is that trade is beneficial to everyone involved. These benefits arise from the different efficiencies in the production of goods in different countries. Instead of each country producing everything for itself, each specializes according to its comparative advantages and costs are thereby minimized. Trade and specialization will result in a higher total production to be shared among nations. Thus, for the United States, in this view, increased international trade means expanding markets for United States products and services and

more and better jobs for United States workers because they are highly skilled, well educated, and very productive. United States consumers will benefit by wider choices and lower prices realized through international competition. Since trade is beneficial to all parties, the conclusion is that the international market should be free, unrestricted by government interventions or barriers that impede the flow of benefits.

This theory still plays an important role in international deliberations over trade issues. To make this argument rigorously, however, requires a number of simplifying assumptions—for instance, that prices fully reflect the social and ecological costs of production (the absence of so-called "externalities"); that markets are fully competitive; and that factors of production such as labor and capital do not move between nations. Since these assumptions do not prevail in reality, many advocates of enhanced trade have become much more pragmatic, assessing the costs and benefits of trade on a case-by-case basis.

Moreover, advocates of deregulated trade tend to see trade restrictions as reflections of interest group politics. Protective tariffs and quotas, they argue, are generally not designed to promote the public welfare but rather to shelter inefficient industries and special interests from competition—to the detriment of the public's interest in competitive prices and goods. [19]

The arguments against deregulated and expansive international trade are diverse. One is that unrestricted trade gives competitive advantages to countries and corporations willing and able to exploit cheap and passive labor (including prisoners and child labor) and to tolerate lax environmental and social protections. This is the argument often used by trade unions in the United States whose members fear lost jobs, depressed wages, and a weakening of collective bargaining rights. Tariffs are needed not to shelter inefficient industries, they say, but to protect the rights of labor from exploitative competition. Others point out that the damage to incomes and jobs from expansive trade agreements like NAFTA often is concentrated among workers and communities least able to adjust. At the very least, they urge adoption of strong international labor standards as part of all international trade agreements.

Environmental arguments against freer trade also have become increasingly prominent. The concern of those who present them is that deregulating trade will accentuate unsustainable uses of resources both in the generation of more waste and the excessive use of depletable resources. The growth of international trade in the postwar period, for example, has depended heavily on transportation services that use lavish amounts of energy and pollute the global commons. The way to reduce these and other side effects of trade, it is argued, is to assign more appropriate values to environmental resources, i.e., "full-cost" pricing (see Chapter 4). When resources are priced at less than their full social and environmental costs of extraction, transportation, and use, overuse and waste is encouraged. Yet in a trading system where many countries have become very dependent on trade, competitive pressures make it very difficult to "internalize" all the costs that should be counted, especially when others are unwilling to do so too. An obvious solution would be to coordinate initiatives internationally by allowing domestic producers, who are subject to stricter environmental standards, special protections from foreign competitors with laxer standards. In fact, economist Paul Hawken has proposed a new tariff status called "Most Sustainable Nation," providing low or no tariffs to trading nations that protect their environments and workers. [20]

Enhanced trade also raises serious questions about its effects on the economies of poor countries. The existing trading systems, many believe, tend to freeze the patterns of specialization that assign to the poorest countries the production and export of natural resources with slowly growing international demand. Weak demand for their exports has been worsened by the restrictions richer countries have placed on the ability of poor countries to "add value" to their natural resources through processing them into semifinished goods.[21] Trade also is seen in this view as widening inequalities within poor countries, as when land is unequally distributed and it is more profitable for big land owners to produce raw materials for users abroad than to grow food for the home market.

In short, these voices believe that trade—and possibly free trade—serves the interests of the rich but not of the poor. With a long history of easy access to cheap raw materials, the rich countries have established social structures and lifestyles that depend on the

continued exploitation of natural resources and on the continued underpricing of transportation. Thus, these doubters of free trade wonder if a better route than open international markets for many poor nations would be to decrease their dependence on the exports of commodities to the north and to gear more of their production to their own and their immediate neighbors' basic needs. This approach would protect some activities, on a carefully selected basis, from international competition. Such an approach has the advantage of allowing the use of "intermediate technology"—affordable, easily repairable, user-friendly, labor-intensive, and decentralized means of production,[22] which is appropriate to the social and economic conditions of many poor countries.

Not surprisingly, the task force reached only partial agreement on many questions of trade. Still, it shared a general moral framework for interpreting and deciding these questions. No nation should responsibly tolerate totally free trade for it would permit economic enterprises to act independent of the social matrix of accountability. They are part of a complex web of social and ecological responsibilities precisely because they exist in social and ecological relationships. Governments, as the social instruments of order and justice, have the responsibility to establish rules that protect the common good from abuse. This responsibility certainly includes setting the rules of trade to ensure fair competition among enterprises and nations without damaging society or nature. The real question is not whether protective means are justified, but what protective means—tariffs, subsidies, or other barriers to trade—are justified in given circumstances. The goal is not free trade, but just and sustainable trade.

It is essential that reduction of global poverty be a central moral consideration in trade debates—far more than it has been thus far. Trade rules that enable affluent nations to profit at the expense of poor nations or that do not contribute substantially to the reduction of poverty in all nations cannot be acceptable ethically.

E. MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Multinational corporations (MNCs) are major actors in the global economy. They account for most of international trade and they serve as the primary source of direct foreign investment in

developing countries. Their primary aim is to make profits, yet in the process, they often have increased employment, provided training, technology, and other forms of development assistance, while enhancing national incomes. Many have made commendable contributions to the economic development of some poor countries.

The corporate charters from which multinational corporations have evolved were designed to advance the interests of human societies and to hold in check the potential abuses that any concentration of power made possible. Yet as corporations have grown larger and become multinational, many have acquired powers that dwarf those of the governments that are meant to moderate their activities. Thus, as markets have become freer and more global, the power to govern—i.e., to control public policy and practice—has often passed from national governments to corporations whose interests may not coincide with a majority of citizens.23

Accordingly, their contributions are not always positive. Some MNCs have profited from activities that have done irreparable harm to host nations by destroying tropical forests, severely polluting rivers and lands, mining minerals with destructive techniques, uprooting indigenous peoples, and jeopardizing the health and safety of workers and communities. Poor nations have been used occasionally as cheap dumps for the industrialized nations' toxic wastes; as the sites of hazardous industries and technologies originating in the United States and other wealthy nations; and as the markets for pesticides like DDT, made but banned for use in the United States and elsewhere. To be sure, some of these activities probably were sanctioned by weak or corrupt government leaders whose interests accorded more with the corporations than with their own people. Even so, the idea of "free and informed consent" by the citizens of poor nations does not seem particularly relevant in such cases because risks are largely unknown, genuine alternatives are not sought, costs and benefits are unequally distributed, and bargaining powers are so uneven."

For more than twenty years, the United Nations led an effort to negotiate a "Code of Conduct for Transnational Corporations." Its intent was to restrict corporate behavior and impose universal conditions that would prevent profiting at the expense of poor nations and

peoples. But in 1992 the negotiations were abandoned when "market friendly" policies came into fashion, leaving MNCs free to invest wherever and however the patterns of prices and costs are attractive to them.

F. SPECULATIVE CAPITAL MOVEMENTS

The extremes of prosperity and poverty that have emerged in the global economy during the last few decades also are related to dramatic changes in the mobility of money and finance. Until recently, most international flows of foreign exchange have been used to facilitate international trade and direct investments of corporations in foreign countries. Speculative capital movements—money flows seeking to profit from minute differences in the rate of return in different geographic markets—though significant, were small by comparison.

That no longer is the case. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, of some $650 billion in foreign exchange transactions that are completed each day in New York, Tokyo, and London, more than 80 percent are for speculative purposes rather than to finance trade or investment.[z5] Using modern computers and telecommunications technology that recognize no national boundaries, currency speculators place their bets in dizzying amounts without full understanding of the potential effects of their actions on the societies whose currencies they are trading.

A globalized money system that recognizes no geographic boundaries tends to undermine the ability of each national government to control its money supply and influence the value of its money. This means that many governments end up with fewer policy options to control the level of employment and inflation at home, and even governments that retain substantial control of their monetary policy may be forced to set interest rates higher than desired in order to prevent the flight of capital out of their country.

A globalized money system also raises an important question about citizenship. In a political democracy, each person gets one vote. But in the market, each dollar buys one vote, and those with the most dollars get the most votes. Recently, this fact was indelibly impressed on the government and citizens of Mexico when actions

by the Mexican government to correct an overvalued exchange rate led to massive withdrawals of capital from the Mexican economy.

This and similar episodes have caused many governments to wonder whether some form of democratic control over speculative capital transfers might be developed as a quid pro quo for the public protection from domestic and foreign threats that such governments have offered foreign-owned capital. Wealth holders in other countries, they believe, should not be allowed to veto a set of policy reforms that were freely arrived at by the country's citizen representatives even while enjoying the normal civil protections of its society.

To be realistic, this technological and institutional genie cannot be put back into the bottle. A global money system of some sort is probably here to stay. Nevertheless, some boundary conditions on the freedom of speculative capital movements are currently being explored and should be encouraged. Perhaps the most radical reform would involve outright restrictions on speculative capital transfers with all their potential for abuse and corruption. A more moderate reform might include measures designed to regulate the timing of capital transfers or ones that increase the cost of speculative transactions." Similarly, a uniform tax might be imposed on intercurrency transactions.[27] Still another possibility would involve the introduction of controls on the trade accounts, e.g., import licensing that would assure a balance of imports and exports, thus removing the potential for flows of short-term debt instruments to settle trade imbalances."

G. ECONOMIC AID

America's generosity has declined in real terms. Measured in 1988 dollars, United States international development assistance averaged $35 billion during tile Marshall Plan years, held steady at about $22 billion annually until the mid 1970s, and then fell to about $15 billion. Recently, it has fallen to less than $10 billion. Even this amount of aid is significant, but it is only 0.2 percent of the United States GNP, less than all other industrialized nations."

In fact, most United States foreign aid is determined by United States military, geopolitical, and commercial interests rather than by

authentic expressions of need for development, such as improved primary education and health care. Very little of it goes to the poorest countries to eradicate hunger. Most of the aid given to Egypt and Israel, the largest recipients of United States aid, is meant to promote United States security and political interests. Such aid can, in fact, harm development if it contributes to militarism. Poverty was exacerbated, for example, when nations like Angola were helped to become superpower battlegrounds. Development assistance is also used to aid the United States economy by tying assistance to the purchase of United States goods and services.

Aid's effectiveness is hard to measure. Supporters of aid point to triumphs in certain countries such as health and nutrition improvements, crop yield increases, and improved transportation. Others point to countries like Sudan and Tanzania where poverty remains an intractable problem. Some critics also claim that aid's side effects—draining highly skilled people from more productive activities, increasing reliance on foreign investments, and expanding the role of government—may more than offset its benefits at the project level.

Presbyterian General Assemblies have often called on the United States government for substantially increased economic and technical assistance to poor countries, particularly in the form of human development grants rather than loans.[30] To be sure, it is extremely naive to suppose that the United States alone could provide sufficient aid to eliminate global poverty. But it is quite realistic to believe that significant and prudent economic and technical assistance from the United States and other developed countries can strengthen the skills and capacities of poor nations to support themselves. The real moral challenge is to multiply the quality and amount of assistance to those in greatest need.

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CHAPTER 3: OVERCONSUMPTION AND OVERPOPULATION

A. SCARCITY AND OVERCONSUMPTION

Perhaps the most significant link between prosperity and poverty is to be found in the idea of "scarcity." The question of scarcity is important because human populations and their economies are dependent upon the natural ecosystem. When the scale of human activity grows large relative to the biological system's carrying capacity, limits to growth become evident and actions must be sought to stabilize or reduce the amount of resources that are turned into waste.

How close are these limits to growth? It depends on whom you ask! Biologists are especially skeptical of our ability to continue growing indefinitely. The limits to growth are ecological, they say—limits imposed by a finite capacity of photosynthesis to support life. One respected study widely quoted in scientific journals,[1] for example, calculates that the human economy currently preempts 40 percent of the land-based net primary product of photosynthesis—perhaps only a generation away from the physical limit to further growth. Arguments of this sort usually lead to policy conclusions calling for an end to population growth and a cutting back on consumption, especially in wealthier societies.

Ask most economists whether the limits to growth are about to be reached, and you'll get a very different answer. Most economists admit that somewhere there are limits to exponential growth. But the primary cause of today's deteriorating environments, they say, is the inefficiency and waste that accompanies certain kinds of growth. The culprit is not growth itself but wrong policies and market "failures" that drive a wedge between scarcity and price, benefits and costs, rights and responsibilities, actions and consequences. Rather, the costs of growth should be borne by those who generate them, and not by general taxpayers, foreign debtors, or future generations.

Neither biologists nor economists provide a wholly satisfactory answer to the dilemmas of growth and scarcity. If relative ecological scarcity is our global condition, as the task force tends to believe, then the risks to future generations would be fewer and the options more numerous if the affluent moderate their consumption habits and if population growth stops sooner rather than later. The higher our consumption standards and the longer population growth continues, the more we create a particular set of problems: more rapid depletion of resources, greater pressures on the environment, more dependence on technology to solve these problems, and postponement of work on other problems.

If the world's actual and potential material goods are insufficient to tolerate both prosperity for some people and economic sufficiency for all, traditional Christian norms of distributive justice require sufficient reduction of consumption in the affluent nations to provide the material conditions for essential economic development in poor nations. Enough can be made available for all only if essential resources are used frugally and fairly by all. Indeed, on traditional Christian value assumptions, the deprivation of necessities for any is an issue of justice [Chapter 7] whether or not ecological scarcity is a reality, whether or not a causal relationship exists between prosperity and poverty.

B. A DANGEROUS PROGRESSION

The world's human population is now approximately 5.7 billion [1995]. It is expected to be more than 6.7 billion in 2005,[2] for the numbers added annually will soon be more than 100 million. Current projections indicate that the figure may rise to 8.5 billion by 2025 and more than 10 billion by 2050, if modest assumptions hold up. Some demographers expect human population to stabilize at 11 or 12 billion shortly after the end of the next century—or perhaps even earlier by social and ecological necessity. For historical comparison, human numbers reached one billion around 1800, after many millennia of reproduction; two billion by 1930; and three billion by 1960. We soon may be adding more than one billion per decade.

The numerical increases are occurring while birth rates (number of live births per 1000 population) and fertility rates (live births per

average woman of reproductive age) are declining in most parts of the world. Death rates also are declining most places because of welcome improvements in primary health care (e.g., immunizations), sanitation, and food production. Because persons of reproductive age make up a large and growing percentage of the population in many developing countries, the absolute numbers of births will grow even if the fertility rates continue to decline. [3]

Most population increases are expected in Africa, Asia, and particular countries of South and Central America—all areas of extreme poverty now. Africa's population is growing faster than that of any other continent, at the rate of 20 million more people per year. Its population is expected to climb toward 1.6 billion in 2025.[4] Asia's population, already half the world's total, will be approaching five billion by 2025. Fertility rates in Africa average 6 children per woman of reproductive age, compared to 3.2 in Asia, 2.1 in the United States, and 1.7 in all of Europe.[5]

Population expansion is a dangerous progression. It must be reversed to achieve social justice and ecological integrity. Overpopulation is a major threat to economic security and a cause of environmental degradation in many poor countries. These countries are losing the race between socioeconomic well-being and population expansion. Their dilemma is that as production increases, the rate of reproduction erodes all or much of the gain in output. Population growth exacerbates the problems of educational improvement, better nutrition, health care, housing, employment, sanitation, and urbanization. Megacities are emerging, creating massive municipal overburden. Overpopulation increases the vulnerability of these nations to natural disasters like floods and drought. It also increases the potential for social conflicts—now widespread in Africa—as growing numbers compete for static or shrinking resources. Migration flows rise as refugees flee worsening conditions, increasing tensions in other countries. Migration also leads to the disintegration of family life and to changes in values and lifestyles that make initiatives for sustainable living difficult.

Will food supplies—the very foundation of good health and well-being—be adequate in the future, or will they be overwhelmed by human numbers? Despite some optimistic predictions, the

answer to this question remains uncertain. Food sufficiency certainly will depend on successful agricultural research and a fairer method of distributing its results.[6] Even so, food production will need to double by the middle of the next century,[7] a daunting challenge when fish harvests already are declining and grain harvests give promise of falling behind population growth.[8]

Excessive population growth also accentuates every environmental problem. The earth has a limited carrying capacity, even with our amazing technological powers to improve output. Population can exceed that capacity, as it has done often in densely populated places but only for a while as resources are depleted. Increased demands for food and other basic needs can lead to excessive exploitation of nature's limited resources: the overuse of croplands and grazing lands, the reduction of fresh water supplies, the excessive consumption of energy resources like fuel wood, increased pollution, and the degradation of ecosystems along with the destruction of their species. Overpopulation is not the only cause of environmental degradation, but it often is a major contributor.

Population growth is a problem for both rich and poor nations. The reason is that each additional person in affluent nations consumes far more than the average person in poor nations. If population carrying capacity is sensitive to variations in per capita resource consumption, as the task force believed, the slowing of population growth is an urgent demand on *all* nations, including affluent nations like the United States that place greatest stress on the biosphere.

C. WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Family size is not simply a private matter—a question of how many children we want or can afford. It is also a social responsibility, as Presbyterian General Assemblies have long argued.[9] The question is what the world can afford—and the evidence increasingly indicates that the world may not afford North American levels of global resource consumption. If the nations are an interdependent community of moral equals, as the Christian ethical tradition has claimed, then patterns of reproduction and consumption must be considered together in assessing the responsibilities of nations.

The issue of overpopulation has troubled north and south government relations, partly because the nations of the south have resisted proposals that link financial and technical transfers from the north to adoption of adequate population policies in the south. Northern proponents of population "control" often have been accused by southern leaders of promoting racism, neocolonialism, and even genocide. At the 1992 United Nations' Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the south responded to the north by trying to link the issue of overpopulation to "excessive" consumption of the world's resources in the north. It argued that strategies of population stabilization must be accompanied by primary strategies for overcoming economic disparities. Thus, overpopulation raised many uncomfortable controversies and became the great neglected problem of UNCED.[10]

Undoubtedly, the case of the south has merit. Some proposals for population control have been racist, punitive, and paternalistic. These proposals have included the withdrawal of economic aid from nations with high fertility rates, compulsory abortion and sterilization, and some birth quota plans. Yet, not all proposals can be so branded, as many leaders from the southern countries have long acknowledged. The moral task is prevention as uncoercive as possible and without offense to human dignity.

What, then, are some effective and ethically reasonable means for preventing overpopulation? Contraception certainly must be a central focus of population policy. For more than thirty years, Presbyterian assemblies have endorsed artificial means of birth control as a right and their use as socially responsible.[11] Since overpopulation exacerbates other social and ecological problems, contraception is not only morally acceptable but also essential for the good of men and women and the common good of nations and nature. The right to birth control information, education, services, and means emerges from the demands of both social and ecological justice.

Population policy should focus on reproductive health, the empowerment of women, and the basic human rights and essential needs of all persons. In this way, an enabling environment can be

created that gives women and men a new basis for deciding whether and when they want to have children. Safe, effective, affordable, simple, and reversible means of contraception are necessary but not sufficient for effective population control.[12]

Unfortunately, the demand for family planning greatly exceeds its supply.[13] The United Nations' Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, September 1994) estimated that at least 120 million additional married women would adopt contraception if available and culturally acceptable.[14] Others have suggested that perhaps 300 million women in developing countries now want birth control that is not available to them.[15] Probably many more would want it if they understood its personal, social, and ecological relevance. Thus, there is an urgent need for easily affordable and universally accessible contraceptive education and means for women and men. Men must be included because they bear equal responsibility for procreation, and their attitudes are often controlling factors in the reproductive behavior of women in many countries. Significantly increased efforts in contraceptive research and development are also required. The 1994 Cairo Conference estimated the annual costs of these needs at $17 billion in 2000 and $21.7 billion in 2015, with one-third of these amounts coming from donor nations and organizations.[16]

Population stabilization needs to be part of a much broader strategy for socioeconomic justice. Socioeconomic conditions seem to be prime factors affecting fertility rates, with improvements in the quality of life clearly associated with reductions in the rates and numbers of births. Equality for women—in social status, political power, education, employment, health care, and nutrition, among other things—is critically important. The reproductive health of poor women in developing countries is a scandalous crisis in itself. Jodi L. Jacobson of the Worldwatch Institute describes below the situation:

> Taken together, illnesses and deaths from complications of pregnancy, childbirth, and unsafe abortion, from diseases of the reproductive tract, and from the improper use of contraceptive methods top the list of health threats to women of reproductive age worldwide. At least one million women will die of reproductive causes this year [1992], and more than 100 million others will suffer disabling illnesses.[17]

Demographer Partha S. Dasgupta adds another startling note below:

> In some parts of sub-Saharan Africa as many as one woman dies for every 50 live births. . . . At a total fertility rate of seven or more, the chance that a woman entering her reproductive years will not live through them is about one in six. [18]

The improved status of women should have a variety of benefits, including a decline in the appallingly high rates of maternal and infant mortality, as well as in fertility rates.

Improved economic security for all citizens of poor nations should have similar benefits. According to demographic transition theory, poverty breeds more people in poor countries, since large families provide a means of economic assistance in family production and security in old age. Improved incomes, nutrition, housing, health, education, employment, and social security, then, should decrease the need for more children.[19] Even so, socioeconomic justice is valuable in itself and should be pursued independent of its demographic effects.

Substantial economic and technical assistance from the northern countries will be necessary to help assure these changes and avert the dangers of overpopulation.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 4: ECOLOGICAL DEGRADATION

Ecological degradation creates a set of interwoven problems that adversely affect humans and other living things in our many relationships. These problems should be understood as dimensions both of a global social crisis and global ecological crisis.

Ecological problems were explored in some depth by the Presbyterian Eco-Justice Task Force in its report to the 202nd General Assembly (1990), *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice*. To avoid unnecessary repetition, this chapter will highlight only those ecological problems that are most directly relevant to just and sustainable human development on a global scale. It will stress particularly the connections of ecological degradation with poverty, overpopulation, and overconsumption.

Robert D. Kaplan, in a much-debated article, describes the emerging ecological context of development in a way that is both unnerving and largely convincing:

> It is time to understand "the environment" for what it is: *the* national-security issue of the early twenty-first century. The political and strategic impact of surging populations, spreading disease, deforestation and soil erosion, water depletion, air pollution, and, possibly, rising sea levels in critical, overcrowded regions like the Nile Delta and Bangladesh—developments that will prompt mass migrations and, in turn, incite group conflicts—will be the core foreign policy challenge from which most others will ultimately emanate, arousing the public and uniting assorted interests left over from the Cold War. [1]

A. POLLUTION

Pollution is a generic term that refers to the harmful effects on humans and other living things of depositing waste products in ecosystems beyond their assimilative capacities. Thus, pollution includes oil spills and other hazardous discharges from industrial sources; acid rain from smelters and coal-burning utilities; ozone depletion; human-induced climate change; radiation from nuclear

waste; pesticides and fertilizers used in agriculture and private lawn care; wastes from mining; dumped toxic chemicals; human excrement; and tons of so-called "solid" waste, often mixed with toxins.

The multiple and serious effects of pollution—millions of deaths and a host of impairments among humans and other species and their habitats—makes pollution a serious moral offense.

Pollution, moreover, is not only a local or regional problem; it has transnational, even global effects. Transboundary pollution, such as the acid rain that kills aquatic life, forests, and crops in lands far removed from its points of origin, is a common problem. The tens of thousands of toxic substances created and used in the industrialized nations cannot be kept at home in an ecologically interdependent world; they are carried in the world's one atmosphere and water system to remote places. Human tissues examined in one hemisphere often are found to contain chemical contaminants produced in the other hemisphere.

The planet's poorest people bear the heaviest burdens of pollution. Commercial agriculture, for example, has become chemically dependent from the Green Revolution, and pesticide poisonings have mounted dangerously in the nations of the south. According to the World Health Organization, occupational pesticide poisoning may affect as many as 25 million, or 3 percent, of the agricultural workforce each year in the south. In Africa alone, where some 80 percent of the populace is involved in agriculture, as many as 11 million cases of acute pesticide exposure occur each year.[2] More than 200,000 deaths result worldwide from these poisonings annually.[3] Ignorance of the risks from agricultural chemicals and of the means to minimize them are typical among workers, often as a consequence of illiteracy. Even pesticides like DDT and chlordane that are banned from use in the United States are exported to poor countries, contaminating their ecosystems and persons.

Hazardous industries, sometimes dominated by multinational corporations, often are located in the communities of the global poor, because the emission controls and precautions against accidents that are required in politically developed nations are weak or wholly absent in these communities. The disaster at the Union Carbide Plant

in Bhopal, India, in 1984, for example, led to at least 2,500 deaths and perhaps 45,000 serious injuries. The Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster caused widespread, long-term environmental damage along with radiation illness and the loss of human lives. Poorly enforced environmental regulations and policies by the former governments of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have left contaminated water, air, and land problems far beyond the budgetary capability of the current governments to resolve in the near future. United States military bases abroad also have been a significant source of toxic contaminants, adversely affecting the water, soil, and public health of poor nations like the Philippines.[4]

The export of toxic and solid wastes to poor countries, which usually lack the technical and administrative capacities to handle them, also has grown recently. Prosperity in industrialized nations produces an abundance of hazardous byproducts far beyond their political capacities to tolerate them at home. Thus, "waste colonialism," as the Dutch minister of environment described it, has emerged.[5] In the process, "the rich get richer and the poor get poisoned"[6] but not without the resistance of some developing nations, which are pushing for a total ban on such exports. North-south tension over this practice is illustrated by the fact that two chapters in UNCED's *Agenda 21* were devoted to it.[7]

Finally, mining of minerals in developing countries has often caused massive pollution of soils and waters and the poisoning of local inhabitants. Gold mining provides a vivid example:

> Since 1979, when the price of gold soared to an all-time high of $850 per ounce, a gold rush has swept the world. Waves of gold seekers have invaded remote areas in Brazil, other Amazonian countries, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Zimbabwe. Dramatic environmental damage has resulted. Hydraulic mining has silted rivers and lakes, and the use of mercury—an extremely toxic metal that accumulates in the food chain and causes neurological problems and birth defects—to capture gold from sediment has contaminated wide areas. Miners release an estimated 100 tons of mercury into the Amazon ecosystem each year.[8]

B. INTERNATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

The abuse of poor people by actions that pollute their environments points to a serious weakness in the methods used by some

governments and corporations to assess environmental risk. When evaluating the probability of adverse outcomes from, say the export of pesticides or the depositing of wastes, polluters usually give inadequate consideration to the stakes of all parties in the outcome. Risk assessments are often insufficiently inclusive and unjust. The economic interests of major producers like chemical companies and agribusinesses are normally given precedence over the concerns of the poor in other nations.

If all people on this planet are moral equals, responsibilities cannot stop at the water's edge. Ethically acceptable environmental impact assessments relating to various pollutants must give fair consideration to their global consequences in a socially and ecologically interdependent world. Indeed, if protecting the health of the poor should be preferred to providing luxuries for the affluent, as the Christian ethical tradition has argued, then national and international regulations to prevent these abuses are imperative.

C. FULL-COST PRICING

Until recently, most approaches to pollution control have involved direct regulation by governments of the quantity of pollution allowed by the individual sources that generate it. Direct control tends to be costly, however, and it is increasingly ineffective as pollution sources have multiplied. This is why the principal alternative approach—that of using market forces in the form of economic incentives to reduce pollution—now is receiving widespread attention in both developed and developing countries.

Market forces do not ordinarily reflect all the social and environmental costs of economic activity. They often fail to integrate these costs into economic decisions at either the business or the government level because it is so easy to pass them on to others. Consider, as an example, the costs passed on by a coal-fired power plant in the form of pollution that damages human health, kills forests, acidifies lakes, and corrodes buildings. These costs—and many like them—are called "externalities" because they do not enter into cost calculations at their source. Yet they are genuine costs to others and to the society.

The idea of market incentives to reduce pollution is based on the so-called "polluter pays principle" popularized by the World Commission on Environment and Development[9] and embodied in the Rio Declaration of UNCED[10]. Under this regime, polluters pay a financial penalty for higher levels of pollution and pay a lesser penalty, or receive a reward, for lower pollution levels. It is a system of economic incentives and disincentives for businesses, governmental agencies, and even individuals to pursue efficiency, conservation, and technological innovation. "The goal," argues Stephan Schmidheiny for the Business Council for Sustainable Development, "should be price-induced conservation by the consumer and cost-induced innovation by the producers of energy and energy-consuming products."[11]Paul Hawken adds, "The purpose of a green tax is to give people and companies positive incentives to avoid them." [12]

Thus, "full-cost pricing" is essentially an effort to "internalize" all costs of producing and consuming a product. The true costs of production should be measured to include not only the usually reported costs of a business or governmental entity, but also the costs of externalities that damage the environment and may lead to countervailing public expenditures for, say, health-care and clean-up costs. If producers were encouraged through various economic incentives to count all costs as costs of production, they would search harder for more efficient ways of organizing production. Then, too, they no doubt would set prices at levels more commensurate with total costs, goading consumers into more environmentally sensitive decisions about what and how much to buy.

The applications of full-cost pricing are certainly not limited to the problems of pollution. They are equally applicable to the problems of controlling erosion, reducing the chemical dependency of agriculture, fostering sustainable forestry,[13] rationing scarce mineral resources, and even preserving a sense of security in local communities.

To be sure, it is rarely possible to get costs and prices fully right, since the social and ecological costs are usually so complex that they are impossible to calculate accurately. How can one accurately assess the impact of certain sources of pollution on the depletion of ozone

in the atmosphere, for example, or calculate the effects of toxic dumping on human health? Still, it is possible, and often desirable, to construct a system of incentives—including taxes, charges, subsidies, deposit refunds, or financial enforcements—that is sufficient to move producers and consumers in the desired direction, even if the price is far less than "right." The task of moving the world's markets toward a system of full cost-pricing—a task already well underway—must move forward despite imperfect knowledge and inadequate tools.

Revenues collected by governments and other agencies from the implementation of full-cost pricing methods can be used to finance expenditures for certain purposes, such as environmental law enforcement, environmental rehabilitation, and compensation to parties unjustly injured by the imposition of higher prices.

Almost inevitably, implementation of full-cost pricing will raise the prices of many goods and services that are included among the basic needs of poor people. Too often, this fact receives only casual reference in proposals for full-cost pricing. Yet the prevention of economic harm to the poor ought to be a central concern of any ethically responsible solution to pollution and other ecological problems. Hence any system of full-cost pricing must be accompanied by a system of rebates and fiscal transfers designed to insulate the poor from its adverse effects.

Market incentives certainly are not the only way to achieve the objectives of full-cost pricing. Businesses and governments can be encouraged to internalize environmental costs through direct public regulations that set performance standards for technologies and products as well as for effluents and emissions. Producing entities also can be urged to engage in self-regulation by setting standards for environmental protection and monitoring compliance. The task in every country—developed and less developed—is to strike the right balance of regulations, self-regulation, and economic incentives to achieve a more environmentally benign pattern of production and consumption decisions.

Ultimately, of course, countries must develop systems of environmental protection that are harmonized internationally, lest

businesses and governmental entities in particular countries are allowed to steal a competitive advantage in the international marketplace by enforcing less rigorous standards of protection.

D. RESOURCE EXHAUSTION

A fundamental fact of human existence is that we live on a finite planet. Yet prevailing economic behavior seems to assume the practical inexhaustibility of the capacities of nature.[14] Economic systems—indeed, all social systems—cannot be sustained unless ecological systems are sustained, because human welfare depends on the productivity and dynamic diversity of the natural world.

Nonrenewable resources include fossil fuels and industrially significant minerals like iron, copper, and bauxite. By definition., they will eventually run out or become too costly to extract. At present, the resource base of most industrially significant metals is adequate_ certainly if measured in decades. New discoveries occur regularly and new technologies now make extractions of some deposits cost-effective. Increased recycling reduces the need for new ores.[15] But if significant growth in the consumption of these minerals continues, market-based shortages and increased costs may occur sooner rather than later.

Market-based shortages are not an adequate indicator of environmental scarcity, however.[16] Current market prices made higher by temporary shortages tell us only about near-term demand and supply conditions: they rarely anticipate the longer-term effects of resource depletion. By waiting to recognize environmental scarcity, it probably will be too late to conserve nonrenewable resources for the sake of future generations.

To be sure, human technology can help extend the availability of nonrenewable resources. Recycling is now widespread. Substitution of one mineral for another is technologically possible in some cases—like fiber optics for copper. Renewable resources sometimes can be substituted for nonrenewables. But substitutes are not assured and technology is not alchemy.[17] While technological innovations are truly impressive and will be indispensable to the tasks of achieving just and sustainable development, it is well to remember that

technology, too, is subject to biophysical limits. There really is no substitute for the conservation of nonrenewable resources.

Renewable resources like fisheries, forests, and soils periodically regenerate themselves. But they can become nonrenewable when pushed beyond their bounds of tolerance. Currently, many of the world's renewable resources—particularly those that are biologically based are declining from unsustainable levels of use.

Croplands in many places are degrading and disappearing. The recent emergence of agricultural systems highly dependent on fossil fuel for cultivation, seeding, pest management, and harvesting—such as in the United States—has resulted in a serious erosion of the land's long-term sustainability. As developing countries try to emulate our chemically-dependent methods of farming, destabilization of heretofore well-balanced systems is occurring at an alarming rate.

> Intensified farming to boost crop yields has wrought widespread degradation in China's soils . . . . Erosion, poor crop rotation, over-fertilization and the loss of organic content of soils that once flourished from manure-based farming have brought a new plague to the land. So has an uncontrollable level of industrial pollution. Moreover, the country's rapid development has ignited wasteful patterns of land use.[18]

As the demand for food crops climbs with the growth of world population, choices must be made between bringing new land into cultivation or enhancing the productivity of existing croplands. Given the critical importance of preserving biological diversity and wildlife habitat, expanding onto new lands that are also quite fragile seems unwise. Rather, effort must be concentrated on increasing yield per acre on lands already committed to agriculture and forestry. This means embracing integrated pest management strategies vigorously; developing crop species and varieties increasingly efficient in the use of water, light, nutrients, and space; responsible rotation of both crops and chemicals; and, above all else, exercising wise stewardship of the soil, our most precious food-producing resource.

Potable water is becoming increasingly scarce in many places. More than one billion people in the south lack water that is safe for drinking and cooking. And in some places, particularly Africa, the

Middle East, and South Asia, its relative scarcity may be leading to violence:

> In many parts of the world, the most sought-after resource will not be agricultural land, but water. A growing number of countries are reaching the point where the availability of water will seriously constrain agricultural expansion and industrial development. Within countries, quarrels over the availability of water will sour relations between country and town. And where watersheds are shared by several countries, the availability of water will become a source of political tension.[19]

Fisheries, a prime source of animal protein in many developing countries, show dangerous signals of unsustainable catches. The problem is global. All of the world's major fishing areas apparently have reached or exceeded the limits of sustainability, including the once-bounteous coasts of New England and Newfoundland, where the main fishing banks are now closed. The world catch has been declining since the peak year of 1989 after nearly a fivefold increase since 1950.[20] The coastal nations of the south have been particularly hard hit by overfishing for export by foreign fleets.[21] The destruction of coastal wetlands, the principal nursery of marine life, has also contributed to reduced harvests.

The above illustrations are sufficient to show that the present generation is living beyond its planetary means. It is maximizing current benefits, particularly for the affluent, at the expense of future generations. Responsible economic decision makers should be stressing not only efficiency and equity in the use of the earth's resources, but also frugality and sustainability.

E. BIODIVERSITY

Biologists now estimate that somewhere between 10 million and 100 million species of plants and animals—from sponges to elephants, from algae to redwoods—exist on the planet. The actual figure is not even close to being known.[22] Taxonomists have classified significantly less than two million, and little is known about most of them, particularly their ecosystemic interactions.

Major losses in this rich biodiversity are occurring and are certain to increase in the coming century. The distinguished biologist,

E. 0. Wilson, has calculated that the rapid degradation of tropical rain forests, where perhaps half of the probable species resides, will extinguish at least 5 to 10 percent of the species in that habitat alone in the next thirty years. By the end of the next century, the extinction rate for the planet as a whole could be 20 to 50 percent,[23] reducing still further the genetic diversity—and survival power—of all species. Even now, three-fourths of the world's bird species are declining in population or threatened.[24] Once extinct, a species is gone forever. The present scale of human-induced extinction is unprecedented. These losses are a moral crisis.

The causes of these losses in biodiversity are numerous. Every dimension of the global social and ecological crisis—pollution, overpopulation, economic inequality, resource exhaustion—takes a heavy toll, and climate change may significantly increase the risk. Some species, like African elephants and leopards, are jeopardized by overhunting and poaching to provide luxury goods for the affluent. So, too, are other species that provide exotic foods to those who can afford them. Commercial fish species have declined drastically because of overfishing, as have other species, like seals and seabirds that get caught in drift nets. Many species are threatened by the introduction of alien species, which prey on or compete with native species.

Yet, the major direct cause of the decline of species is the destruction and degradation of habitats—the essential and highly particularized systems of existence for all nonhuman species. No habitat—not grasslands, tropical or temperate forests, tundra, mangrove swamps, coral reefs, estuaries, oceans—or species is safe from unsustainable production and consumption. Under the pressures of overpopulation, maldistribution, and economic expansion, natural habitats are being converted for "development." The ecologically diverse and fragile tropical rainforests, for example, are now being burned, bulldozed, and logged for cattle ranches, mines, hydroelectric projects, exotic woods, and subsistence farms on nutrient-poor soils for desperately poor settlers. In the process, indigenous peoples are often displaced from their homelands—a tragic loss to the sustainable use of their ecosystems.

What strategies are required to protect biodiversity? Stabilizing human population is critically important. So, too, is ending current

patterns of production and consumption in industrialized societies. Yet another important strategy is to ensure economic sufficiency for the poor: "poverty alleviation is the only feasible or ethically tenable means of protecting natural areas in the long term."[25]

Central to the sustainability of agriculture is the protection needed for its genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. Much of the variety of living organisms and habitats that are important to agriculture is found in the developing countries of the south, where indiscriminate expropriation and destruction of these irreplaceable genes and ecosystems have been accelerating. A new strategy must be found to engage the developing world in a full and trusting partnership to ensure the protection and rejuvenation of biological diversity. A key component of this partnership must be attention to the fate of chemical inputs and waste products that are known to damage biodiversity, and thus to the stability of agricultural systems.

Biodiversity has immense, still largely untapped potential for human well-being, both present and future. Species and their genetic adaptations can make major contributions to agriculture, medicine, and industry. Tropical forests are sometimes described as pharmaceutical laboratories, offering the potential for new drugs derived from plants and animals. New foodstuffs and new sources of paper are emerging from wild plants. Other species are "unmined riches,"[26] sources of long-term human welfare, which far surpass any short-term gains from extinguishing them.

No part of God's creation has value only in relation to human needs and human understanding. The natural sciences are teaching us that as humans we depend on our life-sustaining relations to atmosphere, soil, vegetation, and a great prolixity of nonhuman species. These, in turn, are dependent upon each other so that, as the theologian H. Richard Niebuhr pointed out, hardly anything in creation has value only in itself or in a single value-relation.[27] Oak trees help produce the oxygen that we breathe but also the acorns on which squirrels feed. We practice a kind of idolatry when we think of trees as valuable only because they produce lumber for us, or money, or shade for our picnics.

This dense interdependence of the parts of God's creation should make us modest about our right and our ability to intrude upon the

ecosystem or even to understand how, in fact, the parts are valuable to each other. On the one hand, we are not to practice an ecological reverence that presumes to avoid all alterations of the environment. All creatures impose burdens upon their environment, and competition for survival has historically led to the destruction of some species, quite apart from human interference. There is mystery in the desolations that God seems to allow, if not to ordain, in the history of earth. For example, probably the largest source of air pollution in the world is still volcanos. How volcanos serve the purposes of God for this earth seems to defy both science and theology. A theologically based sense of stewardship moves us to protect other creatures, whether or not they are useful to our economy, our political power, or even our own survival. As frequently claimed in this paper, respect for our Creator implies respect for the creation. Out of that respect our care should grow, not only for the value of other species to us, but for their value to each other and, supremely, their value to the One who created us all.

Our challenge is both to reduce poverty and preserve biodiversity. Both humans and nonhumans are wronged when human problems of poverty are resolved by destroying nonhuman species and habitats. These moral dilemmas are best resolved by confronting directly the prime sources of poverty and the loss of biodiversity: overconsumption by an economic elite, overpopulation, and economic maldistribution.

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CHAPTER 5: THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS

While Christian theology cannot provide us with precise policy instructions, it can provide what is more important for free and responsible agents: an enlightening and empowering perspective or worldview. Our theological expressions of the faith are our fundamental resource—literally our guidance system. They describe the source of our spiritual energy and hope. They reveal our ultimate values and the roots of our ethical norms. They are our framework of meaning and our interpreters of reality. They shape how we perceive and judge the "signs of the times" (Matt. 16:3, NRSV),

In this chapter, the goal is to make our ultimate values and their moral derivatives clear and explicit. What is the value system by which we interpret the signs of the times, and on which we ought to structure our policy evaluations and directions?

A. GOD'S WORLD AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITIES

The first statement of the classical creeds is that God is the Maker of heaven and earth. This is an affirmation of divine sovereignty, universal providence, creaturely dependence—and human responsibility. Nothing in creation is independent of God; nothing is equated with God. God is the sole source and providential benefactor of all being. God alone is the ultimate and universal proprietor: "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and all those who live in it" (Ps. 24:1, NRSV; cf. Pss. 50:12; 146:57). Thus, no part of the creation—whether other humans, other species, even the elements of soil and water is our property to use as we wish. They are to be treated in accord with the values and ground rules of God, the ultimate owner.

These values and ground rules are rooted in the fact that creation is an expression of God's divine grace and faithful loving kindness. God is love. Love is the foundation and goal of all being. This radical affirmation is the center of the doctrine of creation as well as every

other core doctrine of the Christian faith, from covenant to redemption. Since God is love, the process and products of creation are expressions of love, and all living creatures are recipients of ongoing love.

The moral implication for all living beings of this divine love is that all deserve to be treated with appropriate care and concern. Christians are called to love what God loves. Thus, in imitation of Jesus, our definitive exemplar of divine love, and in response to the empowering grace of the Spirit, the Christian life is to be "faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6, NRSV)—and that is to be "not far" from the Reign of God (Mark 12:28-34, NRSV).

The doctrine of creation reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is not to the nationalistic and human-centered values of our culture, but rather to the values of the Source and Sustainer of Value, the loving Maker of heaven and earth.

From this perspective, the doctrine of creation is also a strong antidote to idolatry. Modern idolatries are often encountered in economic forms, as in the New Testament's warnings about the spiritual perils of prosperity.[1] Jesus offers a radical critique of the idolatries commonly associated with wealth, evident particularly in the parables of the rich, hoarding fool (Luke 12:15-21), and the rich youth (Matt. 19:16-24; Luke 18:18-25), as well as in his teachings about alleviating materialistic anxiety (Luke 12:22-33; Matt. 6:25-33). Our treasures are indicators of our ultimate values, and wherever these values are incompatible with the values created by God, there is idolatry. We are devoted to false gods when we lavish confidence in technology to save us from our ecological follies; we seek plenty obsessively; we engage in compulsive and competitive consumption; and we commit ourselves to Economic Fate—that makes prosperity for some and poverty for others inevitable. Indeed, as the prophets regularly argued, idolatry is vanity and stupidity (Isa. 40:12-28; 44:9-20; 46:1-11; cf. Acts 14:15). God is sovereign and is smashing our false gods.

The creation is also "good"—in fact, "very good," according to Genesis 1 (NRSV). It is good, apart from human values (Ps. 104) and independent of human interests. It is good not in the sense that evil

is absent, which it clearly is not, but in the sense that the creation is an expression of the goodness of the Creator, that it is intensely valued by God in all its moral ambiguity, that it functions in accord with the divine design, that it is an appropriate habitat for humanity and all other beings in our interdependent relationships, and that it serves God's redemptive purposes for all created being. Thus, God values biophysical reality and the needs of every form of life, human and otherwise. The planet has been created as a habitat to be shared by all. God's compassionate concern covers the whole.

This affirmation of the biophysical is prominent also in the doctrines of the incarnation and the presence of the Spirit. In the incarnation "the Word became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14, NRSV). In the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, we have encountered the saving Christ. The incarnation confers dignity not only on humanity but on everything with which humanity is united in biophysical interdependence. The incarnation opens the eye of faith to a new vision of the whole.

Moreover, in the church's experience of the Spirit, the world is filled with the glory of God (Isa. 6:3; Ps. 19:1; Eph. 4:6). God is not only beyond but in the creation as the vivifying, reconciling, liberating, and sanctifying presence of the Spirit. Indeed, God is intimate with the creation, experiencing the joys and agonies of all creatures (Rom. 8:19-25). The whole creation is thereby endowed with value and dignity by association with the sacred. It is to be valued as it is valued by God, who chose to be present within it.

Thus, on the basis of our Christian interpretations of creation, incarnation, and the Spirit, biophysical realities have great moral significance. They are worthy of appropriate care and concern. Materiality is affirmed; material needs are not to be denied or transcended. Contempt for the material or biophysical is a false spirituality that is alien to the Reformed tradition. There must be no indifference to hunger, poverty, and disease; human physical well-being matters! Nor should there be neglect of ecological integrity. While humans need to use other forms of life as resources, we also have responsibilities to use these resources fairly and frugally, to minimize harm to other living things, and to ensure sufficiency for all human communities, present and future. Therefore, wanton

pollution, profligate consumption, human-induced extinctions, and excessive differences in economic well-being are sins—all because the God who is Creator, Redeemer, and Spirit affiliates lovingly with all of creation.

B. IMAGE OF GOD AND DOMINION

The moral status of human beings is enhanced by the claim of the Christian church, based on Genesis 1:26-28, that humans are created in the image of God. That is a great honor—and a great responsibility.

The concept of the image of God provides a basis for Christian affirmations of the dignity of individuals, human rights, and democratic procedures. It suggests that human beings have a God-given dignity and worth that unite humanity in a universal covenant of rights and responsibilities—the family of God. All humans are entitled to the essential conditions for expressing their human dignity and for participation in defining and shaping the common good. These rights include satisfaction of basic biophysical needs (e.g., adequate nutrition, shelter, and health care), environmental safety, full participation in political and economic life, and the assurance of fair treatment and equal protection of the laws. These rights define our responsibilities in justice to one another, nationally and—because they are human rights—internationally.

The image of God also entails social and ecological responsibilities—and here dangerous distortions of the concept have arisen in modern cultures. The image is linked in Genesis 1:26-28 with dominion, which the divine images are called to exercise in relation to all other life-forms. This idea has raised the important question of whether dominion is a license for the destruction of nature or a mandate for its just and benevolent care and use. While dominion has been interpreted as a divine grant to prey on the rest of nature without restraints, we regard dominion to mean the entire stewardship of nature. In premodern Christianity, including the times of our Presbyterian forebears in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, dominion was interpreted as a command against tyrannical abuse and for benevolent guardianship.[2]

A careful exegesis of Genesis 1 does not suggest domination or despotism. Approval for the exercise of unlimited power is absolutely foreign to Scripture. Humans are creatures subject to divine dominion. The land is God's, entrusted to humanity to "till it and keep it" (Gen. 2:15, NRSV) in accord with God's rules—rules that even include a soil conservation mandate to let the land rest every seven years (Lev. 25:3-5; Ex. 23:10-11). Earthly rulers are subject to the rules of God's justice; they are the guardians of the good (Psalm 72). Thus, human oppression distorts the image of God and usurps divine sovereignty. [3]

In contrast, humans act in the image of God when they are responsible representatives.[4] We are to "subdue" the earth only to the extent necessary to protect important human interests like nutrition, health, and creativity, and to do so in accord with the values of God's dominion. To be in the image of God is a vocation or calling, based on the biological fact that humans alone have evolved the peculiar capacity to represent, in modest caring ways, God's care for the Creation. We are called to be protectors of the biosphere and frugal consumers of the world's goods for the sake of just distribution among all humanity and other life-forms.

The New Testament understanding of the image of God enhances this social and ecological responsibility. Christ is the perfection of the image and the paradigm of dominion (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3; John 1:14-18). Christians are to mirror the reconciling love of Christ (Eph. 5:1-2). Humanity is to reflect that love in relationships with all that God loves. This means to live out the image and the responsibility with nurturing and serving love.[5] We are called to be faithful stewards, but only so long as stewardship is understood as just and benevolent service on behalf of the interests of both human and nonhuman kind.

C. JUSTICE IN COVENANT

The rights and responsibilities associated with the image of God are inextricably tied to the stress on justice in Scripture and tradition. Love is seeking the well-being of others in response to their needs and to the God who is love, and justice is an indispensable dimension of love. Love is not present without the fair treatment of others

and full respect for their rights. We render to others their due because of our loving respect for their God-given dignity and value. Distributive justice must be a critical focus of our global social and ecological responsibilities.

The God portrayed in Scripture is the "lover of justice" (Ps. 99:4, NRSV; cf. Pss. 33:5; 37:28; 11:7; Isa. 30:18; 61:8; Jer. 9:24). In sympathetic response to the groanings of Hebrew slaves (Ex. 2:23-24), the God "who executes justice for the oppressed" and "gives food to the hungry" (Ps. 146:7, NRSV) pushed Moses to become the liberator, smashed the shackles of Pharaoh, and led the people to a new homeland. God's deliverance became the paradigm of justice for Israel and continues to be so for us.

The covenants between God and the liberated people were understood largely as God's laws for right relationships. They established a moral responsibility on the part of the society and its members to deal fairly with participants in the covenant and to provide for the basic needs of all. They also served as an expression of loyalty to their Liberator and as a condition for harmony (shalom) in the community (Isa. 32:17). Injustice was a violation of the covenant and an act of faithlessness. In the light of the covenant, to know God is to do justice (Jer. 22:13-16; Micah 6:8). Indeed, justice in the prophetic tradition is a spiritual discipline, an act of worship, without which the value of other spiritual disciplines—prayer, fasting, sacrifice—are negated (Isa. 58:1-10; Amos 5:21-24; Hos. 6:6). Isaiah reminds us of the following:

> Is not this the fast that I choose:
> to loose the bonds of injustice,
> to undo the thongs of the yoke,
> to let the oppressed go free,
> and to break every yoke?
> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
> and bring the homeless poor into your house;
> when you see the naked, to cover them,
> and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
> Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
> and your healing shall spring up quickly .
>
> (Isa. 58:6-8a, NRSV)

Faithfulness to covenant relationships demands a justice that recognizes special obligations, "a preferential option" to widows, orphans, the poor, and aliens—in other words, the economically vulnerable and politically oppressed (Ex. 23:6-9; Deut. 15:4-11; 24:14-22; Jer. 22:16; Amos 2:6-7; 5:10-12). This tradition of concern for the weak and poor was embodied in the idea of the Jubilee Year (Lev. 25). The Jubilee Year prevented unjust concentrations of power and poverty by requiring the return of property every fifty years. Similarly, the Year of Release (Deut. 15:1-18) provided amnesty for debtors and liberation of indentured servants every seven years.

The Noachic or Rainbow Covenant (Gen. 9:8-17) suggests a set of right relationships with the rest of nature. Following the Flood, God pledged to be inclusively and perpetually faithful by preserving all species and their habitats. This "ecological covenant,"[6] along with the story of the ark, seems to recognize the interdependence of all creatures. It also suggests that the Creator's purpose is to provide living space for all organisms so that all may share the earth together.[7] The divine promise always entails human obligations because faithfulness to God means loyalty to God's covenants. Ecological negligence, then, is defiance of God's care for all creatures, human communities, and future generations.[8] Although the ecological covenant was infrequently emphasized in Israel's life, (Deut. 22:6-7, 10; Ex. 23:12), it needs emphasis in contemporary Christian life, as the "always-reforming" community of God seeks new understanding of the theological meaning of ecological degradation.

The commitment to justice also is clearly visible in the New Testament. Jesus was certainly in the prophetic tradition of Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea when he denounced those who "tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others" (Matt. 23:23, NRSV; cf. Luke 11:42). Similarly, Matthew's gospel recalls the prophets in its description of divine judgment. Christ comes to us in the form of people suffering from deprivation and oppression, soliciting just and compassionate responses. Individuals and nations will be judged on the basis of their care for the "have nots" (Matt. 25:31-46).

The Reign of God, the central theme in Jesus' preaching, should probably be understood as the fulfillment of the prophetic vision of justice and other dimensions of love (Matt. 5:3-12, 6:33; Luke 6:20-31). Jesus incarnates concern for the rights and needs of the poor, befriending and defending the dispossessed and the outcasts. The Magnificat of Mary (Luke 1:52-53) and Jesus' reading from Isaiah (61:1-2) in the temple (Luke 4:16-21) stress social and economic justice; they seem to be attempts of the early Church to define the exemplary ministry of Jesus and, thus, the ministry of the Church itself as the pursuit of justice. The suffering servant, with whom the Church traditionally has identified Jesus, is the one who proclaims "justice to the nations" (Isa. 42:1-4; Matt. 12:18).

Justice is disclosed as inclusive in the New Testament witness, particularly in the ministry of Jesus. Universality is a central feature of love in general and justice in particular. Love (including justice) cannot be limited to one's social, cultural, national, or ecclesiastical tribe. It punctures all forms of parochialism. Universality is symbolized by the call to love our neighbors, including our enemies (Luke 6:32-36; Matt. 5:43-48); to be "kind to the ungrateful and the wicked" (Luke 6:35, NRSV); and to bind the wounds of foes in distress.

From this perspective, communal identity is found not in bloodlines nor culture, but rather through Jesus Christ, in whom is the dignity and equality that unites humanity in a covenant of rights and responsibilities—the family of God (John 1:12-13), God's reconciling love as shown through Christ's death for our sin and His resurrection life, offered to us, breaks down the humanly constructed walls that partition us into alienated peoples and nations (Eph. 2:14). It is the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3, NRSV).

Though concepts of justice are not applied explicitly to nonhuman life in the biblical texts, there are sound reasons why this extension should occur in our time—notably, to represent the all-encompassing compassion of God. Since God's love is unbounded, Christian interpretations and applications of that love should be similarly unbounded. God also cares for the sparrows (Matt. 12:6; Luke 10:29), the lilies (Matt. 6:28-30; Luke 12:27), and all other flora and fauna (Ps. 104).

Justice is at the ethical core of the biblical message. It is a moral imperative for Christians, especially in our time. Justice demands that we focus especially on meeting the needs of the poor and oppressed, both domestically and globally. As the Roman Catholic bishops emphasized in their 1986 pastoral message, *Economic Justice for All,* economic policies and systems must be evaluated by how they affect the dignity of all individuals in communal solidarity, particularly "the least, the lost, and the left-out."[9] We add the following: In light of the universality of the covenant, justice for the abused must be extended to those of future generations and to nonhuman life. The covenant of justice we are called to incarnate includes all creatures in all situations, national and global, present and future. Thus, economic policies and systems must also be evaluated socially and ecologically on the basis of their benefits and harms to the well-being of all in our interdependent relationships.

D. SIN AND JUDGMENT

The Reformed tradition has been realistic, sometimes luridly so, about human capacities for sin. Like other Christian traditions, the Reformed often has been fooled by the ingeniously creative powers of sin to masquerade as forces of righteousness. Nonetheless, the Reformed understanding of sin is an indispensable aid in interpreting the global social, economic, and ecological condition. "Sin" may be an antiquated word to some in our culture, but the phenomenon it describes is the ever-contemporary power behind economic depredations and ecological plunderings all over the world.

Sin is a declaration of autonomy from God, a rebellion from the sovereign source of our being. It makes the self and its values the center of existence, in defiance of God's care for all creatures and in disregard of their interests. Sin tempts us to value things over people, measuring our worth by the quantity of goods we acquire and consume, rather than by the quality of our relationships with God and with others. Sin is also injustice, the self-centered inclination to defy God's covenant of justice by grasping more than our due and depriving others of their due.

Sin often takes the form of exaggerating human powers to solve problems. Overconfidence in technology, for example, leads decision-makers to take dangerous risks that do not make sufficient allowance for the virtual inevitability of human error and sin. Technological optimists may not be able to find substitutes for depleted resources soon enough, or increase agricultural productivity fast enough to feed a rapidly growing population. We are neither wise enough nor good enough to prevent the systems that we create from malfunctioning or abusing human beings or nature. A realistic awareness of the weaknesses in human character and the limits to human ingenuity can encourage us to avoid high-risk gambles, to exercise cautious care, and to find solutions that fit the human condition.

Sin is manifested not only in individuals, but in social institutions and cultural patterns. These structural injustices are culturally acceptable ways of conducting daily living that give some individuals and groups of people advantage over others. Because they are pervasive and generally invisible, they compel our participation. They benefit some and harm many others. Whether or not we deserve blame as individuals and churches for these social sins depends in part on whether we defend or resist, tolerate or reject, them.

Social sin is encountered in global economic disparities and ecological degradation. It is corporate or institutional far more than individual in character. Indeed, every economic system embodies social sins, albeit in different degrees. One of the more serious expressions of social sin in our time is the increasing concentrations of economic power in the hands of certain businesses. Systems of dominance have emerged, capable in coalition of corrupting governments, controlling markets, manipulating public opinion, and contributing to a sense of political impotency in the public. Globally, some multinational corporations operate with relative freedom from public accountability, sometimes abusing their power to the detriment of people and earth, including the atmosphere, the oceans, and the other components of the global commons. The problem is serious and deserves attention by the church at all levels.

The Reformed tradition has always understood that power must be controlled because of the universal human tendency to grasp more than our due. While tradition has recognized this need particularly in politics, the problem extends today to the concentrations of economic power. A major challenge for the churches in resolving the problems of widespread economic disparities and ecological degradation is finding ways to control or counter the economic powers of sin that frustrate our goals.

Sin, fortunately, is not the only characteristic of human beings. There is also a strong potential for good, empowered by the grace of God who intervenes in human affairs to renew, reconcile, and enlighten the peoples of all nations. Indeed, no social life would be possible without some substantial level of human goodness. This other side of the ambiguous character of human beings provides some realistic possibilities for social transformation.[10] The human potential for good is also the basis for our hope that the powers of sin can be constrained.

According to Jesus' parable of the Last Judgment—or, perhaps no less accurately, to the parable of Economic Justice and Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46)—social and economic relationships count eternally. To neglect the deprived and powerless is to reject Christ, who encounters us in the hundreds of millions of the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, imprisoned, and alienated people of today's world, all of whom make a rightful claim for just and compassionate responses. Their needs can be fully met only by justice achieved through political and economic institutions. The church must be a participant in this struggle for justice.

If God's covenant of justice is the right ordering of relationships, sin is the wrong ordering of relationships. The moral ordering of the planet requires that biological limits be respected, that just rules of relationships be observed, and that our interdependence in culture and with nature be honored. Sin is disdainful of these limits and disruptive of these rules. Christians can discern the dynamics of sin by searching constantly for the causal relationship between environmental abuse and ecological collapse, and between human injustices and social disorders. "The religious consciousness confronts the

judgment and wrath of God on those occasions when the consequences of our commissions and omissions signal a serious disordering of relationships between persons, in society, in relation to nature."[11]

The often costly consequences of the sins that God's judgments confront remind us of our interdependence. God's judgments are meant to be corrective, to promote right relationships, and to shape human behavior toward wise and just ends. The grace of natural and social judgment is to save us from our sins, deliver us from evil, and restore the covenant of justice. The only appropriate response to these judgments is repentance.

E. THE CHURCH'S MISSION AND HOPE

All of God's people are called to be involved in ministry. The Church is the local and universal communion of pardoned sinners who have responded gratefully to the creating, sustaining, and redeeming graces of God's all-embracing love. The Church's ministry is to be a manifestation of this love.

Because God's love is comprehensive, the church seeks to be "truly catholic," characterized by wholeness, fullness, universality. The divine ministry is experienced as nurturing, comforting, counseling, strengthening, guiding, sanctifying, liberating, forgiving, reconciling, and redeeming in the fullness of covenant. The church is called to manifest a similar breadth to its ministries of worship and witness. For the church to represent God's values, it must witness on behalf of social and ecological justice and call out for repentance and reconciliation. The church must be a voice for and with the poor, a challenge to the rich. Because God's ministry is universal, the church's concern must be global as well as local (Isa. 42:6, 49:6). Because our God is the Sovereign for all time, the church must commit to a sustainable future for all generations.

The church is called to be an effective expression of the ultimate goal of God's ministry, the Reign of God, which Jesus embodied, proclaimed, and pledged fulfillment. This ultimate hope is a judgment on our deficiencies and a challenge to faithful service. God's goal of a just and reconciled world is not simply our final destiny but

an agenda for our earthly responsibilities. We are called to be a sign of the Reign, on earth as it is in heaven, to reflect the coming consummation of God's new covenant of shalom to the fullest extent possible.

However, the church that understands its long history of sin and finitude will also understand the difficulties of social transformation. Both evil and human error are always around and part of us. Confusion and uncertainties abound. The concentrated powers of sin constantly frustrate reforms. "The cross of Christ is a constant warning against simple optimism,"[12] Consequently, discouragement, disillusionment, and even despair are common, and they often lead to inertia, apathy, or withdrawal, which simply become additional barriers to change.

But there are good reasons for persistence in the struggle despite demoralizing defeats. Evil is not the whole story. Forces for good are also present. Positive though limited changes can and do occur with persistence. The Resurrection of Christ is a constant reminder that pessimism is premature! Hope is always warranted. New possibilities are always emerging on the socioeconomic scene, often as a mixture of rational necessity and strange political dynamics. Our God is always present, active, and creating new possibilities for expressing the covenant of justice. God accompanies the poor on the journey to justice and calls the church to accompany the poor-working and sharing with them, learning from them, and testifying with them to the presence and power of God. Our power is in the confidence that God is empowering us for God's cause:

> Why do you say, 0 Jacob, and speak, 0 Israel,
> "My way is hidden from the Lord,
> and my right is disregarded by my God"?
> Have you not known? Have you not heard?
> The Lord is the everlasting God,
> the Creator of the ends of the earth.
> He does not faint or grow weary;
> his understanding is unsearchable.
> He gives power to the faint,
> and strengthens the powerless.
>
> (Isa. 40:27-29 [NRSV])

Endnotes

1. See Wolfgang Schrage, The Ethics of the New Testament, trans. David G. Green, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 102-106, 159-60.

2. See Jeremy Cohen, *"Be Fertile and Increase: Fill the Earth and Master It" The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text,* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), 5; Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility,* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 149-81.

3. George M. Landes, "Creation and Liberation," *Creation in the Old Testament,* ed. Bernard W. Anderson, (Philadelphia and London: Fortress/SPCK, 1984), 146.

4. See Claus Westerman, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary,* trans. John J. Scullion, S. J., (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1984), 33-39, 147, 153-54; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis: Interpretation,* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 132; Bernard W. Anderson, "Creation and Ecology," ed. Bernard W. Anderson, 163; Douglas John Hall, *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship,* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 88-108.

5. Douglas John Hall, *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship,* (Grand Rapids/New York: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co./ Friendship Press, 1986), 107-8, 113-28, 184-87.

6. Bernard W. Anderson, "Creation and Noachic Covenant," Cry *of the Environment,* Philip N. Joranson and Ken Butigan, eds. (Santa Fe: Bear & Co., 1984), 50-51.

7. Ibid., 48.

8. Charles S. McCoy, "Covenant, Creation, and Ethics: A Federal Vision of Humanity and the Environment," Cry of the Environment, Philip N. Joranson and Ken Butigan, eds., (Santa Fe: Bear & Co., 1984), 357, 369-70.

9. Economic Justice for All, (Washington, DC: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986) XV, 1.

10. Cf. Beverly W. Harrison, *Making the Connection: Essays in Feminist Social Ethics,* Carol S. Robb, ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 251.

11. James M. Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective: Theology and Ethics,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 246,242-47.

12. Christian Faith and Economic Life: A Study Paper Contributing to a Pronouncement for the Seventeenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, Audrey Chapman Smock, ed., (New York: United Church of Christ, 1987) 12. We have been informed here by the discussion of hope in this document.

CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS JUST AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?

"Sustainable Development" is now the most widely recommended remedy for the global social, economic, and ecological crises. It is also the most widely varied. Some people limit it to strategies that attempt to sustain economic growth indefinitely. Others propose strategies that sustain the environment even at the expense of growth when necessary. And still others promote strategies designed to assure the continuing viability of traditional communities, with all that implies for basic needs and communal life. Good can be found in any number of recipes for sustainable development, but which among them provides the best combination of economic viability and ecological soundness and social justice?

This report offers a vision that in both name and substance accepts the strengths of sustainable development but attempts to correct its weaknesses. It calls this vision just and sustainable human development, and understands it to be the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all (present and future) and to involve integration of the economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of human fulfillment in community.

This chapter begins with a critique of sustainable development, as others have known it, and then offers an alternative that centers attention more directly on the critical roles of justice, sustainability, and human development.

A. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CRITIQUE

Sustainable development was a major theme of *Our Common Future,* a 1987 report of the United Nations' World Commission on Environment and Development,[1] and it was the fundamental focus of the United Nations' Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) convened in Rio de Janeiro, in June 1992. President Clinton embraced it in 1993 when he established the Council for Sustainable Development "to find new ways to combine economic

growth and environmental protection."[2] A new commission in the United Nations is similarly named. The notion of sustainable development is accepted by the World Bank and by an assortment of social and environmental organizations. It is embraced by business people with as strongly divergent viewpoints as Paul Flawken[3] and Stephan Schmidheiny.[4] In most "official" and popular usage, however, sustainable development is still a slogan in search of a shared interpretation.

If sustainable development has an "official" substance, it will be found in *Our Common Future* and in the principles of the Rio declaration and the chapters of *Agenda 21,* the comprehensive agreements for international action that emerged from the UNCED in 1992.[5] *Our Common Future* defined sustainable development in the following way:

> Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of "needs," in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.[6]

As interpreted in *Agenda 21,* sustainable development is a morally ambiguous concept. Some of its elements are worthy of enthusiastic support, such as enhanced international cooperation, reduced inequality, people's participation, and the integration of environmental and developmental goals. But other key elements of sustainable development seem ethically dubious, notably the sovereign right of nations to exploit their resources, the exclusively human-centered orientation of most versions of sustainable development, and the simplistic objective of "sustainable economic growth." Sustainable development seems to need more clarity of purpose.

Consider, for example, what *Our Common Future* says about economic growth:

> Far from requiring the cessation of economic growth, it [sustainable development] recognizes that the problems of poverty and underdevelopment cannot be solved unless we have a new era of growth in which developing countries play a large role and reap large benefits.[7]

The authors of *Our Common Future* note, of course, that the "quality" of growth must be changed to become "less material- and energy-intensive and more equitable in its impact."[8] Yet, it calls for a five-to-tenfold increase in manufacturing output in order to raise the developing world's consumption to the level of the industrialized world in the next century.[9] Is this vision ecologically possible? Are technology and social organization not also constrained by biophysical limits and as populations continue to grow? Is there not a better way to reach a more equitable and sustainable vision?

Sustainable development also confronts us with ambiguity about the meanings of "sustainability": What values are important to sustain for the future, and for whom should they be sustained? Should economic or cultural or ecological values be emphasized when it comes time to choose between conflicting values? Ought our immediate successors be favored over distant future generations and nonhuman species, or should "sustainable" apply especially to all living things even in the far-distant future?

Moreover, "sustainable" is not a sufficient qualifier of "development." It is an indispensable norm, to be sure, expressing our trusteeship for future generations. No social or ecological ethic is adequate without a stress on sustainability. But it must be accompanied by other norms of comparable value, particularly distributive justice, defined broadly enough to include equal rights to participate in public life.

Then, too, what kind of "development" should we be seeking? Is sustainable development primarily an effort to sustain *economic* development, which usually is defined as steady increases in the per capita income of a people or nation? If so, does it necessarily involve "modernization" of the kind associated with Western models of development, or are other more traditional models available that yield more satisfactory patterns of change, such as improvements in the ability of people to build self-esteem and to choose freely, as well as to meet their basic needs?[10]

Or does development mean full human development, entailing not only improved economic standards of living but also the full complement of social, political, cultural, and transcendental values

and rights, and with an emphasis on quality, not quantity? If so, what is a good "quality of life," and how do efforts to achieve it affect our ability to ensure that the rest of humanity and other species, present and future, have similar opportunities?

None of the current versions of sustainable development give adequate answers to these questions. We need a better and broader interpretation of just and sustainable human development.

B. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Distributive justice is essential to our faith. It is the ethical process of apportioning benefits and burdens to ensure that all parties with stakes in an outcome receive their due or proper share. It is concerned not with "the greatest good of the greatest number" (which seems unjust to any minority), but with a fair apportionment of those benefits and burdens.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are moral rights that concern the vital interests of human beings. They permit us to express our human dignity and to help shape the common good. They apply equally and universally to all humans. They demand not only national but international justice.

Moral rights are instruments of justice. They give substance to the formal principles of who should get what and why. They specify the content of what is due. Thus, justice is rendering to each his or her rights, and a just community is one in which everyone's rights are properly honored.

When individuals or groups cannot or will not respect the rights of others, governments must become the agents of our interests and the prime representatives of our responsibilities as a society.[11] These are important duties. Rights are not only protections from governmental tyrannies; they also are the basis for our protection by governments from a variety of injustices, including unreasonable concentrations of economic power.

Human beings, as relational creatures, are interdependent parts of communities. Our moral responsibilities arise from being

persons-in-communities.[12] The connective tissue of rights and responsibilities is built into our being and is an essential source of our well-being. Thus, human rights are expressions of human solidarity—that we stand together with those whose rights are denied.[13]

Our inalienable human rights were codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, UN General Assembly) and subsequent international covenants. Here is a brief summary of them:

(a) Basic biophysical needs, including adequate nutrition, shelter, health care, clothing, and sufficient personal property. Ordinarily, these rights are satisfied through a right to labor for a living; otherwise, one has a right to social assistance in a just society.[14]Basic needs for all have precedence over luxuries for some in a just society.

(b) Physical security, including public protections from murder, torture, rape, enslavement, ethnic cleansing, intimidation, theft, etc. No other rights are secure without the political and economic justice that makes order possible and legitimate.[15]

(c) Spiritual and moral autonomy, including the freedom to make personal decisions about the ultimate values of one's life without unwarranted public interference. These primary liberties include the rights of religious freedom and privacy.

(d) Mental and cultural development, including freedoms of thought, research, and expression, as well as opportunities for education appropriate to one's cultural context and the modern world. In today's world, an ecological education is a human right because human security and survival depend on it.

(e) Full and equal political participation in defining and shaping the common good, including voting rights and freedoms of speech, press, petition, and association. Democratic institutions are essential means of claiming subsistence, security, and other rights in the face of resistance.

(f) Social ground rules for fair treatment and equal consideration, including the right to due process and equal protection under the law.

(g) The common good, including the total constellation of human rights fairly distributed and blended.[16] Particular rights can be restricted only for the purpose of protecting a fuller and fairer balance of the total constellation of equal rights for all. Article 28 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights says: "Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized."[17]

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international covenants say very little about the environmental bases of human welfare. Yet, human environmental rights are essential conditions for human well-being. In an interdependent biosphere, the vitality of socioeconomic systems is grounded in the integrity of ecosystems. Thus, human environmental rights are no less important than social, political, and economic rights. Ecological integrity is a precondition of social justice. The World Commission on Environment and Development asserted: "All human beings have the fundamental right to an environment adequate for their health and well-being.'[18] Accordingly, we add another human right:

(h) Environmental security, including the right to protection of the soils, air, waters, and atmosphere from levels of pollution that exceed the safe absorptive capacities of ecological systems; the right to preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems on which all life depends; and the right to ecologically responsible governments.

Attaining the full constellation of human rights in the near future seems a remote hope. The full range of economic and environmental rights, for instance, are not recognized legally in the United States, and no human rights have been recognized functionally in many countries. Oppression is widespread. Yet, human rights remain "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations."[19] When the full range of human rights is not realized, it becomes the duty of individuals, groups, churches, and nations, in proportion to their capacities, to create new and necessary possibilities.[20] The quest of these rights must be a fundamental part of the quest for human development.

2. BIOTIC JUSTICE

The parties most likely to be excluded from consideration of distributive justice in our culture are nonhuman species. The result, as we noted earlier, has been wanton destruction of nonhuman populations and a dramatic rise in the extinction of species.

Yet, concepts of distributive justice can and should be extended beyond human relationships. We need to redefine responsible human relationships to all forms of life with which we live in complex interdependency, and to ground these responsibilities in the demands imposed on us by their vital interests. As the Presbyterian Eco-Justice Task Force said, "justice is to be done to nature and its manifold creatures, because they make legitimate claims upon our respect and care."[21]

Other living things qualify for moral consideration because they are vulnerable and powerless in the face of human hegemony. Whatever their instrumental values for us, they have other and greater value to the Ultimate Valuer. Responsibility inheres in us as humans to value other living things as the Creator values us all. The moral issues surrounding this extension of justice are, of course, mind-numbing in their novelty and complexity.[22]

This concern for justice to nonhuman life introduces a major moral limit to economic activity. Production and consumption must be limited to the carrying capacity of nature. This limitation assumes that all species are entitled to a "fair share" of the goods necessary for their welfare and perpetuation. We need moral limits to economic activity to prevent excessive harm to wildlife and wildlands. Profligate production and consumption are abuses of what God has designed for fair and frugal use in a universal covenant of justice.

"Development" in its ordinary usage deals strictly with improvements in and for human communities. But our ecological responsibilities include the protection of ecosystems out of respect for justice to the rest of the biota. Accordingly, there are moral limits to the development of human communities. The qualifier "just" in the phrase "just and sustainable human development" implies for us

that justice to human life and to nonhuman life is a necessary part of the quest for human development.

Any morally acceptable concept of human development must be grounded on distributive justice, providing a fair share of scarce resources to all parties with stakes in an outcome—and that includes the whole biotic community, human and nonhuman, present and, as we shall now argue, future.

C. SUSTAINABILITY

The ecological crisis has brought into prominence a "new" ethical norm—namely, sustainability or responsibilities to future generations. Historically, Christian ethics assumed the moral validity of sustainability. Just as we have moral duties to strangers in remote lands, so we have duties to future strangers in remote times.[23] God's covenant is with you and "your offspring forever"(Gen. 13:15, NRSV). The future is important because history as a whole is important; it is a contribution to the ultimate reign of God. Thus, a major task of Christian ethics is to interpret sustainability, particularly its moral significance and implied responsibilities, and to evaluate prevailing models such as sustainable development in its light.

What is sustainability? Sustainability is living within the bounds of the regenerative, assimilative, and carrying capacities of the planet, consistently and indefinitely.[24] It seeks a just distribution of well-being between present and future generations by following policies that ensure the ecological conditions necessary for thriving in both the present and future.[25] While we cannot know the precise needs of future generations, we can reasonably anticipate (because they are our biological heirs) the general nature of their needs for sufficient and safe resources. The cultural and ecological heritage that we pass on will shape our successors and their prospects profoundly, for good or ill.

The moral tragedy of the ecological crisis is not only the damage done in the present, but the harm caused to future generations. Their vital interests are being sacrificed for present gratifications, particularly by the affluent. A portion of humanity is receiving generous benefits by living beyond planetary means, forcing future

generations to bear most of the risks and costs. Future generations will be major victims of our generation's excessive consumption, toxicity, and reproduction.

How far into the future should we be looking? In most efforts to imagine the future, we limit ourselves to at most a few decades. The United States Competitiveness Policy Council defines the long-range future as somewhat longer than ten years;[26] the Environmental Futures Project of the Science Advisory Board of the United States Environmental Protection Agency defines it as thirty years; and some contemporary environmentalists favor seven generations. Political forecasting, based on polls, on the other hand, usually is limited to the "next election."

Even the longest view expressed here is not adequate to a Reformed understanding of our responsibilities for the future. When assessing the risks of nuclear energy, biopersistent chemicals, and irrigation from nonrenewable aquifers, for example, one cannot calculate in any absolute way the costs to future generations of undertaking such projects today. Today's decisions usually underestimate future risks. Flexibility must be built into present projects to allow for unpredictable long-term shifts in ecological dynamics such as climate changes, natural calamities, or normal population fluctuations.[27] Sustainability compels us to think in terms of centuries, particularly if one moral objective is to perpetuate our species and its successors until the end of their natural time. Our responsibilities seem to extend as far into the future as our influences are plausibly foreseeable.

The concern for sustainability also forces us to think holistically. For the sake of both present and future generations, our assessments of environmental risk must abandon the prevailing methods that concentrate on single events or conditions and adopt methods that account more for cumulative and persistent effects, e.g., of chemical pollution or extinctions. How should we deal with the prospect of cumulative catastrophes, for example, in which many small hazards combine into a dangerously unacceptable hazard over time?[28] How many "greenhouse effects" and ozone holes are awaiting unnoticed in the global future?

Similarly, an abundance of individual economic activities, each ecologically tolerable in isolation, may be ecologically intolerable when considered in the aggregate. This possibility is generally ignored by those who claim that continued business expansion is compatible with sustainability. Stephan Schmidheiny and the Business Council for Sustainable Development, for example, argue that the limits to economic growth are primarily related to the capacity of the "sinks" where pollution and other waste materials are dumped rather than to the availability of resources. Solutions, therefore, are ultraefficiency, conversion of wastes into raw materials for other industries, technological substitutes, recycling, and "life-cycle stewardship" by corporations to minimize the adverse effects of their products.[29] All of these actions are important; we certainly can do much more with far less. But the problem of cumulative consequences cannot be summarily dismissed, particularly on the dubious assumption that the availability of resources is not a basic long-range problem. In contrast, Herman Daly and John Cobb stress the importance of the "optimal scale of the economy relative to the ecosystem."[30] Strategies for sustainability must reflect the fact that we live in an interdependent and interactive ecosphere in which cumulative economic activities in the present may have severe, even catastrophic, consequences for the future.

Sustainability, as an ethical norm, takes into account the inevitability of human error and of evil in the world. It therefore requires that we proceed with caution as we develop strategies that match short-term needs with long-range benefits. Sustainability requires that we leave the ecosphere to our successors in at least as healthy condition as it was received; moreover, it requires us to strive to reverse or correct ecological damage left behind by our forebears. Sustainability requires us to limit our own pollution to a level below what can be naturally assimilated. It requires us to limit our depletion of natural resources to a rate that is below their rate of regeneration;[31] and it requires us to limit our use of nonrenewable resources to the extent that we can provide replacements for them. Sustainability also requires us to address the issue of population growth. Given the interdependence of the whole created order, it is imperative that the global community work to limit human populations to levels that will preserve the ecological conditions necessary

to the continued thriving of human and other species in our interdependent ecological system.

In sum, sustainability depends upon careful conservation, comprehensive recycling, maximum efficiency, restrained consumption and product durability and repairability. Sustainability requires us to defend the future through "environmental accounting"—the practice of factoring into our economic equations the long-term costs of such things as resource depletion and pollution. Sustainability can neither be achieved nor maintained if we discount those long-term costs in our economic cost-benefits analyses. While the application of "discount rate" is appropriate in developing certain economic projections, where the environment is concerned discounting the impact of environmental strains on future generations in order to argue for short-term economic gains is nothing short of "stealing from our grandchildren" and flies in the face of the requirements of the norm of sustainability.

D. FRUGALITY

An interpretation of justice and sustainability is incomplete without an emphasis on frugality as a norm for all, a norm particularly incumbent upon those "to whom much has been given." Frugality is probably the most neglected norm in modern morality. Yet, it should not be foreign to Presbyterians. Frugality was part of the "Protestant Ethic," and was powerfully shaped by Reformed thought and action. And it remains strongly relevant today. Solutions to major social and ecological problems depend on the revival of this norm.

Frugality denotes moderation, temperance, thrift, cost-consciousness, efficient usage, and a satisfaction with material sufficiency—similar to the "contentment" celebrated in the first letter to Timothy (6:6-10). As a norm for the economic activity of both individuals and societies, frugality means morally disciplined production and consumption for higher ends, such as the common good.

Frugality is not austerity. John Calvin argued that austerity is "too severe"; it degrades us into "blocks." [32] In praise of frugality, Calvin denounced both excess and deficiency, both overconsumption

by the affluent and underconsumption by the poor. Nor is frugality simply a means to prosperity through capital accumulation.

Rather, as a norm of moderation or balance, frugality is an earth-affirming delight in the less-consumptive joys of the mind and flesh in human communities. It is "sparing" in production and consumption—sparing of the resources necessary for human communities and sparing of other species. It minimizes harm to humans and other living things, enabling a greater thriving of all life.

From a Christian perspective, the essence of frugality is self-discipline for the sake of Christ's cause of love. It enables responsible sharing in joyful commitment that promises to enhance life and bestow it more abundantly. For John Calvin, the "rule of moderation" is shaped by the "rule of love."[33] Frugality leads to liberal help of neighbors and stewardly accountability to God. He summarizes as follows:

> Let this, therefore, be our rule for generosity and beneficence: We are the stewards of everything God has conferred on us by which we are able to help our neighbor, and are required to render account of our stewardship. Moreover, the only right stewardship is that which is tested by the rule of love.[34]

Thus frugality includes both providing goods and services to others in need and placing moderate limits on consumption so that others may have enough. Frugality describes the character and conduct of just and sustainable neighbors.

Frugality is not free of economic risks. If frugality among the affluent became widespread, it would surely set in motion profound economic adjustments. It may be a formula for economic depression in a system that depends heavily on expanding levels of consumption to keep the system going and growing. A slackening of demand also could shorten production runs, resulting in less productivity, lower profits, higher unemployment, and reduced public revenues. The consequences for the poor and unemployed could be serious. Internationally, poor countries that depend on affluent countries for export markets and economic assistance might also suffer.

This ironic dilemma means that a new economic paradigm is necessary to fit the norm of frugality to the affluent. What might a new paradigm look like, and how might we manage the transition to it without excessive harm to peoples and environments at risk? Envisioning appropriate economies is an inherent part of the church's ethical task; that task must begin at once.[35]

E. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The term "human development" was chosen to distinguish it from other types of development that are destructive of people, and to highlight the claim that development ought to be focused on advancing human well-being.

The term "human development" is now officially used in the annual Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme. The Development Programme describes the term in the following way:

> Human development is development of the people for the people by the people. Development of the people means investing in human capabilities, whether in education or health or skills, so that they can work productively and creatively. Development for the people means ensuring that the economic growth they generate is distributed widely and fairly. . . . [D]evelopment by the people [means] giving everyone a chance to participate.[36]

The basic question is: what kind of development is good, desirable, or beneficial? Every conception of development assumes some standard of "the good." This means that development is fundamentally a moral concept and an ethical problem.[37]Human development, in our understanding, is the quest for a good quality of life for all peoples in community.

Perhaps the most common way to describe and measure development is through the use of statistics. This often takes the form of data about growth of aggregate production or per capita incomes. Other statistics often describe trends in infant mortality, maternal health, eradication of communicable diseases, life expectancy, and the like.

While these approaches to development are useful in identifying overall trends, they cannot be used as sole indicators of progress in genuine human development. They often mask realities that are extremely detrimental to the development of certain individuals or groups within a particular social structure.

For example, aggregate growth in a particular national economy does not necessarily mean that those who are most at risk are deriving benefit from that growth. Indeed, in many developing economies, as well as in many developed economies, aggregate growth hides the fact that the gap between the richest and the poorest in those societies has expanded. Moreover, what appears to be exciting economic growth in a developing economy may mask realities such as deforestation, massive pollution, cultural dislocation, and political repression.

Any vision of genuine human development must lead us, then, to the identification of criteria for describing and measuring positive human development, namely, the enhancement of the quality of life for all people. Consider, for example, the thoughts of a group of human development theorists and practitioners who met at the Marga Institute in Sri Lanka in September 1986. According to Denis Goulet, they observed that human development is essentially an ethical concern that includes at least five dimensions. They are as follows:

> —an economic component dealing with the creation of wealth and improved conditions of material life, equitably distributed;
>
> —a social ingredient measured as well-being in health, education, housing, and employment;
>
> —a political dimension including such values as human rights, political freedom, enfranchisement, and some form of democracy;
>
> —a cultural dimension in recognition of the fact that cultures confer identity and self-worth to people; and
>
> —a fifth dimension called the full-life paradigm, which refers to the meaning systems, symbols, and beliefs concerning the ultimate meaning of life and history.[38]

For the people who met at the Marga Institute, "integral human development is all of these things." Goulet adds, "Clearly, ecological

soundness should be added to the Marga list as [a sixth] essential component of authentic [human] development."[39]

It should be clear that there is no single best model of human development. Differences in cultures and conditions require adaptations that are appropriate to local circumstances. That is especially true in the application of technologies that may have been useful in one region, society, or culture, but have to be significantly modified to be useful in another part of the world. Some of our most tragic development failures have come from efforts to increase production in an impoverished area by forcing on the local situation technologies that ignored the realities of resource availability and local culture and custom.

Just and sustainable human development, in whatever form it is undertaken, is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all (present and future), involving the integration of the economic, social, political, cultural, ecological and spiritual dimensions of being. It reflects the understanding that human development is a universal need and is the business of the whole human family. It cannot be achieved without the kind of solidarity among all of God's children that recognizes and uses the gifts of all.

As followers of Jesus Christ who live in relative affluence, American Presbyterians must consider the possibility that God places a responsibility upon each of us to use all the means available to us to see that just and sustainable human development becomes a reality for the whole human family in harmony with all of God's creation.

Endnotes

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standards of sustainability into internationally recognized and legally enforceable norms, 21.

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CHAPTER 7: POLICIES FOR JUST AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: PRINCIPLES, GUIDELINES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HOPE FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE

DEFINITION: Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks just and sustainable human development because the church believes that God wills the fullness of life for all people. Yet the conditions necessary for such fullness are sorely lacking today for a large part of the human family. Just and sustainable human development requires policies and efforts undertaken intentionally to achieve these conditions.

Jesus came that all people might "have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10, NRSV). The good news of God's kingdom preached by Jesus is meant to be good news of abundant life for all nations, all people. God's gifts in creation are essential to this life and will be sufficient, in the present and in the future, if they are cherished and protected, taken carefully and shared equitably.

What then are the goals that thoughtful Christians and the church must seek in working for just and sustainable human development? What guidelines seem appropriate for our time in the light of global concerns and the norms of justice and sustainability?

All development must be tailored to the specific problems and unique features of each situation. The church cannot speak with such concreteness. Instead, it must focus on strategic rather than

tactical objectives, on general rather than specific conditions. It must seek guidelines of a more general sort that are relevant to all or nearly all contemporary situations, particularly those of desperate economic, social, and ecological deprivation. These guidelines should provide a basis for designing and evaluating specific development policies and practices.

Considerable overlap will be evident in the following guidelines for just and sustainable human development. They are interdependent parts of a whole. Some descriptions are longer than others for the sake of clarity and not according to their significance. Nor are the guidelines exhaustive; they are, of course, open to corrections and additions.

A. SUFFICIENT PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

PRINCIPLE: The satisfaction of basic needs is indispensable for human development. Sufficiency for all requires that poverty be eradicated and that the affluent live more frugally.

Innumerable passages of Scripture recognize implicitly or explicitly that the satisfaction of basic needs is essential to life. The Apostle Paul assures the Corinthian church, "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work" (2 Cot 9:8, NRSV). Having "enough of everything" frees a person and a community for the "good work" of ministering to the needs of others.

The satisfaction of basic economic needs is foundational to all human development. All other dimensions of development depend upon quantitative and qualitative sufficiency in basic biophysical needs: nutrition, shelter, sanitation, primary health care, clothing, clean water, and sources of energy. Hunger and illness dull human creativity; a harsh struggle for survival drains human energy, so that a person's best talents are never fully exercised.

Normally, basic needs are satisfied through labor for a living. Good work is instrumental to physical well-being, self-expression, social esteem, and service to God and neighbor. The satisfaction of

basic needs depends upon full, fair, sustaining, and participatory employment or subsistence, available to all.

Sufficiency of consumption requires sufficiency of production. Economic activity, national and global, has to be at least adequate for the needs of all people, and it has to be ecologically sustainable in order to satisfy the needs of future generations. Economic development must be enhanced, with respect to both total product and fair distribution, in proportion to the extent of underconsumption.

The goods and services produced by the economy, however, are not only for the satisfaction of basic biophysical needs. Men and women have needs transcending the material basics. They have uniquely human powers of cultural creativity—powers to create and experience diverse religious, moral, political, technical, intellectual, and aesthetic values. The goods and services should be sufficient to undergird the full constellation of human aspirations.

The modern debate about limits to economic growth is not about stifling or restricting human development but about sustaining both human development and ecological integrity. It is more than an empirical debate about the biophysical limits of the planet. It is also a moral debate about the material conditions necessary for full human development; and about the moral limits to production and consumption made real and urgent by our human responsibilities to the global community, future generations, and other life-forms.

Economic growth that fails to remain within the bounds of the requirements of justice and sustainability cannot be ethically justified. The economic sufficiency that we are bound morally to achieve, yet not exceed, is notoriously difficult to define with precision for practical application. Clearly, however, sufficient economic production and consumption for human development can be realized at a much lower level than is now fashionable for the world's affluent minority.

The economic goal of human development is not "prosperity" or maximum production and consumption, but a

sustainable material sufficiency as necessary for the comprehensive fulfillment of life for all in community. For the affluent, the challenge is to find meaning in the idea of sufficiency and to seek alternatives to a pursuit of growth that violates community and environmental values.

At the same time, the most pressing problem for human development in much of the world is the insufficiency of production even for basic biophysical needs. This primary level of need defines the first and foremost priority of development. In Africa, for example, where 90 percent of the poor live in rural areas, food production is insufficient to feed the present population. As of the middle of the decade, some 34 million Africans were facing food emergencies—for reasons ranging from civil war and misguided government and economic policies to overgrazing and natural disasters. Financial resources are not available for sufficient food imports or for technical measures to increase agricultural yields. In some places the human population appears to have already exceeded the existing carrying capacity of the land. Yet, despite all these factors, international financial institutions and national government in many poor countries in Africa and elsewhere often give priority to cash crops for export, leading to the ever-greater marginalization of subsistence farmers. The situation is desperate and the dilemmas are severe. The appropriate short-term strategy under these desperate conditions may be to depend less on the global market and to focus greater attention on growing food for domestic consumption.

Equitable distribution and ecological constraints put moral limits on economic activity for the sake of community well-being, future generations, and nonhuman life. In situations of relative scarcity of necessary goods, equity implies not only floors but ceilings on consumption, so that all can have at least "enough." This elementary demand of justice applies both within and among nations, on Christian assumptions of human equality and mutual responsibility. Constraints on production and consumption in affluent nations increasingly appear to be necessary conditions to make a sustainable sufficiency possible for all.

In the light of all these considerations, the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. reminds all Presbyterians of the historic support of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for measures to overcome poverty, not primarily by extension of relief, necessary as this is, but by economic arrangements that make universally available the opportunity to work for a secure livelihood. The church must be involved in the study and understanding of what causes poverty and what creates suffering for all.

2. calls to the attention of all Presbyterians the intolerable suffering that characterizes today's world, especially in the poorest developing countries of the south. Widespread hunger, disease, and social unrest persist in tandem with environmental degradation, massive landlessness and unemployment, meager wages, and racial/ethnic/religious conflict. "Development" since World War II has failed to prevent, and has even contributed to, these conditions and has widened the gap between poverty and affluence. The General Assembly asks Presbyterians and all Christians to denounce any reluctance by the United States and other northern countries to address the causes of impoverishment and suffering in their own midst and in the south.

3. reaffirms as relevant to development the ethical norms and guidelines acknowledged by the 202nd General Assembly (1990). The norm of sufficiency reminds Christians, citizens, and policy makers that justice requires economic arrangements and ways of living whereby the members of a community may obtain enough for their essential needs, not only by means of policies to ensure a minimum material well-being but also by avoidance of wastefulness and excessive consumption. The norm of participation underlines the requirement of justice that the arrangements for sufficient sustenance be such that all may take part in them. These norms convey the distinctive meaning of justice in a time newly characterized by keen awareness of the constraints of sustainability, which requires the wise and careful cherishing, preserving, and sharing of the abundance that God's good creation still can provide.

4. calls for Presbyterians and other Christians to lead the way to a basic reconception of the "good life," one that, in accordance with our Christian and Reformation heritage, is less

materialistic and more frugal. The good life finds fulfillment through the abundance of genuinely caring and mutually supportive community in Christ, and through adventurous faithfulness in response to God's call to restore creation and discover the contemporary meaning of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with our God (Micah 6:8, NRSV).

5. calls upon the United States government and indeed all governments, in cooperation with the United Nations, the international development agencies, and nongovernmental organizations, to reconsider and revise their measurements of success in development, so that the various indicators will reflect the priority of sufficient and sustainable production and consumption. Traditional GNP-based (gross national product-based) measurements fail to capture the complexity of the development process and do not distinguish between reasonably equitable and badly skewed distributions of essential goods and services. They count as benefits the costs, in dollars spent, of health problems, and environmental pollution. The new indicators should disaggregate information so that they more accurately reflect persistent poverty, resource depletion, and the various welfare, human rights, and environmental dimensions of people's lives.

B. FULL RESPECT FOR ALL HUMAN RIGHTS

PRINCIPLE: Human rights are essential to the expression of human dignity and are fundamental to the quest for human development. These rights include satisfaction of basic biophysical needs, physical security, moral and spiritual autonomy, mental and cultural development, social participation in defining and shaping the common good, due process, environmental protections, and the common good itself.

"What are human beings that you are mindful of them," the Psalmist asks God, "mortals that you care for them?" (Ps. 8:4, NRSV). There may be no one definitive answer as to why, but the biblical message, culminating in the incarnation, is that God is mindful, that God does care. God's mindfulness and caring are not directed only to the righteous or a chosen few but to all—to human beings, all created in the divine image, with at least the potential

of being "imitators of God," called to "live in love, as Christ loved us" (Eph. 5:1-2, NRSV). Within the entire natural •.rder, created "very good" (Gen. 1:31, NRSV), humans have a distinctive God-given dignity and worth that unites them all in a universal covenant of rights and responsibilities.

Human rights are recognized by the community of nations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international covenants or treaties. Yet, many nations, especially those under autocratic regimes, systematically violate these covenants. Essential to the promotion of human rights, therefore, is the development of democratic political institutions—free and fair elections, an independent judiciary, legislative structures, a free press, and free expression of political opposition.

The United States has opportunity and obligation to promote human rights internationally through its policies on aid and trade. Should this country extend foreign assistance to, and engage in trade with, only those nations that fully respect human rights? The question is unnerving. An unqualified "yes" may be too neat, simple, and absolute to fit the dilemmas of international relations. Strict and consistent exercise of the leverage provided by trade and aid policies may prevent the realization of other values with greater immediate significance. It might, for example, deprive desperately poor people of economic assistance because of the repressive practices of governments over which they have no control. Nevertheless, a heavy burden of proof must be met by any aid or trade policy that does not make respect for human rights integral to its design and implementation.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. calls to the attention of its own agencies and all Presbyterian congregations and the United States government the long-held Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) support for the full range of human rights, both domestically and internationally, and points to the connection between these rights and just and sustainable development. Respect for human rights must be reflected in the church's continuing commitment to inclusiveness in its membership and leadership and in vigilant rejection of prejudice and

mean-spiritedness directed against racial/ethnic groups, immigrants, handicapped people, or any other segment of society.

2. continues to urge the United States Senate to proceed without further delay to the review and ratification of (a) the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; (b) the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; (c) the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and (d) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.[2]

3. calls on the United States government to provide strong support for human rights through its international economic policies, especially foreign assistance and trade policies, and to exercise strong leadership in the United Nations and other international arenas for the strengthening of respect for human rights by governments, corporations, and other agencies of development. The United States should use its political and economic leverage to discourage such human rights abuses as child labor, unsafe working conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, and all infringements upon freedoms of speech, press, and religion.

4. urges the United Nations, and the United States government in its role with the United Nations, to enlarge the concept of universal human rights to include rights pertaining to ecological integrity, environmental security, and long-term sustainability, and to incorporate these rights into appropriate international covenants.

PRINCIPLE: Women's rights—to a secure livelihood, to freedom from oppressive domination, to education, and to safe contraception within broadly available health care—are an essential component of just and sustainable human development.

Full and equal rights for women constitute a particular kind of equality and universality inherent in the concept of human rights. Women's rights require special consideration because the evaluation of development often ignores the international feminization of poverty, and because effective development strategies must be directed to the particular roles and needs of women.

There is a wide "gender gap" in development, as revealed in a new measurement called a Gender Development Index, which was introduced by the United Nations Human Development Report 1995. In comparison with men in most developing countries, women suffer from debilitating subordination and discrimination: higher illiteracy, higher rates of childhood mortality, more malnutrition, poorer health care, fewer legal rights, longer hours of work for subsistence, lower incomes, less access to credit, fewer opportunities for employment, greater likelihood of becoming refugees, and higher frequency of being victims of violence. Gender discrimination and oppression may happen through various means, and is a major cause of women's poverty. The liberating gospel of Jesus Christ is for all people (Gal. 3:28-29, 5:1). Yet development programs have dealt mainly with men on the dubious assumption that working with them best serves the family and the community.

The assumption is incorrect. Women in the South are essential participants in the development process. They often have the primary roles in family health care and nutrition, subsistence agriculture, and the ecological management of local resources such as forest products, soil, and water. Effective development strategies must take specific account of their special roles and needs.

Therefore, regarding its further concern for human rights, the 208th General Assembly (1996)

5. directs the Worldwide Ministries Division, in all its ecumenical relationships and partnerships and its programs to address hunger, health, and self-development, to take particular account of the roles and needs of women, encouraging partner congregations and their governing bodies in developing countries, especially those that belong to the Reformed family, to include women fully in church governance and leadership and to promote full inclusion and empowerment of women in local economic development.

6. calls upon the president and the Congress of the United States to increase the degree to which United States international economic policies, especially development assistance, take account

of the need for the full participation of women in development through, for example, full access to training for improved productivity, expanded control over household income and resources, and assured exercise of legal, reproductive, and social rights.

7. encourages the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other assistance agencies to give greater emphasis to the need of girls for better education, nutrition, and health care. This need is apparent in virtually all developing countries.

PRINCIPLE: Public participation of all persons in the decisions that affect their lives and well-being is a fundamental human right.

Civil and political participation depends upon democratic procedures and the freedoms of speech, press, petition, religion, and assembly. It entails the social and political empowerment of people, not only as individuals but as associations of individuals in farmers' cooperatives, labor unions, women's organizations, and other groups. Participation redistributes power and constitutes the antithesis of authoritarian governments, repressive use of religion, and secretive corporations.

Participation includes the "right to know"—to full and timely disclosure by governments, international development agencies, and private enterprises of development plans and risks, including information on how and by whom decisions are made. Such disclosure is often called "transparency." But participation is more than the right to know. It means participation in decision making itself—in the identification, formation, implementation, and evaluation of development projects. It means that projects are planned and designed with the people and, as much as possible, by the people.

Public participation is a means of making governments, corporations, and international organizations accountable. The need for accountability is great. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), for example, has maintained a policy of institutional secrecy and autonomy far beyond that which is needed for stable financial

markets. An international stress on "participation" has emerged in recent years, manifested locally in a variety of indigenous communities and internationally in the preparatory committees for United Nations conferences and in connection with the conferences themselves. The IMF and the World Bank have begun to structure limited forms of participation into some of their projects and conditions for assistance. Persistent public pressure for participation and transparency remains necessary. Similarly, public participation may enhance the possibilities of controlling the monopolistic or oligarchic tendencies of many multinational corporations. A global marketplace is vast and ungovernable in the present state of the world's international institutions. Community objectives often conflict with those of corporations. The concept of the constitutionally limited state has been both cause and effect of public participation. Business corporations also must learn to meet popular community objectives.

Countless local communities and governments perceive that their developmental destinies lie largely outside their control. Other parties—local elites, prosperous nations, and foreign investors, together with multinational managers without national or local loyalties—seem to wield control. Public participation and institutional accountability are instruments of just and sustainable human development.

Therefore, in its concern for human rights, the 208th General Assembly (1996)

8. urges Presbyterian congregations and governing bodies that are contemplating covenant relationships with particular communities abroad to seek those whose projects are designed by the local community and controlled by its people.

9. encourages Presbyterians and Presbyterian churches and institutions that hold stock in United States domiciled multinational corporations to hold their companies accountable for conduct contrary to just and sustainable human development, and in this endeavor to avail themselves of the resources of our denomination's Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI)

program and those of the Interfaith Committee on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR).

10. calls on the United States government to renew its acceptance of the obligation to develop international economic policies that restrain and correct the abuses of economic power by United States-based corporations and other corporations that have operations beyond the boundaries of their country of origin. The United States should stimulate renewed efforts at the United Nations to establish international codes of conduct for transnational corporations, to govern environmental protection, product safety, and labor standards; and should provide leadership for compliance and urge all domestic businesses to meet similar standards.

11. calls upon the World Bank, the IMF, and all other international organizations involved in development processes, and upon the United States government as it exercises its role in these organizations, to make their research results, environmental impact findings, and policy advice open to public scrutiny, except when confidentiality is absolutely necessary.

C. JUST AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

PRINCIPLE: Commitment to human development requires a commitment to effective governance capable of encouraging order, assuring justice, and promoting the common good.

The prophet Jeremiah addresses King Jehoiakim, as the embodiment of the governance of the nation, to censure him for irresponsibly building a luxurious palace for himself while neglecting just administration. The prophet condemns this king for not following the ways of his father Josiah. "Did not your father . . . do justice and righteousness? Then it was well . . . . He judged the cause of the poor and needy ... Is not this to know me? says the Lord" (Jer. 22:15-16, NRSV). In line with the Old Testament understanding of what government ought to be, despite the repeated gross violations of the ideal, the Apostle Paul identifies the proper function of the governing authority: to be "God's servant for [the people's] good" (Rom. 13:4, NRSV).

Governments today are principal actors in human development. They make or break development. Tragically, many break it.

For reasons ranging from colonial legacies to ethnic conflicts, poor countries are often poorly governed. Corruption and/or incompetence are commonplace in both military regimes and civilian governments. Economic exploitation by political leaders is extensive; the public welfare is often traded for bribes, private villas, and Swiss bank accounts. Some governments are severely oppressive, identifying the interests of the society only with those of the elite and the interests of the state with those of the greedy rulers. And when governments actually are authentic representatives of the citizenry but lack the resources to use their legitimacy effectively, they find the task of governing daunting.

The process of state-building, establishing governmental legitimacy and authority over society through specially created institutions and structures is a lengthy, difficult, and complex undertaking. Inevitably it is shaped by the social and cultural heritage of particular peoples. The route to legitimacy differs widely from people to people.

A fundamental task of government is to organize and preserve the basic social support systems that enable individuals and their mediating institutions to thrive together cooperatively and fairly. Government's critical functions require prudent structuring. This does not happen automatically.

The market is a valuable instrument for the creation of goods, services, jobs, and income. But governments can effect equitable distributions of income and wealth while also overseeing the social and ecological common good. Such oversight requires the exercise of regulatory powers. The question is not whether governments should be forbidden by some sacred principle from intervening in the market, but when and how to intervene prudently. The role of donor nations and multilateral lending institutions in promoting development is not to impose a particular economic ideology on recipient governments. The task is to hold these governments accountable and to enable them to be just and effective

in serving human development, preserving the environment, and protecting earth and people from exploitation.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. commends actions by sister churches of the Reformed and other traditions in developing countries to hold their governments to high standards of conduct and accountability, particularly with respect to efforts to further just and sustainable human development.

2. calls upon the United States government to direct its assistance agencies to give increased attention and funding to improvements in the governmental structures, operations, and personnel of developing countries, with emphasis always upon their effectiveness as instruments of the common good.

3. calls upon the assistance agencies of the United States government to help the governments of developing countries make more efficient, less wasteful investments in physical infrastructure—transport, power, water, and sanitation systems, irrigation, telecommunications—avoiding expensive, ostentatious projects that benefit only a few or prove difficult to complete and maintain. Investments in infrastructure should serve all the people, under-gird local community development initiatives, and respect environmental integrity.

4. recognizes that the level and extent of corruption in some governments may preclude the advisability of extending assistance; encourages the United States government and private multinational firms doing business with governmental agencies to adopt policies that require disclosure of corrupt practices as a condition of completing transactions; and endorses the objectives of Transparency International, an association of private and public officials calling for greater openness in cross-border transactions. The possibility or actuality of disclosure, as well as the possible termination of transactions, may lead to higher standards.

D. UNIVERSAL AND ADEQUATE EDUCATION

PRINCIPLE: Education is a basic human right and is essential to human development because it enhances human capacities, improves opportunities, and widens the range of choices.

There is no stronger testimony anywhere to the value of learning than in the wisdom tradition of the Old Testament. The gaining of wisdom entails acquiring knowledge, understanding, insight, and sound judgment, together with moral uprightness. It appropriates the lessons of practical experience and is liberating and life-giving. "I have taught you the way of wisdom," says the teacher to the pupil. "When you walk, your step will not be hampered; and if you run, you will not stumble. Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life" (Prov. 4:11-13, NRSV).

In virtually every developing country there is a traditional wisdom to be respected and cherished. It relates the people to the land and their history, fostering social cohesion. For development today, this wisdom may be complemented but should not be overwhelmed by the factual, analytical, scientific, and technical tools that modern education can bring. Education is an indicator of just and sustainable human development when it is relevant to the real-life situation, teaching and encouraging understandings and skills, both old and new, that lead to individual and community empowerment.

The importance of appropriate education can hardly be overstated. It is a key to employment opportunities, population stabilization, the exercise of human rights, effective public participation, disease prevention and health care, environmental conservation, economic productivity, agricultural sustainability, and cultural and spiritual development. Thus it is indispensable for increasing both the quantity of goods and the quality of lives.

While literacy and school enrollments have risen significantly in the South since the 1950s, 35 percent of the adult population still is illiterate. Two-thirds of those who are illiterate are women. Eighty percent of school-age children are enrolled in schools, but this leaves many millions, especially girls, without schooling.[3]

A prime goal of human development is universal literacy coupled with universal and adequately balanced education. Education should be conceived as providing opportunity to serve the community, not just to gain individual advantage and privilege. Achievement of this goal will require generous investments in the educational infrastructure—schools, administrators, teachers—in all nations.

Therefore, the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. recognizes that for those of us in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), education for sustainable development begins with ourselves, and recommends to congregations and governing bodies the continuing use of the churchwide study document published in 1994 by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy under the title, "Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy: Churchwide Study Document."

2. directs all agencies of the General Assembly whose ministries have an educational dimension—including Conference Ministries, Peacemaking, Stewardship, Theology and Worship, Theological Education, the Presbyterian United Nations Office, the Presbyterian Washington Office, Higher Education, Racial Ethnic Ministries, Social Justice Ministries, Women's Ministries, the Hunger Program, and Global Awareness—to consider the implications of this report for their educational tasks.

3. directs the Congregational Ministries Division (particularly those responsible for curriculum resource development), working with the Worldwide Ministries Division Offices of Hunger/Health and Development, to design and produce appropriate educational resources for all ages, focusing on the concerns and issues of just and sustainable human development. These concerns and issues include the causes of global poverty and hunger; the inequities in access to sustenance from God's creation; the implications of environmental degradation and ecological limits for justice and sustainability; the theological and ethical foundations for dealing with development issues; the place that development planning should give to the role and well-being of the local community; the ways whereby the United States government's

policies and United States-based corporations' activities affect the prospects for just and sustainable development in southern countries; the issues of economic growth, trade, debt, and aid as they affect the goals of just and sustainable human development; and the implications of global environmental and development imperatives for the fashioning of a faithful lifestyle by Christians in the United States. These concerns and issues, introduced in the present report, will continue to require serious attention by church as well as secular education for the foreseeable future. They have profound implications for discerning the activity and will of God in contemporary history, and hence for understanding the concrete meaning of our love and discipleship in this world that God loves.

4. directs the Worldwide Ministries Division to consider the implications of this report for its educational ministries in all countries and encourages the Worldwide Ministries Division and its personnel throughout the world to continue to give strong support wherever possible to strengthening the kind of education that liberates and empowers people, economically, socially, culturally, spiritually.

5. encourages governmental, nongovernmental, and multilateral development assistance agencies, together with the governments of developing countries, to give high priority to extending and improving educational programs and systems to foster just and sustainable human development such as literacy programs; schools and facilities at all levels; extension programs in sustainable agriculture; training in technologies for energy efficiency, resource conservation, and environmental protection; and adequate preparation and compensation for teachers, specialists, and community-based trainers.

6. urges that every effort be made by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the bilateral agencies of creditor nations to ensure that programs of "structural adjustment" do not adversely impact the quality and availability of education.

E. POPULATION STABILITY

PRINCIPLE: Overpopulation is neither just nor sustainable. Procreation is a deeply felt human right that must be balanced

with the responsibility to preserve environmental quality and long-term sustainability and to make sufficient sustenance available to all.

Every part of creation is related to the rest. The Psalmists understood this. Long before there was any formal science of ecology, they were implicit ecologists as well as explicit champions of justice. "You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal . You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use ... The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that [God] planted. In them the birds build their nests ... The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the coneys . 0 Lord, how manifold axe your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures" (Ps. 104:10, 11, 14, 16-18, 24, NRSV).

The human creatures, with all their God-given distinctiveness and dignity, remain creatures within the created order, sharing the Creator's love and care with other creatures, dependent upon the natural systems ordained, by God, The health of the created order, in the wisdom of God, is a matter of stability and balance, encompassing marvelous, intricate interdependencies that God alone can number and fathom.

The astounding surge of human numbers—more than a tripling in one century—upsets the balance. No other creature could undergo a similar upsurge of population without overshooting ecological limits followed by precipitous decline. Science and technology have allowed humans to extend the limits spectacularly, but in doing so, humans have degraded the habitats of other creatures, in many cases to the point of their extinction. Further, they have begun to undermine the stability of the life-support systems upon which both population and economic growth are utterly dependent. Complacency about continued population growth now constitutes defiance of the wisdom of God. Our time is very different from that in which it was needful for human beings to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28, NRSV). The failure to accept responsibility for stabilizing and eventually reducing the human population amounts to the ultimate anthropocentric

presumption that human creatures alone are forever exempt from the ecological laws by which God governs complex processes and the interaction of living creatures.

Overpopulation is unjust because it exacerbates the problems of poverty and hunger. It is unsustainable because it undercuts the tasks of responsible earth keeping. High fertility rates are now contributing to both poverty and unsustainability in many nations. But the problem is not merely one of fertility rates. The total human ecological and social impact depends not only on the number of people but on their impact per capita. The problems of population press us to face also the problems of unnecessary and wasteful production and consumption. The United States and other countries of the north bear a far greater responsibility for environmental degradation and economic maldistribution than the countries of the south. The north, with its enormous use of all resources, cannot escape its own responsibility by pointing to southern fertility rates. At the same time, the south must acknowledge that population growth (like overconsumption) is unsustainable and will become even more so as the south rightfully increases its production and consumption.

A just and effective international strategy for reducing fertility rates and preventing overpopulation must emphasize at least the following elements: (1) strengthening the family as the basic social unit; (2) universal accessibility to safe, effective, simple, convenient, diverse, reversible, and inexpensive contraception for both men and women; (3) increased research on contraceptive means for men and women; (4) equality for women in social status, political and economic rights, education, income-earning employment, health care, and nutrition; (5) a dramatic rise in the level of female literacy; (6) a broad range of primary health services for women, including prenatal and postnatal care, treatment of genital diseases, birth control education and counseling; (7) improved social support systems to reduce the need for large families; and (8) elimination of the poverty that breeds overpopulation.

A major issue in controversies over contraception is power: the power of men and institutions to control the reproductive destinies of women. This fact has to give way to the power of women

to assert their own full identity (beyond being only spouses and son-bearers). Women are entitled to exercise freedom of choice and the right of full human development.

Another major issue in controversies over contraception is responsibility: the responsibility of men, women, and cultures to act appropriately with their sexual lives. We seek that men in the United States and throughout the world be educated in sexual responsibilities and their role as active parents of their children. We need to seek ways to help men and women look upon their children as gifts of God and a strengthening of their communities.

The United Nations Population Fund and some proponents at the United Nations Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (September 1994) have established a goal of stabilizing the human population at 7.28 billion by 2050. Achieving this goal will require major initiatives grounded on the elements listed above. It also will require considerable financial assistance as part of development aid.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. reminds Presbyterians and other citizens of the United States that the population problem is here, not just in countries with higher fertility rates, and therefore that they too have the responsibility to prayerfully consider the size of their families and to moderate consumption.

2. encourages the assistance agencies of the United States government to extend their support for the key factors that bring about the transition to fewer births: an emphasis on social and economic progress, with enhanced social security to reduce the need for large families; the reduction of infant mortality; improvements in the status of women; and the availability of family planning services.

3. urges all governments together with donor agencies to broaden the availability and the scope of family planning services. These services must provide a wide enough choice of contraceptive methods to ensure women an acceptable balance of personal

needs, preference, and risks; and they require adequate counseling and follow-up care to assure women the options suited to their situation. This emphasis on contraceptive services is the most important factor in making abortions unnecessary.

4. urges governments and assistance agencies to consider not only the total population of a country but also the distribution of the population and to adopt policies to effect a more sustainable distribution—specifically, policies to decentralize the availability of social services, education, health care, and economic opportunity so that rural life is enhanced and the pressure on urban centers is relieved.

5. opposes policies that restrict information about and availability of contraceptive and reproductive health measures for religious or political reasons, as well as programs that use coercive measures such as compulsory abortion or involuntary sterilization.

F. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND FOOD SUFFICIENCY

PRINCIPLE: Human life and well-being depend upon the flourishing of other life and the integrity of the life-supporting processes that God has ordained.

The church's concern for the environment goes beyond human self-interest and prudence because Christians see the environment as God's creation, to which we humans also belong. "God's works in creation are too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated," the 202nd General Assembly (1990) declared. But the creation already cries out from abuse. "Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore. . . . The Creator-Redeemer calls faithful people to become engaged with God in keeping and healing the creation

. The love of neighbor, particularly 'the least' of Christ's brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death."[5]

If resources were inexhaustible, basic biological systems impregnable to human assault, and nature's "sinks" for absorbing civilization's wastes unlimited, there would be no question of

sustainability. But the creation is finite and human numbers and the human impact continue to mount. Earth and people will flourish together or not at all, and both now are seriously threatened. This realization is the great new factor in any realistic understanding of the world in the late twentieth century, and it carries profound implications for social and economic development, especially for the food sufficiency vital to human survival and well-being. Humankind must seek to overcome poverty and hunger while also increasing equity and peacefully sharing and protecting global resources. In order to achieve these goals, however, efforts to ensure sustainability must transform lifestyles, economics, agriculture, and other aspects of development to a much greater extent than they have to date.

Therefore, the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. calls to the attention of General Assembly divisions and entities, middle governing bodies, congregations, and individual Presbyterians the continuing urgency of the Call to Restore Creation by the 202nd General Assembly (1990), and points to Part III., Social Policies to Preserve the Environment of that General Assembly's report *(Minutes,* 1990, Part I, p. 658) and the study paper adopted, *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice,* as timely and relevant to the issues of just and sustainable human development.[6]

2. calls particular attention to the 202nd General Assembly (1990)'s recommendation on global warming: "The United States and the other industrialized countries should assist developing countries to achieve the energy sufficiency necessary for the general improvement of living standards ... [while extending] appropriate technology transfers for pollution control and energy efficiency."[7] This recommendation reflects the south's (see Glossary for definition of north and south under Two-thirds world) legitimate demand for a larger and fairer share of global resources, including fossil fuel energy, but recognizes the urgency of global cutback on greenhouse gases. It follows a recommendation that the United States step up research and development of solar energy technologies and hasten its own transition away from dependence on fossil fuels. Enabling the south to meet its needs

and yet limit its dependence on fuels that contribute to climate change (while the north reduces its dependence) is extremely important for combining environmental sustainability with appropriate development.

3. encourages the United States government to take steps toward incorporating environmental damage and depletion into "full-cost pricing" and to call upon other governments to join in discussions of ways to achieve this kind of pricing. It will include public as well as private costs of private action, especially costs associated with the pollution of air, water, and land, and associated health and cleanup expenses. Full-cost pricing generally entails phasing out public subsidies to industry and agriculture such as insufficient charges for irrigation water and the use of public lands.

4. urges all citizens and policy makers of the United States to acknowledge that even with full-cost pricing, very efficient technologies, and an accelerated shift to renewable energy sources, just and sustainable human development still requires moderate consumption by the affluent and good stewardship of the planetary ecosystems.

5. recognizes the formidable problems that substantially reduced consumption in the north would pose for an economy geared to growth, and calls church members, economists, politicians, and citizens to wrestle with the issues of fashioning economic arrangements that affirm global solidarity and participation by all in sustainable sufficiency.

PRINCIPLE: Environmental sustainability requires agricultural sustainability, which is necessary for human survival and well-being, now and for the long-term future.

Food sufficiency lies at the very center of the concern for sustainability—the earth's capacity to supply food for a human population that increases by 90 million people every year. Until a few decades ago, humankind's needs for food, feed, and fiber were generally met with limited alteration of natural environments. Reliance on human labor, mixed cropping systems, and a

limited amount of highly productive land preserved soil quality and maintained a sustainable relationship of production inputs to crop yields.

The emergence of agricultural systems highly dependent on fossil fuel energy for land preparation, seeding, pest management, and harvesting has led to a serious erosion of the sustainability of food production. Since the end of World War II, the yield per unit of energy invested in food production systems has declined steadily throughout the developed world (D. Pimentel and M. Pimentel, "The Future of American Agriculture," in Dietrich Knorr, ed., Sustainable Food Systems [Westport, CT: AVI Publishing Co., 1983]; see also D. Pimentel et al, "Food Production and the Energy Crisis," *Science* 182 (1973), 443-49). As developing nations now emulate the north's chemically-dependent agriculture, destabilization of heretofore well-balanced systems is occurring at an alarming rate.

The critical importance of preserving biological diversity and wildlife habitat constitutes a warning against bringing additional land under cultivation. Moreover, most of this land that might be farmed is fragile, with low potential for productivity and would require an untenable quantity of fertilizer and pesticides. Modern monocropping systems with their chemical inputs and waste products pose a real threat to biological diversity, including the preservation of the gene pool, and thus to agroecosystem stability and renewability.

The alternative to extending cultivated areas is to increase yields per acre on lands already committed to agriculture and forestry. Sensible, sustainable use of food production inputs involves the embrace of integrated pest management strategies; developing crop species and varieties that are increasingly efficient in their use of water, light, nutrients, and space; and responsible rotation of both crops and chemicals. The overarching intent must be the wise stewardship of the soil. The role of those who bring knowledge and assistance from the developed world can only be one of full and trusting partnership with farmers in the developing world.

Indeed there is much to learn from the farmers of the south who have long embraced a close relationship with the land and maintained a reasonable balance between animal husbandry and cropping systems and between their production and the food needs of the village.

For farmers to produce beyond the subsistence level, they must be able to exchange their excess products for goods or resources that their families need. But once access to a viable market is achieved and farmers embrace United States-style cropping systems, the risk to long-term sustainability increases greatly. The challenge for agriculture policy makers in all food-producing regions of the world is to maintain the viability of farming for small-scale landholders, to restore land to the many people who have been displaced, and to identify and promote systems that stabilize quality yields above the subsistence level while ensuring the integrity and productivity of agroecosystems.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

6. reminds Presbyterians, church agencies, and policy makers of the policies adopted by the 202nd General Assembly (1990) on sustainable agriculture *(Minutes,* 1990**,** Part I, pp. 662-63) and asks that relevant recommendations be applied carefully and sensitively to developing countries.

7. calls upon the Worldwide Ministries Division (including all personnel involved in mission in developing countries, those involved in the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and persons working with the Self-Development of People) to encourage partners to give high priority to agricultural sustainability and sufficiency, increased food self-reliance within each region or country, fairer distribution of land, and the viability of small farms and community-based programs for sustainable agriculture.

8. urges the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States government in all its policies that relate to development around the world to give high priority to research, promotion, and assistance to increase agricultural yields, to the sustainability of agriculture, and to increased

food sufficiency within each region or country, fairer distribution of land, and the viability of small farms and community-based programs for sustainable agriculture.

9. urges full United States cooperation with and financial support for the work of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the World Food Program in the global efforts to provide food security through agricultural development including its related infrastructure, as well as the emergency provision of food in times of crop failures and natural or human-made disaster.

G. ETHICAL UNIVERSALITY WITH CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

PRINCIPLE: Authentic human development does not come in a single, fixed pattern. There are differences in cultural and worship practices that express the same universal values of justice, integrity of the person, solidarity, and sustainability.

The theology of the Holy Spirit includes recognition of the work of the Spirit in many cultures and religions. A recent study paper from an ecumenical consultation of Christians from many countries contains a paragraph on "The Religions and Cultures of the World." "We remember," it says in part, "stories in our Scriptures that testify to the presence of the Spirit in persons who do not belong to the people of the covenant. Though Abraham is the one with whom God has covenanted, he recognizes Melchizedek as 'priest of God most high,[9] accepts from him a blessing, and gives to him a tithe (Gen. 14:17-20). . . . In each culture we may find the 'Melchizedek factor', evidences of God's rule, and be enriched in our own faithfulness to God in the 1990s."[8] As we continue to interact with, and learn from, diverse cultures across the globe, we rejoice in the way that the Spirit goes before us, preparing hearts with the implicit message of God's love through creation, made explicit through Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:20, 3:21-30).

Those fostering human development must walk a fine line between cultural or even religious imperialism and moral relativism while avoiding both. Even with acute care, errors are

inevitable and the consequences of change are unclear. Unfortunately much that goes on in the name of development is the imposition of one set of cultural values on another. But a moral or religious relativism that regards all cultural values as ethically equal or neutral is equally unacceptable.

Human development seeks both to respect cultural and religious diversity and to uphold certain ethical values—justice, personal integrity, solidarity, and sustainability. This dual effort, requiring uncommon moral wisdom, will be enhanced in our morally pluralistic world by a serious search for a "global ethic," a working agreement on moral principles across cultural, religious, and philosophical lines, which will enhance the interfaith cooperation that global crises demand.

This "global ethic" is needed because cultural isolation is nearly impossible (as well as undesirable) in an age of sophisticated transportation, communication, and exploration. It is impossible to maintain population stability, end the subordination of women, protect the full range of human rights, introduce new medicines and technologies, and provide universal education without dramatically changing cultural structures and values.

Just and sustainable human development seeks both to preserve some and transform other cultural traditions based on the values of authentic human development. This process of change is always an ambiguous mix of important gains and mournful losses. It can only be followed in the humble faith that the Holy Spirit is active within and through all cultures—that all cultures, including our own, ultimately are judged by the Word of God, and that the quest for a "global ethic" is ultimately flawed by the condition of being human.

Authentic human development based on a "global ethic" condemns the casual dismemberment of traditional cultures and spiritualities that has characterized many development projects. These projects often have imposed norms of progress, prosperity, property, and propriety on other societies. They commonly reflect cultural imperialism and insensitivity to diversity.

Some peoples wish not to adopt the development models of full-scale technical and industrial modernization. Their wishes must be honored. The right of societies to choose independent development paths should be encouraged and respected insofar as the basic universal norms are honored.

This ethic includes a spirituality that often has been eroded by modernization. All societies have had a deep sense of the interrelatedness of all things and the overarching design of God's universe. Their spirituality, nurtured by religious values and rituals and artistic expressions, has kept the various elements of society together and has grounded the people in the cradle of their natural environment. Its power has enabled communities of indigenous peoples around the world to withstand centuries and even thousands of years of aggression by expansionist neighbors, economic and cultural imperialism, religious persecution, and even genocide.

In the context of the dehumanizing aspects of modernism (such as materialism, growing inequality, and excessive individualism) the struggles of poor communities to survive in the midst of economic deprivation, political oppression, and social chaos have given rise to a Christian spirituality of suffering and resistance. Such intense spirituality manifests itself in Christian-based communities in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as among traditional tribal groups in the mountains of the Philippines and India. In Africa and Latin America, a new Christian thinking has emerged, articulated in a "theology of the cross," built around the suffering of the Christ in solidarity with humanity. In the Philippines a similar emergence is called "people's theology"—an expression of the faith of posr people in their struggle for survival, dignity, and justice.

In considering just and sustainable human development, therefore, it is critical to recognize the role of people's spirituality as one of the elements capable of ensuring both the continuity of a given community and its cohesion and holistic rapport with the rest of God's creation.

An "ethic"—that incorporates the values of justice, personal integrity, solidarity and sustainability—is biblical and

contemporary in response to the steadfast love of the Creator-Redeemer. These values and norms also follow from the common experience of the claims made upon the conscience by human and other kind to be respected and valued, claims that are ultimately the claims of God. The ethical universality embodied by these claims and norms undergirds, directs, and judges all cultures, religions, and spiritualities and provides a basis for mutual respect, compassion, reconciliation, and cooperation amidst diversity.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. reaffirms the norm of solidarity, together with the norms of justice and sustainability, adopted by the 202nd General Assembly (1990), *(Minutes,* 1990, Part I, pp. 657-58) as affirmations of the oneness and interdependence of the human family, the essential place of community in human fulfillment, and the validity of human claims upon one another for mutual support in the struggle for justice and sustainability.

2. calls upon the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respect and appreciate the rich diversity of Christian worship around the world; to honor truth, beauty, and authentic morality as these are manifested in diverse cultural, artistic, spiritual, and religious forms; and to contribute generously to, and learn gladly from, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

3. urges that the multiple cultural expressions of people's spirituality be recognized and respected as important for cultural identity and human development. Frequently a people's deep-rooted spirituality serves to assure community integrity and sustainability.

4. affirms that Christian expressions of people's suffering and struggles, articulated in "people's theology," "theology of the cross," "liberation theology," and "Reformed theology" are appropriate, powerful forms of spirituality, which provide a foundation for the sustainability of their communities.

5. calls upon Presbyterian mission personnel, when engaged in promoting development in poor communities, to accompany

those communities in their efforts to achieve their own development in the spheres of economic, social, and political life and, when engaged in evangelism, to do so with understanding of the values of their own spiritual expressions.

6. acknowledges with deep regret that economic expansion and modernization in the less-developed countries of the south, furthered by northern governments and corporations, have often proceeded in ways that have demeaned local cultures, disrupted community support systems and community cohesion, displaced small-scale and subsistence agriculture, ignored traditional knowledge and wisdom, and degraded the natural resource base. These violations of the norms of solidarity, sustainability, and justice stand in the way of concrete realizations of the goal of just and sustainable human development.

H. DISMANTLING WARFARE AND BUILDING PEACE

PRINCIPLE: Peacemaking is essential for human development and for the church's faithfulness to Christ. It requires actions to reduce militarization and to address the unmet needs that aggravate tensions.

The Confession of 1967 declares that "God's reconciliation in Jesus Christ is the ground of the peace, justice, and freedom among nations which all powers of government are called to serve and defend. The church, in its own life, is called to practice the forgiveness of enemies and to commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace."[9]

In 1990, the World Council of Churches convened the World Convocation on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation. A prime purpose of this international gathering was to impress upon all the churches that the three concerns of the convocation title are truly inseparable. In today's world we strive effectively for any one of them only by striving for the others as well.

War, including the preparations for war, may be the most serious disrupter and destroyer of human development and sustainability. War involves the massive diversion of scarce

resources—human, technical, financial, material—from the satisfaction of human needs and creative aspirations. War destroys resources, people, and communities. Today more children than soldiers die in war (Hal Kane, *The Hour of Departure: Forces That Create Refugees and Migrants* [Worldwatch Institute paper no. 125, 1995] 19-21).

War disrupts community services such as education and health care, reduces food production, weakens or destroys the infrastructure of transportation and sanitation, and shatters natural surroundings, perhaps irreparably. Systems of law and order break down. Joblessness and homelessness mount. Refugees by the thousands or millions wander within their homeland or migrate when they can to some other land.

Most recent conflicts have been within states—Liberia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Bosnia, among many others. These civil wars often are ethnic or religious conflicts, involving exceptional, even genocidal cruelty toward largely civilian populations. But whether within or between states, the wars of recent years have taken millions of lives and shattered prospects for development for millions more (United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, 1995* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1995],16).

We cannot account for these wars without understanding the internal dynamics of each situation, such as longstanding ethnocentric hatreds and the competition of ambitious military leaders for dictatorial powers. Nevertheless, nations of the north have often contributed to these wars. Many small countries were made pawns in the Cold War while it lasted. The United States has sometimes sided with repressive governments for the sake of the stability that protects economic investments. And the north has reaped enormous profits from the international arms trade.

The United States weapons industries, aided by the United States government that licenses and promotes the exports of these weapons, are leading actors of this trade. United States international weapons sales rose from about 35 percent of global arms sales in 1988 to 70 percent in 1994. Two-thirds of the sales are to

nations of the south. Apart from sales, the U.S. Defense Department annually gives away billions of dollars worth of weapons to nurture ties with actual or potential allies (Center for Defense Information, *The Defense Monitor,* XXIII, no. 7 [1994]).

A third of the arms sales to the nations of the south are so-called "light weapons," that is, small arms (which probably are responsible for most of the deaths in southern conflicts) and antipersonnel mines. The secretary general of the United Nations stresses the importance of "micro-disarmament" to build peace in the conflict situations of the south.[10]

Only new initiatives in peace building will enhance the prospects for human development in many places. Direct initiatives should include (1) sharply reducing arms sales through international agreements to constrict arms dealing; (2) making bilateral and multilateral aid contingent on the recipient governments' agreement to limit its military posture to strictly defensive needs; (3) transparency in arms sales through participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and by the adoption of a Code of Conduct for Arms Sales; and (4) aggressive efforts to convert military research, development, and production into commercially feasible activity, including the renewal of social infrastructure and the retraining of workers.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. reaffirms the *Call to Peacemaking* of the 192nd General Assembly (1980); calls particular attention to its declaration "that peace cannot be achieved simply by ending the arms race unless there is economic and political justice in the human family"[11] and reminds all members, congregations, and other entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that peacemaking, as understood in the *Call to Peacemaking,* includes promoting the internal peace of the church and resolving conflicts within the church in ways that enhance the church's credibility when it seeks to promote peace within and among all nations.

2. reaffirms the support of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the United Nations and its efforts to prevent war and establish

peace and calls upon the United States government to give reinvigorated support and constructive leadership to the United Nations as the chief international instrument for dismantling warfare and building peace.

3. calls upon the United States government to end promotion of United States arms sales by its agencies and departments; to end subsidization of United States weapons sales to foreign governments; and to take immediate steps through the United Nations and other appropriate international forums to press vigorously for early and substantial reductions in arms sales, with the aim of bringing the international arms trade to an end.

4. calls upon the United States government to ban production and sale of land mines, which by accidental explosion kill or maim thousands of civilians each year; to support efforts in the United Nations to institute a worldwide ban on the manufacture, transfer, sale or use of antipersonnel land mines, continuing a voluntary moratorium until such a ban is in force; to support the worldwide effort of mine clearance through financial assistance and the provision of advanced mine clearance technology as it becomes available; and to contribute generously to the international fund for victims of mine explosions.

5. calls upon the United States government to reduce substantially the military component of foreign assistance programs, to move toward discontinuing military aid in most instances, and to cut severely or discontinue economic assistance to countries with unacceptably high levels of military spending. These measures are particularly important when corrupt and oppressive regimes use weapons from the United States to stifle democratic development and popular dissent, especially in instances where United Nations' forces are called upon to engage in peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts.

6. calls upon the United States government to redouble efforts to develop environmentally acceptable ways to dismantle or destroy military weapons and materials, which are stockpiled not only in the United States but abroad and pose problems for sound and safe development in some southern countries. Such

efforts pertain, among other things, to nuclear and chemical warheads, conventional explosives and propellants, solid and liquid rocket fuel, and deployed land mines.

7. calls upon the United States government to correct the massive contamination problems of United States military base and arms factory where nuclear, chemical, and conventional weapons have been produced, maintained, or used, abroad as well as at home; and in this connection to pass legislation to make its facilities outside the United States subject to the Federal Facilities Compliance Act, which mandates comprehensive cleanup measures and makes military violators legally liable for noncompliance with environmental laws.

I. EQUITABLE DEBT RELIEF

PRINCIPLE: The repayment of debts and interest at the expense of the basics of life raises serious questions of justice. The burden of debts must be shared equitably in ways that reduce poverty, protect the environment, and avoid perverse incentives in the future.

The biblical understanding of justice as intrinsic and central to faithfulness is unmistakable. The cries for justice, the calls and commandments to do justice are pervasive, inescapable, and powerful. Justice is an expression of love in social relationships and in community and national life. It is not merely a legalistic rendering of another's "dues" but is fairness combined with compassion and kindness. It is both an individual responsibility and a responsibility of government. And while justice is to be done to all, the persons of prime concern are those most vulnerable: the poor, the needy, the hungry, the widow, the fatherless, and the sojourner or stranger. "May [the king] defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor" (Ps. 72:4, NRSV).

In the prophets we find implicit condemnation of those who afflict the poor for nonpayment of debt. Isaiah denounces those "who join house to house, who add field to field ... " (Isa. 5:8, NRSV); Micah, those who "covet fields, and seize them ... oppress

householder and house, people and their inheritance" (Micah 2:2). Undoubtedly, the extension of the holdings of the powerful came from taking advantage of the vulnerable who could not pay their obligations and lost their land, their inheritance.

Without making simplistic comparisons between that time and our time, we have to confess that greed, expressed in ever more sophisticated ways, remains prominent. The burdens and benefits of production and distribution are not shared so that all may participate in sustainable sufficiency. Justice, as understood biblically, is for Christians the chief consideration in assuming the key roles of debt relief, international trade, and development assistance in fostering just and sustainable human development in our time.

Despite the widespread assumption that the international debt crisis has ended, it remains severe for many poor countries. The heavy burden of paying interest and principal on debt has exacerbated poverty in many cases over more than a decade and continues to do so today. Severe debt has increased dependence, making poor countries more vulnerable to the conditions for debt relief imposed by creditors. These conditions, usually in the form of "structural adjustments" required by the International Monetary Fund, include deregulating trade, increasing production for export, raising taxes, and cutting government expenditures (which means almost always reducing government services, particularly for the poor). Progress toward just and sustainable human development is not possible without solutions to the persistent debt crisis in many countries.

There is no simple, generalizable solution. Each nation's debt must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, reflecting the peculiar problems and potential of each nation. Yet, some elements of a solution seem clear. The terms of debt relief need to be examined through an ethical lens to determine legitimate and illegitimate conditions, and to provide international protections against political and economic exploitations of indebtedness by creditor nations and financial institutions.

The repayment of debts and interest at the expense of the basics of life for the poor cannot be tolerated. Debt service should

be limited to a reasonable percentage of national budgets or national production. The burdens of debt should also be shifted to those capable of bearing a higher proportion of taxes. In some cases, payments should be reduced and rescheduled over a longer time span, depending on the consequences for the poor and the economic potential of the nation.

In other cases, lenders should give debt relief in whole or in part—particularly for the poorest countries. Debt relief must be structured carefully, however, to avoid rewarding interests that have acted irresponsibly in past borrowings and to prevent incentives for shortsighted or selfish transactions in the future. Debt cancellation can be accompanied by conditions that clearly promote human development: reduction of military expenditures, enhanced expenditures for basic human needs, reduction of income disparities, respect for human rights, an equitable system of taxation, and sustainable environmental practices.

In all cases, the operative principle should be equitable burden sharing. Extreme national indebtedness does not result solely from debtor misconduct or mistake. Creditors, too, often bear blame—for eagerness to lend when they have large deposits, for less-than-fair terms, and for sloppy appraisals of economic conditions. They should bear at least part of the burden of debt relief. Development and international implementation of the principle of equitable sharing would help greatly to apportion responsibilities.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. calls upon all governments, the multilateral lending institutions, and commercial banks engaged in international lending to strive to insulate the poor of indebted countries from the costs of debt repayment and to consider seriously debt forgiveness or debt relief for the most heavily indebted and poorest countries.

2. urges all creditor governments, multilateral institutions, and private lenders, in reaching agreements on debt relief, to condition them on the effects debt relief likely will have on the incidence of poverty in debtor countries, and on assurance that debt relief will not reward irresponsible behavior or encourage it in the

future. Avoidance of "rewards" to nations whose leaders have acted irresponsibly may, however, sometimes have to be qualified out of concern for the poor and the environment as innocent victims of others' irresponsibility.

3. calls upon the International Monetary Fund to insist on the following conditions in all future structural adjustments for debtor countries: (a) reduction of inappropriate levels of military spending; (b) preservation of spending on basic needs, including education and health care; (c) assurance of a safety net for those most severely affected by adjustment policies; (d) prevention of adverse environmental effects such as deforestation and soil degradation; and (e) a system for monitoring and correcting (as may be necessary) the effects of adjustment policies.

4. calls upon the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to (a) replace current structural adjustment efforts with policies and programs that meet the needs of the poor and promote sustainable, participatory, and equitable development; (b) cancel or substantially reduce multilateral debts, especially of the poorest countries and increase support for the reduction of commercial and bilateral debt; (c) make the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund more accountable to the people affected by their policies and projects through increased transparency, greater access to information, and greater participation in the development of projects, programs, and policies.

J. JUST AND SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONAL TRADE

PRINCIPLE: In an interdependent world, no nation can be fully independent of other nations, and no nation should be overly dependent on other nations. This means that the international trading system must incorporate the basic norms of social justice and environmental sustainability rather than depend solely on the norms and outcomes of free trade.

The sustainability imperative compounds the justice imperative by making it impossible to assume that all people within a global economy can attain the consumption standards of present day Americans. Environmental sustainability translates into a

viable future, a sufficient quality of life, for the world's children and their children—"that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord . . . [who sets] free those who were doomed to die" (Ps. 102:18, 20, NRSV).

Jesus and the prophets knew that justice depends upon sharing. An economy based mainly on self-interest, which rewards acquisitiveness obscures this truth. In faithfulness to the Creator-Deliverer who remains "the hope of all the ends of the earth" (Ps. 65:5, NRSV), the church must lift up this truth again and again, and do so assuming that the ecological limits now make sharing necessary for short-term justice and for longer-term survival.

No aspect of United States international economic policy is more critical for achieving justice and sustainability than that of trade. Yet protecting the environment was not a major issue when the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was drawn up just after World War II. Indeed, the GATT does not mention the environment. This means that until recently environmental officials and the people who make and administer international trade policies worked independently, hardly noticing what the others were doing. Today, while environmental protection is widespread, the norms and institutions of international trade are still rooted in the "pre-environmental" era. As a consequence, trade and environment policies regularly intersect and increasingly collide.

Two recent events—the debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and a dispute in GATT over protection of dolphins—neatly illustrate the conflict. In connection with the NAFTA negotiations, side agreements were reached on labor and environmental protection. Although critics fear that implementation of these agreements will prove too cumbersome and drawn out to be effective, they do signal the potential for broader, environmentally sensitive changes in international trade policy making. But in the dispute over the protection of dolphins, the GATT told the United States that it could not embargo tuna imports from Mexico even if the tuna was caught with dolphin-killing nets. In environmental circles, this case has come to stand for a dubious proposition: countries may not use trade policy to affect the environmental practices of foreign governments or producers.

The charge that trade and trade liberalization can be environmentally counterproductive is accepted today even by many of the most ardent proponents of free trade. Environmentalism's challenge to free trade may be summarized in these four propositions:

- Without environmental safeguards, trade may cause environmental harm by promoting economic growth that results in the unsustainable consumption of natural resources and waste production.

- Trade rules and trade liberalization often entail market access agreements that can be used to override environmental regulations unless appropriate environmental protections are built into the structure of the trading system.

- Trade restrictions should be available [to governments] as leverage to promote worldwide environmental protection, particularly to address global or transboundary environmental problems and to reinforce international environmental agreements.

- Even if the pollution they cause does not spill over into other nations, countries with lax environmental standards may have a competitive advantage in the global marketplace and put pressure on countries with high environmental standards to reduce the rigor of their environmental requirements.[12]

Reconciliation of trade and environmental goals and specific changes in the GATT depend on how one responds to these central propositions. In the broadest possible terms, there are three schools of thought on how to reconcile trade and environmental policy making. The "economic" school suggests that trade liberalization and environmental protection are of inconsistent because both aim at rationalizing the use of resources. When certain resources come into short supply, their prices will rise, usage will decline, and technology will be devoted to finding substitutes. Thus no changes to the GATT are required. The "environmental" school holds that the consequences of unrestricted, indiscriminate economic growth propelled by trade will be so serious that policy cannot reconcile sustainability with the dynamics of ever-expanding production, trade, and consumption. A "middle-ground" school acknowledges that trade and environmental goals are in tension but holds that tradeoffs can make these competing public aspirations more mutually compatible. Changes to GATT rules and adjustments to environmental policies—notably,

institution of the "polluter pays" or "full-cost pricing" principle can ensure an appropriate balance between trade benefits and environmental values.

Environmental values are by no means the only ones at stake in the debate over international trade policies. In a sinful world, justice always involves some constraints on liberties. Many citizens of the south remember the poverty of their colonial pasts and see it repeated today in the uneven bargains being struck with multinational corporations over the exploitation of their natural resources. They grow tired of the many trade restrictions placed in the way of their processing industries that could add value to their raw materials before shipment to other markets. They suffer from the buffeting winds of international competition, always adjusting, always at risk, and they demand a better trading system with justice. Impediments to free trade are justified, they believe, when the purpose is to protect nations and peoples from adverse social and ecological consequences, and when the impediments chosen are designed to interfere least with the efficient (and sustainable) allocation of resources.

The need for fresh thinking about trade arises from significant new factors that make the world situation very different from what it was only a few decades ago. We have stressed the new realization of ecological limits and the dependence of economics upon nature for resources and waste absorption. We must also note carefully the unprecedented globalization of economics and markets, characterized by: (1) the dominance of extremely large multinational corporations, including banks; (2) the unprecedented mobility of capital and finance so that investment and manufacturing can be shifted readily from one country to another; (3) the accelerating reduction of trade barriers; (4) the increasing shift in southern countries, as trade and global economic integration increase from subsistence production to market economies and wage-dependence; and (5) the loss by national governments of their capacity to control and regulate trade, investment, and the uses of capital as these functions have shifted more and more to corporations, banks, and multilateral bodies such as the new World Trade Organization. Many poor countries find themselves dependent on trade as never before. They must stress exports, even

to the detriment of local community self-reliance and resource sustainability, in order to import basic necessities.

We can no longer simply take it for granted that the consequences of expanded trade, economic growth, and global integration will be generally beneficial. The issue is not trade or no-trade, growth or no-growth, but where trade and growth are appropriate and where they are not, and whether they address the most important needs of nations and peoples equitably and sustainably. The assumption that each nation should concentrate on maximizing exports according to "market-friendly" economic theories requires reconsideration in the light of the factors indicated above, particularly the ease with which production facilities are moved across national borders to take advantage of "surplus" labor, low wages, low taxes, and lax environmental regulations.

The purpose of international trade should never be posed in purely commercial terms since the people and nations that produce and consume its goods and services invariably experience a dizzying assortment of benefits and costs. The far more appropriate purpose should be the enhancement of just and sustainable human development. This is the overarching moral criterion on which all trade policies should be developed and evaluated.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. affirms that, given the unequal bargaining positions of various nations, trade policy now requires careful study regarding its implications for poor people, peasants, and workers—their access to land and employment, the respect accorded to workers' rights, the viability of participatory community-based development, the maintenance of traditional community support systems, and the workers' place in the income distribution.

2. directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to monitor the implementation and consequences of the recent international agreements and mechanisms for expanding world trade—such as NAFTA, GATT, WTO—with special concern for the effects of trade on the poor, the natural environment, local communities, and the distribution of power among the actors in

economic development. The ACSWP shall report periodically to the General Assembly and its relevant agencies on its findings and their implications for the further development of policy on international trade and the church's advocacy on trade issues in the public arena.

3. calls upon the United States government to develop sustainability criteria to appraise the likeliest impact on developing countries of existing and proposed United States trade policies. These criteria should reflect the principle that trade, to be supported, must genuinely promote poverty reduction, democracy, and ecological sustainability. No trade policy reform should be undertaken that does not meet these criteria except in cases where injured parties are fully compensated for their losses.

4. calls upon the United States government and the other parties to the GATT to develop rules and guidelines whereby member nations under certain circumstances may use unilateral trade measures for purposes of environmental protection. Tariffs or subsidies may be justified when domestic producers are subject to stricter environmental standards than those of their foreign competitors, and thus are placed at a competitive disadvantage at home or abroad. The possibility of unilateral action to guard against such unfair disadvantage should be an incentive to the adoption of appropriate standards by all countries and the negotiation of binding treaties for international environmental protection.

5. proposes and urges a multinational effort to transform the GATT into the GATE, the General Agreement on Trade and the Environment. Primarily still a trade agreement, GATE nonetheless would recognize the importance of sustainable resource consumption and ecosystems preservation as part of a strategy for assuring long-term efficiencies in the production of wealth and trade.

6. urges the United States and the other member governments of the World Trade Organization to reexamine the potential advantages of regional integration schemes for countries of relatively equal size and stage of development. Such schemes should enable them to harvest some benefits from specialization without subjecting themselves unduly to dependence on imports from and

exports to dominant powers, and to all the vicissitudes of global trade.

K. MORE AND BETTER DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

PRINCIPLE: The purpose of development assistance is to equip people and communities through financial and technical means to implement their own plans for just and sustainable development.

In the parable of the great judgment (Matt. 25:31-46, NRSV) Jesus says that the nations will be gathered before the king. In the separation that follows, we may surmise that it is not simply individuals who are distinguished as righteous or unrighteous but that the nations as such are measured by their practical concern for those most needy, those who are "the least" in Jesus' family. His family—those with whom he identifies—surely is universal, not limited to those who know that they belong. We may leave judgment to the king, knowing with the "righteous" that we are not worthy of the grace the king extends, but perhaps avowing also with the "unrighteous" that we did not realize the implications of our neglect. Nevertheless, the message of the parable is clear, that it is critically important to the meaning of faithfulness to God, or to the best that a person or a nation can know, to respond to need and deprivation by doing justice, extending kindness, and walking humbly with your God (Micah 6:8).

What are the implications of this message for a nation's policies on development assistance and for the voice of its people, especially the Christian people, in determining these policies? If the message is only to extend relief to the hungry and the suffering, most people will give assent. But Jesus wants us to treat them as members of his family—our family ("I was a stranger and you welcomed me" [Matt. 25:35, NRSV]). And surely he does not wish us to tolerate the conditions that prolong their suffering. Hence the need for "development." It now gets harder to respond. It gets harder still when we begin to realize that in today's interdependent world our nation's policies and our personal lifestyles and exercise of citizenship may have some causal bearing on their plight.

It is not easy to begin with Jesus' message and come out with the specifics of a response to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the sick, and the imprisoned—especially when they are not only near at hand but also distant neighbors in a complex world. Yet, somehow we know that this is where we have to start and that it will affect the outcome. What does it really mean to minister to people through development assistance—to do so in a way that actually eases their suffering and helps to change the conditions that prolong it, even if changing these conditions entails changing policies from which we have benefited?

The number of desperately poor people in this world continues to grow. Yet, external aid from various affluent nations, including the United States, is contracting. In the United States, foreign aid, like public welfare, is politically unpopular—reflecting not only political myths and stereotypes, but also, we confess, moral deficiencies, justified by such cliches as "charity begins at home." Negative attitudes toward foreign assistance seem to be as common in the churches as in the general public.

Sufficient development assistance for just and sustainable human development will be expensive. The secretariat for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) estimated the "average annual costs (1993-2000) of implementing the activities in Agenda 21 in developing countries to be over $600 billion, including about $125 billion" in grants or concessional terms from the international community.[13] The total aid from the nations of the north to those of the south in 1991 was $57 billion, $10.1 billion of which came from the United States. Another $14 or $15 billion was provided in concessional loans from multilateral development agencies such as the World Bank. Most of the United States aid, which has been declining, has been extended more for geopolitical reasons than for the purpose of reducing poverty. The United Nations target for official development assistance from nations of the north is 0.7 percent of their GNP. United States' aid represents less than 0.2 percent.

Rather than resign itself to current political realities, the church's proper role is to look beyond them for ways to transform

assistance policies to correspond more closely to the norms of justice and sustainability. Agenda 21 calls for "equitable burden-sharing" by affluent nations in proportion to their resources. This is a demand for justice, not charity. Considering the wealth and the waste in the United States, the low and declining level of United States development assistance is a serious expression of injustice.

Increased aid could and should come substantially from reductions in military and defense expenditures. This would be in line with the recommendations by some nations that at least one-third of the "peace dividend" be devoted to development assistance.[14] Indeed, the reduction of global poverty is in the security interest of the United States and other countries, for it serves to forestall international as well as domestic conflict.

The world needs not only more aid but better aid. The kind of development assistance matters even more than the amounts. Some forms of aid have exacerbated poverty and ecological degradation. They have had more to do with the opening of southern markets than with facilitating sustainable community-based development. Trade policies must be adjusted so that they are not at cross purposes with improved policies of development assistance. Too often development in the south has increased southern dependence on the north, it has failed to guard against excessive and inadequately compensated extraction of southern hemisphere resources, and it has led to the exploitation of poorly paid southern labor. Some large projects, including some sponsored by the World Bank, have led to unnecessary losses of biodiversity. Others have forced resettlements of people with little concern for their well-being in the new location. All projects must be evaluated for their positive and negative impacts on the welfare of poor communities and regional environments.

Although some large projects for infrastructure development are needed, they should be instrumental to community-based development and poverty reduction. Much more emphasis is needed on decentralized, local, small-scale development owned by the communities themselves with assistance understood as facilitation of the people's participation in designing and implementing the programs and processes that will enhance their long-term

well-being and self-reliance through better utilization of all available productive assets.

Occasionally, agents of assistance may need to circumvent corrupt or incompetent governments and relate directly to community organizations. Small-scale projects that many communities want include appropriate transportation systems, appropriate technologies, efficient irrigation systems, primary health services, sanitation projects, educational programs, better forest management practices, environmental rehabilitation and soil restoration, and various micro enterprises that produce and sell locally.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including church bodies, already facilitate many decentralized self-development projects. Such NGOs are important instruments of human development. With their knowledge of and responsiveness to local conditions and needs, they are effective vehicles for cooperative action in development.

Whether in large or small packages, development assistance must be evaluated on the basis of its contribution to just and sustainable human development—especially to the reduction of poverty and the preservation of environmental integrity. The function of development assistance is to provide the financial and technical means for poor people to do their own developing. This is a fundamental guideline for all forms of assistance. It helps prevent the paternalistic impositions that are a constant danger in development projects.

Therefore the 208th General Assembly (1996)

1. commends the Presbyterian Hunger Program, the Self-Development of People program, and the Worldwide Ministries Division Development Team for their sensitivity to the importance of local community initiative and partnership; encourages them to make all possible efforts to insist that overseas partners be in charge of proposal development and project implementation; and urges all Presbyterians to view these programs of the church as a means for their support of just and sustainable human

development, not only at the time of the One Great Hour of Sharing but throughout the year.

2. requests the Presbyterian Foundation to consider increasing the amount it has invested in the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society, the ecumenical church's global instrument for development assistance.

3. calls upon the president and the Congress to make support for national sustainable development strategies the primary mission of the USAID. Such strategies should focus especially on programs aimed directly at conserving natural resources and the environment and programs to meet basic human needs, generate income, and assist family planning.

4. urges USAID, the multilateral assistance agencies, and all agents of development assistance to give higher priority to partnership relationships with local communities. Partnerships involve mutuality and cooperation and aim at increased self-reliance with respect to essential needs. Self-reliance comes through broad-based local ownership and control of productive resources, land reform (as necessary), and encouragement of sustainable agriculture and locally-based business enterprises.

5. calls upon the president and the Congress to increase substantially overall United States financial and technical support for just and sustainable human development. A doubling of funding would be appropriate if prospects are good that it can be well spent. Special emphasis should be given to countries that maximize poverty reduction, minimize military expenditures, and protect the environment, and to programs that have favorable prospects for continuing benefits based upon community-based energies and follow-through after funding is terminated.

6. urges that United States assistance, trade, and debt policies encourage policies of southern governments to provide the framework, infrastructure, and basic services within which democratic, participatory, relatively self-reliant communities may thrive.

7. urges that the significant roles of NGOs in community-based sustainable development be recognized, encouraged, and supported by governments, churches, foundations, other funding agencies, and individual donors.

8. urges that development assistance not be channeled through governments when the likelihood is that it will increase the possibilities for corruption, inefficiency, and military rule. In such circumstances, channeling assistance through trustworthy NGOs is more likely to strengthen people's participation in their own development.

9. urges that the United States government assistance agencies, as well as private donor organizations, promote development of local entities that provide small loans, credit services, and management counseling on favorable terms for locally based, need-oriented agricultural improvements, small business enterprises, and other projects undertaken by individuals, cooperatives, and people's organizations.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 8: HOPE FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE

CONCLUSION

A. THE NECESSARY QUESTIONS

The Task Force on Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy consulted many sources of information in its four-year quest for understanding. Central among them were voices of the people of the land. Above all, they told the task force they needed access to more land, which they believed was rightfully theirs, so that they might grow sufficient food for themselves and their children and take some surplus to a local market. They appreciated an enabling partnership with agencies such as the Christian Commission for Development in Honduras and World Neighbors in many countries of the developing world, agencies that responded to the people's own goals and plans by providing advice, training, and small loans. These people had long known poverty and struggle but still held fast to hope. For them, "development" meant reclaiming the land, reestablishing it as the land of the people.

Meanwhile, the task force learned many governments had adopted policies to integrate their countries into the global economy. These policies pursued development through modernization, industrialization, attraction of foreign investment, and expansion of trade, with increased production of food for export. Officials acknowledged that this development path led in the short run to still greater hardships for most of the people, but said they expected longer-term improvements in the people's lot.

The task force pondered 'these two messages about development in Honduras and elsewhere, wondering whether they were complementary or contradictory. That quandary remained unresolved. But the questions to pursue in probing policies became clear. Do they enable a people or a nation to meet essential needs sufficiently for genuine poverty reduction? Do they foster a comprehensive realization of human development, not only the material and economic dimensions, but the social, cultural, political, and spiritual? And do

they do these things sustainably, by respecting and cherishing the natural systems whose flourishing is indispensable to humankind's own continuing fulfillment?

B. Two IMPERATIVES

Such questions stem inescapably from the ethical constancies of Christian faith, especially the biblical imperative to do justice and extend kindness to "the widow, the orphan, and the stranger"—to all the needy and the vulnerable. In their application to policies, these questions recognize that justice and kindness require societal conditions in which individuals and families may find fulfillment together as members of community. And by including the concept of sustain-ability, they reflect the distinctive contemporary awareness that our complex civilization needs urgently to garner God's gifts in creation carefully and share them equitably.

God's gifts combined with human labor are sufficient. The massive, recalcitrant global poverty of our time cannot be accepted as a condition to which much of humankind is doomed. To the extent that poverty is unnecessary, it is unjust and contrary to God's will. This makes development to overcome it a matter of justice and a priority of Christian faithfulness. Justice requires societal arrangements whereby all may participate in the sufficiency of God's provisions.

Human development as an imperative of justice has become inseparable from the imperative of sustainability. For creation's integrity, for nonhuman as well as human well-being, and for the planet's viability as habitat for future generations, the impact of development on nature has to be reduced. Only then can material sufficiency and the full human development to which all rightfully aspire become realizable and sustainable.

C . REVISITING POLICIES

The focus on just and sustainable human development puts many of the church's existing social witness policies into a very contemporary context. They require new consideration and perhaps significant extension. The church's longstanding concern for poverty and hunger, for example, will properly continue in relation to the

considerations of development set forth here. For development to make sufficiency possible for those who lack it, those whose way of living exceeds sufficiency are called to a new frugality.

The present report, similarly, revisits other concerns of the church—human rights, education, the role of government, environmental protection, and population stabilization—and examines their essential relationship to just and sustainable human development. For instance, the full human rights of women are reaffirmed in relation to the critical leading roles of women in the economies of households and local communities.

A sense of the universality of the most basic ethical claims under the one Lord of creation and history underlies the broad vision of justice and sustainability that this report ventures to lift up. At the same time, the report emphasizes the rich diversity of cultures and spiritualities within which development proceeds and by which it is shaped and sustained.

But development cannot go forward where violence and war rage, whether within nations or between them. The church now gives timely renewal of support to the United Nations, both for its direct engagements in conflict prevention and peacekeeping and for its varied programs that make for peace. Not only is peace necessary for development, but peacemaking as the "believer's calling" encompasses the rectification of oppressive systems and the pursuit of ecological sustainability without which peace will forever be imperiled.

Concern for the global future leads finally to some issues that impinge most immediately on the character of development and call for the most careful scrutiny of United States international economic policy. These are the issues of debt, international trade, and development assistance.

D. UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES—ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE

In dealing with these issues, the church has to make a special effort both to understand the changing times and to anticipate the effects of present policies upon the decades and centuries to come. The path of development since World War II has led to the immense,

unprecedented growth and the ever-tighter interdependence and integration of the global economy. Some of the benefits have been widespread (to combat famines and epidemics, for example); and some people in almost every nation and many people in the industrialized nations have reaped great material benefits. Nevertheless, the promise of this development has remained far short of realization, as the grim facts about massive poverty and widening inequality attest. And now the sustainability factor confronts the world. If poverty persisted and inequalities widened when there was little or no awareness of ecological constraints and perils, how shall development be reconceived to reflect the new awareness and find creative ways of seriously combating poverty today without foreclosing on the future?

The church does not have the option of indifference to this question. This is the overarching justice question for our time, and concern for justice is not optional for Christians. Neither is concern for sustainability optional for biblical people who praise the Creator and the Creator's manifold works and the wisdom by which the Creator has made them all (Ps. 104:24). Moreover, Christians who receive the gift of God's grace in Jesus Christ, to which generation after generation has witnessed for two millennia, cannot deny or "discount" their obligation to the generations in the millennium that lies ahead.

In the face of the complexities and disappointments associated with development, people who remain relatively prosperous face the very real temptation of unconcern—the temptation to escape concern for hunger and poverty, to resist analysis that might implicate their nation or themselves in persistent problems, and to hold to the comforting assumption that the fault for poverty lies mainly with impoverished people. The General Assembly resists this temptation and calls for a renewal of concern.

The General Assembly believes that God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the humbling yet challenging task of acknowledging the failures of development and discerning the new path along which God now seeks to lead and guide (Isa. 42:16). We may undertake this task with hope for the global future.

E. A FRESH ENDEAVOR

The present report represents a fresh endeavor by the church to follow God's leading at a momentous turning point in the history of "human development" under the Creator and Redeemer of earth and people. The church ventures to affirm boldly some principles that faithfulness to God requires in the present historical moment.

Regarding the debt burden of developing countries, justice requires that debt not be laid upon the poor but shared equitably in ways that hold fast to poverty reduction and environmental protection.

In regard to trade, justice forbids that the international system be shaped and evaluated solely in commercial terms. The norms of people's participation in development, people's access to sufficient sustenance, and the sustainability of the environmental and resource base must be applied to trade, even when they require reconsideration of longstanding assumptions and significant change in policy direction. Because of the need for fresh thinking about trade, the General Assembly directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to monitor United States trade agreements and trends with an eye to their implications for social witness policy and advocacy.

With regard to development assistance, justice requires not only more sharing but more wisdom so that aid will be effective in equipping communities to go forward with their own plans for participatory, sufficient, and sustainable development. The aim is not more handouts but partnerships that enable people to do their own developing and to become more self-reliant with respect to their essential needs.

E HOPE FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE

"[Our] hope is in the Lord [our] God, who made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry [and] sets the prisoners free" (Ps. 146:5-7, NRSV). But such hope, rooted in faith, is inseparable from faithfulness. It is inseparable from openness to the contemporary Word of God, which comes to us as we hear the biblical word in the midst of the conditions and events

through which the living God speaks, calls, and commands today. These are the conditions of hunger and displacement, oppression and imprisonment, degradation of earth and disruption of community, which characterize our time. These are the events, the movements and struggles, for restoration and liberation, assurance of livelihood, healing of earth, renewal of community, revitalization of democracy, and redistribution of power, within which despite all human failings, we may experience and discern the action of God's Spirit to make and to keep human life fully human.

Because our God is the Creator-Redeemer of the biblical story, we know that God offers new life in Jesus Christ. And we know that this new life includes responsiveness to God's contemporary Word, which points us to the agonies and the opportunities of this extraordinary time, saying that God seeks to show us what it means now to have justice and community and sustainability as the priorities of social witness and action. All our concerns about human development are to be focused and directed by these priorities.

Taken seriously, these priorities, even as expressed in the recommendations of this report, press us on into wrestling with complexities and controversies, realizing that they entail changes in assumptions, policies, and ways of living that will not come easily. Justice, community, and sustainability are too often overwhelmed by the greed, pride, and carelessness of the powerful, or by the relentless dynamics of systems and institutions dominated by other values. Nevertheless, we lift them up because, as biblical people, we cannot do otherwise, and because they show the way to go. They light the path of adventurous faithfulness to the God who judges and restores commands and forgives makes new and gives hope.

Responding with gratitude and trust to the One who leads us on this path, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls and prays for a renewal of concern . . . a renewal of humility..... a renewal of hope and action for the global future God intends.

REPORT SUBMITTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) submits the report "Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development" to the 208th General Assembly (1996) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and calls on the assembly

(1) to approve the following portions of the report:

(a) "Call to a Renewal of Concern ...Humility... Hope... and Action"; and

(b) "Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations."

(2) to receive the background sections, appendixes, and "Highlights of Principles and Policies."

(3) to approve the report as a whole for churchwide study and use.

(4) to recognize that these recommendations affect the work of all entities of the General Assembly and to establish a four-year emphasis.

(5) to direct the Office of the General Assembly (in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy) to develop and print a study guide, and to print the entire report "Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development" and to distribute both in a timely manner to

(a) all middle governing bodies, sessions, and libraries of the theological seminaries, making additional copies available for sale to aid study and implementation efforts in the church;

(b) leaders of sister denominations and ecumenical organizations; and

(c) the president, vice-president, members of the Congress of the United States of America, members of the President's Council on Sustainable Development, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization.

(6) to enthusiastically commend the members of the Task Force on "Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy" for their work and contribution to the church in the development of "Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development."

APPENDIX A

TASK FORCE ON "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, REFORMED FAITH, AND U.S. INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY"

A. OCCASION FOR A MAJOR STUDY

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) established the Task Force on "Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy," charging it to develop a policy statement and background paper on sustainable development for submission to the 208th General Assembly (1996). The prospectus of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy summarized the primary—and complex—responsibility of the task force in the following way:

> to develop a comprehensive and integrated statement of social witness policy on sustainable development, especially as it relates to the impact of American international economic policies on the economies and societies of the poorest countries, and to derive from it programmatic recommendations for study and action at all levels of the Church.

Later, two General Assemblies asked the task force to include other related issues. The 205th General Assembly (1993) referred *Overture 93-61. On Conveying to All Major Ecclesiastical Bodies Concerns Regarding the Population Explosion Crisis—From the Presbytery of San Jose.* Population matters are, of course, relevant to sustainable development, and the task force had begun to explore them. Responding to the General Assembly request, the task force decided to examine population more rigorously than it had originally planned.

> Response: The policy statement *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development* answers the 205th General Assembly's (1993) referral of *Overture 93-61* concerning population issues.

Two years later, the 207th General Assembly (1995), in its policy statement *God's Work in Our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation,* called on the task force

to make recommendations concerning measures to address the global employment crisis, especially concerning ways in which the world's most privileged groups and nations must make sacrifices as an inescapable aspect of faithfulness in adjusting to global realities; as well as recommendations that encourage equity in international economic decisions, making clear the General Assembly's concern for all employees, both in the United States and other nations. *(Minutes,* 1995, Part I, pp. 425-26)

This encouraged the task force to explore international issues of vocation and work beyond the largely domestic focus of *God's Work in Our Hands.* Informed by the work—and policy analyses—of the earlier task force, the task force addressed the responsibilities of the faithful in facing the inequities of wealth and income among the peoples of the world; it also examined the policy implication of both poverty and unemployment for just, human sustainability.

Response: The policy statement *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development* answers the 207th General Assembly (1995) referral made in *God's Work in Our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation.*

B. THE TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force on "Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy" appointed by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy includes William S. Brackett, elder, Church of the Savior, Oklahoma City, and chief executive officer, World Neighbors; Gordon K. Douglass, elder, Nassau Presbyterian Church, Princeton, New Jersey, and consulting economist and former vice-president for academic affairs and dean of Franklin & Marshall College; Alice Frazer Evans, elder, First Presbyterian Church, Hartford, Connecticut, and director of writing and research, Plowshares Institute, Simsbury, Connecticut; William E. Gibson, minister, Ithaca, New York, theologian/ethicist, and former staff associate of the Eco-Justice Project and Network, Center for Religion, Ethics and Social Policy, Cornell University; Heidi Hadsell do Nascimento, ethicist and dean of the faculty and vice-president of Academic Affairs, McCormick Theological Seminary; James W. Kuhn, chair, elder, Norwood Presbyterian Church, New Jersey, and Courtney C. Brown Emeritus Professor of Management and Organization, Graduate School of Business, Columbia University; Charles E. McLure Jr., elder, Menlo Park Presbyterian

Church, Menlo Park, California, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, former deputy assistant secretary of the Treasury for Tax Analysis, United States Government, and currently advising countries in transition from socialism on how to develop tax laws; Mary McQuillen, elder, Port Townsend Presbyterian Church, Port Townsend, Washington, instructor in Native American Oral History, and workshop leader on a variety of subjects; Edna Orteza, elder, United Church of Christ in the Philippines, a World Alliance of Reformed Churches representative to the task force, and a recent staff member of the World Council of Churches in their social justice division, Geneva, Switzerland; Robert Patterson, elder, West Raleigh Presbyterian Church, professor of crop science, North Carolina State University; Louise Tappa, Baptist minister in the Cameroon, currently working on an integrated community Health Development Program, and a World Alliance of Reformed Churches representative to the task force; Sarah Blyth Taylor, interim pastor, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, and former vice-president of Citibank with both international and domestic experience.

Staff assistance was provided at various times by Catherine G. Borchert, coordinator, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy; Lionel Derenoncourt, Worldwide Ministries Division, associate, International Hunger; Robert Ellis, Worldwide Ministries Division, associate, Program Development; Kenneth G. Y. Grant, National Ministries Division, Churchwide Partnerships, associate director; and Peter A. Sulyok, associate, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

Consultants included Mark Leach, principal consultant, Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group, program and research coordinator, Institute for Development Research, Boston, Massachusetts; Starr Luteri, writer; James A. Nash, executive director, Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy, Washington, D.C.; and Elizabeth Weiman, associate pastor, Grace Congregational Church of Framingham, Massachusetts.

In addition, the task force benefited from the support and concern of Tim and Gloria Wheeler, Noemi Espanoza, and the staff of the Comision Cristiana de Desarrollo (CCD) located in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Gloria Kinsler, Seminario Biblico, San Jose, Costa Rica,

assisted the task force during its visit to Honduras, as well. Each person carefully and fairly described patterns of sustainable and unsustainable development, of partnership with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and of United States international economic policy.

C. PROCESS STATEMENT

The task force members combined intense experience, detailed study, personal involvement, and careful reflection in their search to understand the issues, problems, dilemmas, and trade-offs involved in consideration of policy recommendations that might usefully contribute to sustainability of a kind that were informed by our faith and relevant to the conditions of humankind.

They met for the first time, November 15, 1991, at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. While all members were interested in and informed about sustainability issues, some possessed professional skills and expert knowledge pertinent to the subject assigned. In their early discussions of the assignment, the members realized that the task was large, involving prudent investigation of a variety of complicated and difficult subjects—environment, ecology, economics, politics, foreign trade, demographics, theology, and history. They also agreed that the task required more than data, statistical analysis, factual information, and social analysis. To prepare a report with an appropriate understanding of the human demands and social constraints that sustainability must recognize, they also sought a variety of personal stories and anecdotal (case study) materials.

The task force set itself the task, over its next two meetings, to explore the ways in which sustainable development had already been defined, and to gather measures, data, and "facts" about development and the lack of it—including the losses and gains involved; it also sought to discover the effects of environmental degradation, poverty and powerlessness upon the lives of both rich and poor at home and in the world. Members were assigned responsibility for bringing to its attention theological explorations, biblical writings, and ethical studies that were germane to an understanding of sustainability. It also identified the groups and communities from whom it needed to seek stories and information; it asked for a review and

compilation of the applicable church policies as adopted by earlier General Assemblies; and it decided to explore the uses of a Presbyterian panel survey of Presbyterian views about sustainability and related topics.

The members quickly agreed that the church, following biblical guides, favors the poor in its policy recommendations—that all polices must be judged by the standards of justice and how our faith understands them. It was clear to all that whatever human sustain-ability on our small planet entailed, it could not be achieved unless both the world's poor and rich worked together, cooperating in its achievement; the operative word was, is, and will be together.

The second meeting of the task force, March 28-31, 1992, was held at Plaza Resolana, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Members reported on their study of sustainability, the implications of the Reformed faith for it, and the nature and effects of United States international economic policies since World War II. Sydney Thomson Brown, Lee B. Zinc, and Dan Pellegrom, as expert consultants, critiqued the reports and joined in further discussion of the subjects examined. The members authorized a churchwide survey of attitudes toward and about sustainable development. They also approved plans for a Honduras trip—the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere--as well as a meeting to examine and test a study guide designed for wide use in the church.

The task force met again, February 2-12, 1993, in Houston, Texas, after an eight-day journey to Honduras. Its members had traveled from San Pedro Sula on the northern coastal plain bordering the Caribbean, to the central mountains south of Lake de Yojoa, on to the capital Tegucigalpa, and then to Choluteca and the huge shrimp farms on the Golfo de Fonseca. American trade and United States development policies have significantly influenced "progress" in this poor country, providing evidence of both the good and the bad effect upon sustainability. The effects of a very rapid growth in population were also clear, as the burgeoning numbers of poor people move into the mountains where they deforest the hillsides in their desperate search for farmland. The journey is described more fully in Appendix B of this report, see page 164.

In its fourth meeting, task force members had time to reflect on what they had learned in Honduras, as well as from their earlier study and discussion. They spent a week, August 23-30, 1993, at Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico, joined by a number of expert consultants and a group of interested participants who enrolled in the seminars. All studied and critiqued the draft of a proposed churchwide study document *Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy: A Guide for Organizing and Leading Study Groups*. The consultants were Larry Rasmussen, Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Theology, Union Theological Seminary; Beverley Keene, executive director, Fundacin Servicia Paz y Justicia, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Denis Goulet, O'Neil Professor of Economics, University of Notre Dame; George Tinker, professor, Illife Seminary, Denver, Colorado; and George Ayittey, professor of economics, American University, Washington, D.C.

The task force's fifth meeting was held at The William Penn House, Washington, D.C., January 13-16, 1994. The members, as a group, examined and critiqued two draft documents on sustainability, which were presented earlier by two of their own members. No consensus had yet developed on policy recommendations, but alternate approaches to be evaluated were defined. They also held long conversations with Johannes Linn, vice-president, Financial Policy and Risk Management, The World Bank; and with Matthew McHugh, consultant to the president, The World Bank, and sometime congressperson, on development issues and the problems of changing governmental policies to encourage sustainability. An ACSWP Consultation on "Debt, Jubilee and the Two-Thirds World," February 11-13, 1994, Plaza Resolona, Santa Fe, New Mexico, provided the task force with insightful perspectives and suggested policy recommendations that were helpful to members in analyzing related issues of sustainability.

The sixth meeting was held at International House, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, September 9-12, 1994. The task force received a published copy of *Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy: Churchwide Study Document* that had already been made available to churches for study and feedback response. Elmer Johnson, law partner, Kirkland & Ellis,

Chicago, and former executive vice-president and director, General Motors Company, engaged in dialogue with members on the pressures upon, demands required of, and opportunities presented to business corporations as their managers wrestled with trade, economic development, and production in contributing to sustainability. The members also reviewed and critiqued an early draft of a background report. All members, in one of three subcommittees, were assigned the responsibility of proposing policy recommendations based on the emerging consensus about the nature and implications of just human development, which could be expected to contribute to a sustainable world.

The seventh and final meeting was held in New York City, April 27-30, 1995, at the Seafarers and International House. Members reviewed the responses from church and seminary study groups of the *Churchwide Study Document;* they then reviewed and approved a revised draft of the report, spending most of their time developing and refining policy recommendations based on the principles and analysis of the report. Consensus emerged as the sessions proceeded and general agreement was reached on a final draft, subject to editorial changes by a subcommittee. Within the few weeks, the subcommittee had prepared a rewrite and submitted it to all members for approval. Shortly thereafter, the task force steering committee presented the final report and recommendations to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

D. FEEDBACK RESPONSE FROM THE EDUCATIONAL CHURCHWIDE STUDY

Origin:

In the summer of 1994, the Task Force on "Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy" prepared a study document for adults in local churches. The material provided was a result of three years of study by the task force. By sharing information in a seven-session study format, it was hoped to involve motivated individuals and groups within the church in both the development of the policy paper and to broaden the base of ownership and feedback.

Participants:

Groups or individuals from thirty-four congregations, eleven governing bodies, three seminaries, and four ecumenical representatives responded. The comments noted below were received in Louisville prior to the September 15, 1995, deadline.

Appreciation:

The task force was gratified that so many people spent many hours to carefully study and reflect on the documents and study guide provided. It is apparent that the church cares about this subject and these initial respondents have made a valuable contribution in the shaping of the policy statement and recommendations for the 208th General Assembly (1996).

Feedback on the Study Document:

The study groups made helpful comments about the document itself. Their insightful responses will be carefully reviewed when the study document is revised.

Learnings:

The following paragraphs provide the sense of what respondents felt they learned about sustainable development, the God of Accompaniment, and the appropriate fesponse of the church:

1. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Along with the task force, all respondents acknowledged the complexity of the subject. Many recognized that more and more people are becoming aware of the need to know more about the global impact of their own actions on the world.

"My view of the community has been broadened to include all of the earth."

"My understanding of how the U.S. appears to 'move in and take over' has been increased."

"Sustainable development is more complicated than I thought."

"We were amazed at the extent of the diversity of views on the focus and means of achieving sustainable development even among those who support the general concept."

"There's consensus that sustainability is a critical need."

2. GOD OF ACCOMPANIMENT

The theological expression presented for many was a struggle, while for some it was a logical presentation of the Gospel message.

"Our biblical and theological understanding of accompaniment is the 'emptying of self' and the empowerment of the weak."

"It (God of Accompaniment concept) is generally quite unfamiliar to North American Christians in our approach to mission relationships and developing countries."

"Very valuable not only because they reflect an experience of life, but because it is very much related with our own conception of the right way of doing theology."

3. APPROPRIATE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH

We found a wide variety of comments regarding how the Presbyterian church should respond

"Get involved by making congregations aware of problems/ solutions locally."

"Help to stop all the military aid."

"I have realized how my preconceived ideas and self-interest make the solving of these problems all but impossible."

"Lead the nation in calling for a sustainable global lifestyle."

"Whatever is presented to the 208th General Assembly should be straightforward in terms of policy and rationale, and should emphasize theology."

"Educate people as to the intrinsic worth of God's creation (human and environmental) and of our responsibility to be good stewards."

Policy Implications and Draft Recommendations:

The questionnaire asked responders to comment on the United States stance toward economic growth both nationally and internationally in the following areas:

1. ENVIRONMENT

"As the rich/poor gap widens, the urgent needs of the poor are directly related to irreversible environmental effects."

". . . preferentially support economic assistance to countries with sound ecological policies and practices."

". . . continue domestic legislation on recycling, incentives to reduce consumption, and maximize renewable resources."

"Any attempt perceived to be restrictive to the growth and welfare of other sovereign nations will be met with resistance and even resentment. We must be mindful of this in any global plan we propose to others."

2. POPULATION

"Emphasis should be placed on sustainable societies and how they relate to Reformed faith. As Christians, we focus on people and their environment."

"Economic policies should be implemented which provide for basic human needs . . . especially true of education and training with emphasis on women . . . should lead to lower birthrates."

"Urgently need to support means of population growth via education, family planning, dependent and health care programs. Proceed with and through international cooperative relationships."

3. LIFESTYLE

Here we found a strong sense that the church should lead the way in helping us "access our lifestyle in the relation to realities and the needs of the rest of the world."

"Gain control of consumption, simplifying life styles by applying faith perspectives to individual, community, congregational and national priorities and actions."

"Challenge congregations to not only give money and time but to enter into a covenant of sustainable development by setting an example in their communities."

"Grant assistance so the people might work to progress from a meager or at least a satisfactory comfort life style." "For just as the sufferings of Christ are [ours in abundance], so also our [comfort] is abundant through Christ." (2 Cor. 1:5, NRSV)

The task force was deeply impressed with the scope and breadth of response to the study document. All of us have recognized the complexity of the problem and of the solution. Nancy Tigner of Ithaca, New York, said it well, "I am convinced that we as Christians have the responsibility to use our God-given intellect to marshal all the facts that we have knowledge of and to then apply them as best we can to compassionately solve human problems, humbly accepting that no solution is appropriate for all people in all times and in all places."

APPENDIX B

OUR JOURNEY IN HONDURAS

By mid 1992, the Task Force on "Sustainable Development, Reformed Faith, and U.S. International Economic Policy" had been at work for over a year, reading extensively about issues of economics, "third world" development, theology, and the environment. In an effort to better understand U.S. international economic policies, task force members agreed on the importance of seeing firsthand the impact of these policies. Honduras was chosen for many reasons. This small country of fewer than five million people is the poorest in Central America; seven of ten inhabitants live in poverty.[1] The United States is the primary trading partner of Honduras, and for many years Honduras has been the recipient of more United States aid than any other Central American country. Honduras has a variety of governmental and nongovernmental development models, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long-standing relations with ecumenical grassroots organizations that extended a warm invitation to the task force.

With a primary goal of "looking, listening, and learning," we drove from San Pedro Sula in the northern mountains through the dry plains surrounding the capital of Tegucigalpa to the humid coast along the Gulf of Fonseca. Throughout the week in February 1993, we met many people, listened to their stories, and observed a variety of development projects. Our host organization was the Christian Commission for Development (CCD) directed by Noemi Espinoza. Tim Wheeler of the staff was our guide together with Gloria Kinsler, a mission co-worker for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who lives in Costa Rica.

Poverty and Struggle

Poverty was the overwhelming reality that we saw—poverty and maldistribution, poverty and struggle—but also hope. Sharing some of our experiences may help readers better understand the powerful impact of our time in Honduras.

Philippa was one of eight men and women who met with our group in their church hall to discuss concerns for Honduras and their work for social and economic improvement in their villages. Philippa's youth, wit, vigor, and intelligence impressed us all. Despite the hard lot of the campesinos (peasant farmers), she foresaw better conditions. We were delighted when several of our group were invited to go with Padre Tito, priest for seven parishes and 44,000 people, to Philippa's home following the meeting.

Philippa's small adobe house, with tinned roof and open door and windows, was sparsely furnished. The hospitality was warm, and her mother quickly appeared with cups of hot coffee. Philippa's father rented a small plot of land, about 1.7 acres, from the local landlord who raised sugar cane. In order to earn the rent money, her father had to hire himself out to cut cane. Now he feared that he might lose his little plot because the landlord was extending the sugar cane planting. The family's livelihood depended on the landlord's decision.

When one of our group asked Philippa's father what farm implements he used, he raised his hand as if holding a machete. Swinging his arm up and down in short, powerful cuts, he showed how he farmed—cutting brush and weeds and loosening the soil with that all-purpose campesino tool. The next question was how much land he would need to grow enough crops to support his family. After some thought he replied, "about three mazantas" (a little over five acres). A fond, hardly realizable, but very modest dream!

We met other campesinos who were organizing in order to improve their lives. For one of our most impressive visits, the group left the fine military highway and traveled slowly up a steep, rocky dirt road to the mountain cooperative project, Santa Rosita. A dozen representatives of the cooperative welcomed us to their community center. Each family had a particular area of responsibility: agriculture, health, finances, information, and so forth.

The first man to speak had come to the region in 1950 and had worked hard for some time on large coffee farms. Then he was "fired with no thank-you." He and several friends decided that they must organize to obtain land. They see March 10, 1986, as their

"Independence Day"—the date they seized a section of mountainous land that became their home. It was good but underused land that the owner refused to rent. Their first project was to construct the community center. They then built homes while beginning to work the land.

Seven times the owner, backed by military force, tried to evict the community. The troops evidently did not relish firing at the determined Santa Rositans. Each time the campesinos either stayed on the land or returned to it. Meanwhile, they formally applied to the National Agrarian Institute for the right to use the land. Their request was consistent with the provisions of land reform law, which grants underused and unused land to landless campesinos, a law that is implemented only after great pressure. Finally, the institute gave the community guaranteed use of the land. However, the people still have no title, and they worry about the implications of a new law (the Modernization of Agriculture Act) that might threaten their ability to stay on the land.

The Santa Rosita community has several major projects: a cattle project ("11 animals at first, now 36 with God's grace"); a coffee project that was unexpectedly successful; basic grains and vegetables; and a project for drinking and irrigation water. All of their work is done by hand. The CCD provides valuable assistance—advice, training, and small loans to enable the people to do what they themselves decide they want to do. The women spoke proudly about a small pharmacy opened nine months earlier. They have a literacy program and a school that teaches through the sixth grade for the children. The need for a workforce, however, keeps some children out of school.

The people said that, above all, they need more land, not only to rest the land used for grain but also to expand their cattle and coffee projects. Communication and travel are very difficult in this isolated area, and the state provides no support. The excess corn, tomatos, and other produce available for sale have to be carried on the backs of men and boys for fifteen kilometers over a steep rocky trail to the highway where they catch a bus to the nearest market town. However, two young burros will soon be old enough to provide much-needed transport. The biggest health problem of the

cooperative, despite the success with farming, is malnutrition. The people know, however, that by organizing they have achieved what they could not have done individually. They obtained land and assistance, and they are determined to stay.

More Messages from the People and Their Organizations

The CCD works in an integrated development program with 113 communities. In each case the program runs from three to five years with an evaluation every six months. Because projects must become self-sustaining, CCD staff finds and trains community leaders. The people themselves develop solutions to their problems, conduct their own process, and determine their own destiny. Political consciousness and an understanding of the Honduran reality are essential. "Faith helps in understanding the reality—that it is not God's will for us to suffer."

The CCD staff identified the biggest challenges as malnutrition and other health problems, illiteracy, and the special problems of women who bear the greatest burden of poverty. The CCD has had to learn to accompany women to help them organize, to provide literacy training, to help them recover natural medicines and other positive aspects of their culture.

We found a similar philosophy of working with the people when we visited a World Neighbors project at El Socorro. World Neighbors, based in the United States, insists on community initiative and responsibility; staff members move out as soon as a community's projects are self-sustaining.

Representatives of the Commission for Defense of Human Rights spoke to us about the abuses that were rife in the 1980s when anti-communist fever and security-state doctrine prevailed. There were many assassinations and disappearances. The situation has improved in the 1990s with the easing of the situation in El Salvador and the sharp decline in the United States military presence. Illegal detention and torture in connection with interrogation, however, remains common. The Honduran military (built with United States support during the era of providing assistance to counter Nicaragua's Sandinista government) still plays a dominant, often

corrupt role in the government and the economy. The United States embassy in Tegucigalpa has taken a stance in support of human rights. This is seen by Hondurans as a marked change from the 1980s.

Commission representatives spoke also of the country's inability to meet basic needs without external help, of the extent to which resources were in the hands of foreigners, and of Honduras's political dependence, by which they meant that economic decisions of great importance were imposed from the outside. Their strongest example was of the policies of "structural adjustment."

We met with representatives of the Union of Campesino Workers (UTC), including Elvia Alvarado whose book we had read, *Don't Be Afraid, Gringo*. The UTC has 18,000 affiliate groups in eleven of the country's eighteen departments. These Hondurans believe that the Modernization of Agriculture Act will concentrate the land in still fewer hands, a very serious concern because access to land is the main point of the campesino struggle. "We have to work the land to live. These lands are ours." Already, they said, 460 landowners, including some transnational corporations, have the best land. "We are trying to recover our land." From UTC representatives we heard again that policies in Honduras had been "exported from abroad," that "neo-liberal economics" had been imposed, and that the influence of the military would continue to be dominant no matter who won the coming election. We were being told, unmistakably, that the United States had a lot to do with what happened in Honduras. The campesinos were convinced that "when people of the United States rise up, policies will change."

Christ Accompanies

We heard from many people whose involvement in service and struggle was rooted in their Christian faith. Wilma, a Mennonite worker, spoke of "letting God's love penetrate us [those who seek to serve]," remembering what Jesus did and being a servant as he was. "But the people on the receiving end must be participants in their own cause. There are some in the Church who tell people to wait for a reward in heaven, but this is wrong."

The churches, Wilma said, should denounce the injustices taking place. "Under neo-liberalism a few people are enjoying the additional imports, but most people are worse off. People can't produce their own food; to survive they have to grow pineapples and bananas [for export] instead of corn and beans." She also challenged United States churches to demand that their own government change its policies affecting Honduras.

At the headquarters of a large Catholic parish, we heard more about land and hunger, militarization and persecution, and the imposition of policies that make it harder for campesinos to live. We met "delegates of the Word," lay people trained in Bible, human rights, political issues, and community organization, who do much of the work of the parish. We heard about "Christian family units" for the care of the poorest and sickest. One particular affirmation of the faith sustaining these people impressed us deeply: "Christ accompanies us."

Official Policies

We visited the government office of the Program of Family Assistance (PRAF), the vice-minister for planning, and the United States ambassador. We met with a staff member of the Division of Foreign Commerce of the Bank of Honduras and with the deputy director for policy (working on bilateral relations) of the Foreign Ministry. We found general agreement on what the government's policies pertaining to economics and development actually are and defense of most policies as necessary. We encountered some sharp criticism of policies as well.

It was a critical time for the Honduran economy—the first evaluation of the readjustment plan, which had begun in 1990. After a decade of ups and downs, the government had decided that problems of fiscal deficit—equal to 13 percent of the value of internal production—and the nation's negative balance in international trade must be addressed. The readjustment plan is similar to other "third-world" programs that have been instituted at the behest of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the multilateral lending institutions, and it is in line with United States international economic policies. These programs are designed to generate payment of

external debt through production for export. Social aspects of the economy receive secondary consideration.

The Honduran "structural adjustment" program projects two phases: short-term stability and longer-term economic reactivation. The short-term phase, we were told, has largely succeeded with respect to the deficit, reduction of inflation, and the stability of the exchange rate. There has been some success in getting support from multilateral institutions. The problems remaining are most notably high unemployment and low national investment. There is also the problem of corruption.

From the government Program of Family Assistance we heard about social programs designed to counter the effects of economic adjustment on the poor by helping single mothers and school children and by training women for work in new micro-enterprises. Later we learned that access to these programs is very limited and closely tied to political favoritism.

Some industrial parks have been established to generate employment and increase exports. These parks are free trade zones where business pays only for certain public services. Some 25,000 to 30,000 new jobs have been created, but we heard a very bad report about these parks: labor is very cheap; there is "extreme abuse of the humanity of employees"; their privacy is violated; they are "almost slaves"; and some women, thinking they were getting a vaccination, have been sterilized without their knowledge.

The adjustment plan assigns most social sector needs to be dealt with eventually by a "policy of overflow." Government spokespersons supported the theory that after substantial and continuing economic growth, benefits will redound to the poor.

Direct measures taken to reduce the deficit have been less a matter of cutting expenditures than of increasing taxes. This policy hurts the poorest people the most. The sales tax has risen from 3 to 7 percent. To benefit the wealthy, the maximum income tax has gone from 40 to 30 percent. Some exemptions and deductions have been eliminated, and the middle class is paying more. The income level beneath which one is exempt from any income tax went from 10,000

to 20,000 empiras, but inflation has made 20,000 worth no more than what equalled 5,000 a few years ago.

The vice-minister for planning said that the Modernization of Agriculture Act would make financial and production resources more accessible to farmers, even the small producers. He emphasized, however, that the campesinos must make the land produce. If after three years they do not progress in this regard, the Agrarian Institute can use the courts to take the land away. He said that Honduras was trying to become self-sufficient in food and also to be an important exporter of agricultural products. The new law presses for the greatest agricultural productivity possible.

We heard both praise and criticism of the shrimp industry on the Gulf of Fonseca. The industry was generating $85 million annually in hard currency. We were impressed by the scale and technical sophistication of the large farm we visited. We knew, however, that some fishermen had denounced the damage to their fishing grounds by shrimp farming pollution and large scale gathering of shrimp larvae and that the jobs contracted out by the company paid very poorly. We later learned that a number of ecologists had been arrested for harshly criticizing the ecological damage from shrimp farming.

A military leader spoke on the radio of the past threat to the country from communists. "Now," he said, "there are no communists, only ecologists."

The United States ambassador had much to say about ecological destruction: deforestation from overcutting and poor management; degradation of fishing grounds from overfishing; deterioration of arid range lands from too many cattle. He spoke also of enormous pressures from rapid population growth. "All this," he said, "plus the problems of a bloated, inefficient public administration." An earlier speaker had lamented the lack of a "culture of care." "But," said the ambassador, "the economy must be modernized even though the equity problem is hard."

Two Messages

We heard two contrasting messages in Honduras. The campesinos and those who work with them expressed strong

opposition to neoliberalism, structural adjustment, and the Modernization of Agriculture Act. They saw these policies as a threat to the kind of development they were struggling to achieve—above all, a threat to their efforts to gain more land and achieve self-sufficiency. Modernization meant more emphasis on crops for export. If they did not measure up to this requirement, they could be pushed off the land they had or at the very least receive less consideration in their long struggle to have the land reform measures on the books implemented. They did not trust assurances that modernization would help them to have a better livelihood eventually.

Defenders of government policy raised the prospect of greater equity in perhaps four or five years, while everyone with whom we spoke agreed that the economic adjustments brought more suffering to the poor, at least in the short run. Government spokespersons and the people at the United States Embassy were firmly convinced that the economy must be modernized and that economic growth and expanded trade were imperative. This conviction seems to be in line with prevailing global rules as advanced by United States international economic policy and the multilateral institutions.

As a task force, we met throughout the trip for worship and prayer. We thanked God for the people who so graciously received us and made possible a moving, enlightening, humbling, and transforming experience. We pondered what we had heard and seen. We noted the pressures for modernization but asked if the rules should hold even if modernization and economic growth mean further devastation of a country's ecological base and further intensification of inequality.

How do we accompany the campesinos? How can we—who by contrast live extravagantly comfortable lives—ask them to wait, not for assurance, but for some possibility of enough to eat? Has the time come for searching and struggling to conceive and make new rules?

Endnote

1. Background information and economic data taken from the United States State Department, "Honduras Economic Trends Report, July 24, 1992" United States State Department "Background Notes: Honduras, May 1992."

APPENDIX C

PRIOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLICY ON "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"

The term "sustainable development" has appeared infrequently in actions taken by the General Assembly. The most notable reference to the idea of sustainability is found in the report of the 202nd General Assembly (1990) on *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice, (Minutes,* 1990, Part I, pp. 647-90), which summarized *(Minutes,* 1990, Part I, pp. 658-61) what previous General Assemblies had said about environmental conditions and problems, and which adopted new policies *(Minutes,* 1990, Part I, pp. 662-70) on sustainable agriculture, water quality, wildlife and wildlands, solid and hazardous wastes, and atmospheric instability like global warming and ozone depletion. Even here, however, the term "sustainable development" was discussed in only two paragraphs of the background report *(Minutes,* 1990, Part I, p. 671) and was not mentioned in the policy recommendations.

Nonetheless, by adopting *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice,* the 202nd General Assembly (1990) gave to the church a mighty theological affirmation of the goodness of God's creation and a set of ethical norms as useful to an exploration of "just and sustainable human development"—the goal of the present report—as it was to understanding the "eco-justice crisis." These norms—sustainability, participation, sufficiency, and solidarity—infuse the recommendations of the present report.

Though they rarely have mentioned sustainable development as such, previous General Assemblies often have spoken of the conditions leading to unjust and unsustainable human development and to measures that seemed appropriate at the time to alter these conditions in more positive directions. Indeed, the *Social Policy Compilation* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) (DMS #331-93-002) is a veritable goldmine of past efforts by the General Assembly to link a Reformed understanding of national policy to the goals of just and sustainable human development.

Consider, for example, what General Assemblies of the past have said about human rights. Their policy statements and resolutions have been both general—addressing the rights of all human beings—and specific, addressing the rights of persons in particular situations. In both cases, the statements of the General Assemblies have been motivated out of a Christian conviction that the church is responsible to speak out on behalf of its neighbors' welfare. To give one illustration: in 1978, the Presbyterian Church in the United States General Assembly adopted a "Declaration of Human Rights," which affirmed that human beings are created in the image of God and that every person is of intrinsic worth before God; and declared that human rights derived from God include the right to exist (". . . no human agency has the right to own, manipulate, brainwash, torture, physically eliminate, experiment with, or deny the existence of any human being"), the right to basic subsistence " . . . adequate work, food, clothing, and shelter, together with liberty of thought, conscience, and religion . . ."), the right to participation in community, and the right to meaningful existence *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1978, Part I, pp. 187-93).

Or consider what General Assemblies of the past have said about "development." Development, according to the 1970 General Assembly, "demands social justice, self-determination, and the chance to develop materially, morally, politically, and spiritually." The world's material and technological progress, it is observed, is making it possible to feed, house, and care for all people, yet disparities between the rich and the poor "are greater now than in any previous century." Hence, "[development] [efforts] must go beyond the treatment of symptoms . . . [They] must attack root causes and provide changes in the social and economic structures so that opportunity for development is open to all ... [This] may require the Church to sustain a position contrary to that of existing power structures" *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1970, Part I, pp. 524-25).

The General Assembly returned to the subject in 1979 when it adopted a policy statement on "Challenge of Development." It said in part "We understand the intent of development ministries of the United Presbyterian Church to be to seek to enhance, redeem and liberate the lives of people by strengthening the capabilities of impoverished communities to utilize development opportunities

emphasizing the use of available indigenous resources according to locally-determined needs, priorities and methods" *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1979, Part I, p. 249).

Thus, by the end of the 1970s, General Assemblies clearly had decided that charity was not enough, that concern for the design of development was essential to a full understanding of the church's place in the emerging world economy. In the earlier postwar years, Presbyterian General Assemblies had endorsed programs of technical assistance and foreign aid almost without reservation *(Minutes,* PCUSA, 1949, Part I, p. 246). But they soon realized that not all foreign aid dollars were equally well spent, and that political or military considerations often influenced foreign aid appropriations more than human needs did *(Minutes,* PCUSA, 1953, Part I, p. 183; *Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1965, Part I, p. 439). This reassessment led then to a shift in the church's position away from a single-minded commitment to "foreign aid," with all of its paternalistic connotations, to the concept to development that stressed self-determination.

By "self-determination," successive General Assemblies clearly meant to call for patterns of development in the poorest countries that opened opportunity for all peoples and not only the "elites." This was unlikely to occur, they thought, without fundamental changes in the international economic order as well as in the domestic policies of developing countries—policies that focused on providing for the "basic needs" of the poorest and weakest members of society *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 197). Thus, earlier General Assemblies seemed to be calling for much broader participation in the processes of development planning as well as in other aspects of nation building, an ethical norm echoed later in the *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice* and the present report.

The idea of "self-determination" in the development process must not be interpreted as a call for autarchy, however, as numerous actions by the General Assembly have made clear. The Presbyterian churches entered the post world war years with a new sense of the "smallness" of the world—a world of "interdependence," but hopefully not one of "dominance" or "dependence." Self-determination—by which it meant opposition to colonialism in all its form—and recognition of the need for an "unselfish" response to global

obligations became cornerstones of Presbyterian church General Assembly witness on foreign policy.

By and large, Presbyterian General Assemblies have supported an international system of barrier-free trade *(Minutes,* PCUSA, 1948, Part I, p. 203; *Minutes,* PCUSA, 1954, Part I, p. 186). To be sure, they occasionally have called for the granting of tariff preferences, commodity price supports, and debt relief for the poorest developing countries *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1976, Part I, p. 506). They also have promoted a more "just economic order" (without being clear about how to achieve it) *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 197). But they seem not to have questioned the balance of benefits and costs from "excessive" dependence on trade, other than in recent commissioner-initiated discussions about the environmental consequences of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

General Assemblies have rarely explored the effects of international capital flows on patterns of dominance and dependence in the international economy. Recent General Assemblies' concern over Maquilladoras investments by United States firms in Mexico and elsewhere has begun to probe this issue. The migration of people across national borders, on the other hand, has been the subject of several General Assembly actions, the most notable that states: "Political and geographical boundaries are in and of themselves part of the human social existence . . . . However, the only boundaries Christians recognize ultimately are those established by justice and love" *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 257). Clearly, recent General Assemblies prefer open borders, at least for people.

General Assemblies have been suspicious of multinational corporations for a long time, though they rarely have made specific recommendations for controlling their behavior. Instead, the church's policies and programs have, first of all, given direct support for alternatives to the conventional operations of economic forces that seem to leave out minorities, the poor, and an overwhelming majority of people in developing nations (eg., PEDCO, Self-Development of People grants); and second, they have advocated for patterns of development that narrow rather than widen the distribution of wealth and power. Since multinational corporations wield great economic and technological power, several General Assemblies have

given support to "appropriate international efforts to monitor, develop a code of conduct for, and regulate the activities of multinational corporations" *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1977, Part I, p. 182; see also *Minutes,* 1983, Report of the Task Force on Transnational Corporations).

The General Assembly said little more during the 1980s about economic development. To be sure, its concerns about Mexican migration were based in part on huge differences in Mexican and United States development, differences that were "pushing" Mexicans out of Mexico and "pulling" them into United States labor markets. But the 193rd General Assembly's report on *Mexican Migration to the United States* was mostly concerned with United States immigration policy rather than with Mexican development policy *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1981, Part I, p. 426; *Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 291).

Similarly, the so-called "Debt Dilemma" of the 1980s drew General Assembly attention to the problems of developing countries. Yet here, too, the 201st General Assembly (1989) seemed much more interested in recommending ways to reduce the debts of developing countries than it was in understanding how debt relief affected development processes *(Minutes,* 1989, Part I, pp. 522-34). Notably, it is in this report, "The Third World Debt Dilemma: Searching for a Moral Response to Vulnerable People and Systems," that the General Assembly first recognized the adverse consequences for the poor of "stabilization" and "structural adjustment" policies imposed on indebted nations by the I.M.F. and the World Bank.

Though the idea of development was not a central theme of *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice,* the report's emphasis on the ecological crisis drew special attention to the complicated context of development processes. "Abuse of nature and injustice to people place the future in grave jeopardy," it observed. As the earth's biological systems are taxed more and more by the appetites for goods and services of ever-rising populations, their capacities to absorb wastes and regenerate themselves are diminished. This leads inevitably to exaggerated differences in the ability of people to obtain the necessities of life, with all its potential for conflicts and injustice. Accordingly, [earth-keeping] today means insisting on sustainability—the ongoing capacity of natural and social systems to

thrive together—which requires human beings to practice wise, humble, responsible stewardship, after the model of servanthood that we have in Jesus" (Ibid., p. 657).

Another essential ingredient of sustainable development is population stability. Besides giving its support to various voluntary programs of family planning, especially those of the United Nations, the General Assembly has said relatively little about overall population planning. In its most trenchant statement, it declared: "We can no longer justify bringing into existence as many children as we desire. Our corporate responsibility to each other prohibits this. Given the population crisis we must recognize and teach, beginning with ourselves, that man has an obligation to limit the size of his family" *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1971, Part I, p. 148).

The full and equal rights of women, yet another ingredient of sustainable development, have been addressed frequently by the General Assembly but rarely in the context of women's roles in developing countries. In 1976, the General Assembly expressed support for the continuing goals of the International Women's Decade: equality, full integration of women into international development efforts, and recognition of women's contributions to peace among nations. And in 1986, the General Assembly focused attention on the issues of sexual exploitation of women, especially prostitution, sex tourism, and practices related to military bases in developing countries *(Minutes,* 1986, Part I, p. 645).

Then, too, universal and adequate education is essential to the design of sustainable development. The General Assembly has spoken eloquently about the renewal of public education in the United States *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, pp. 479-86), but has been surprisingly silent about the educational needs of the rest of the world. It is fair to suppose that the assemblies would want to endorse for all countries the conviction "that an education of high quality for all children is an obligation of society and indispensable to the political and economic health of every democracy" *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, p. 481). But in fact they have not, except for the actions they have taken to affirm certain United Nations declarations of universal human rights.

Just and effective governance is another ingredient of sustainable development. General Assemblies speak often about the conduct of

public life in the United States, but much less frequently about the standards of ethical conduct in governments elsewhere. To be sure, they often have decried violations of human rights in specific national contexts, such as Haiti, Malawi, and Taiwan—and these violations usually have been committed by corrupt or brutal governments. But they have shied away from speaking in broad terms about the conditions of just and effective government elsewhere, with one notable exception: Almost annually during the 1950s, the General Assemblies explored the differences between communist and democratic values and affirmed over and over again the preservation of civil liberties. This view was elaborated by a subsequent General Assembly (1974) in a way that may serve as a template for good government anywhere (although it was adopted only with the United States government in mind):

> (1) That the harmful potential in any concentration of government power makes necessary the distribution of power among those who make, execute and interpret law;
>
> (2) That government is to protect the rights, liberties and well-being of all people, and
>
> (3) That all public officials are subject to law in both public and private conduct. *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1974, Part I, p. 164)

Finally, sustainable development depends upon a modest military and generous capacity for peacemaking. The General Assembly has often objected to excessive amounts of, military spending *(Minutes,* PCUSA, 1949, Part I, p. 246) and occasionally has commented on the social and political costs of the United States military-industrial economy *(Minutes,* 1983, Part I, p. 353). The policy base also is solid on the subject of arms control and disarmament *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, p. 640; *Minutes,* 1984, Part I, p. 345). But it has been surprisingly silent about two of militarism's most distinctive attributes: the international arms trade and the environmental consequences of producing and using arms.

The policy base on peacemaking is extensive, starting mostly with approval of *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling (Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1980, Part I, p. 202). Peace is more than the absence of war, it stated, more than a precarious balance of powers. "Peace is the

intended order of the world with life abundant for all God's children." The policy base also includes a "Commitment to Peacemaking," now adopted by a majority of Presbyterian congregations and presbyteries, and "Seeking to Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement" *(Minutes,* 1992, Part I, p. 658).

APPENDIX D

GLOSSARY

Absolute poverty: A situation where a population or section of a population is able to meet only its bare subsistence essentials of food, clothing, and shelter in order to maintain minimum levels of living.

Agroecosystem: Of or pertaining to the agricultural ecosystem.

Anthroprocentric: A view of the world based on the assumption that the human being is the center of the universe.

Basic needs: The basic goods and services (food, shelter, clothing, sanitation, education, etc.) necessary for a minimum standard of living.

Bilateral aid: Bilateral means two-sided, and in the development context refers to agencies of national governments whose purpose is to provide development assistance to other governments.

Biodiversity: A measure of species richness and natural genetic variation that can apply either within or between species of wildlife. Species diversity means the variety of differing wildlife species, while genetic diversity refers to the mixture and range of genes.

Commodity: Anything that is produced for sale. Commodities may be consumer goods such as radios or producer goods, such as copper bars or cereals. However, the term is commonly used to refer to the primary products most widely traded internationally.

Debt burden: The relative burden of a nation's public debt when compared to its ability to meet interest and principal payments on it.

Deforestation: Cutting down coniferous, temperate, and tropical forests at a faster rate than they are being replanted.

Disaggregate: The separating apart of the distinct elements of a total or whole, as in the disaggregation of the Gross National Product into its component parts.

Discount Rates: The interest rate used to calculate the present value of a promise to pay sometime in the future.

Discriminatory Trade: International trade that is subject to regulation and taxes on tariffs that are not imposed on competing domestic firms.

Diversification: Making a conscious effort to reduce the concentration of resources in the production of a relatively few commodities.

Eco-justice: Ecological health and wholeness together with social and economic justice.

Economic development: Steady increases in average economic well-being, usually measured as national income per capita, broadly shared.

Economic growth: The steady process by which the productive capacity of the economy is increased over time to bring about rising levels of national income.

Excessive consumption: See Overconsumption.

Externalities: Activities that affect others for better or worse, without those others paying or being paid for the activity. Externalities exist when private costs or benefits do not equal social costs or benefits.

Foreign aid: The international transfer of public funds in the form of loans or grants either directly from one government to another (bilateral assistance) or indirectly through the vehicle of a multilateral assistance agency like the World Bank.

Free trade: International trade free of all tariffs and quotas. According to traditional economic theory, free trade allows nations to specialize in those commodities that can be produced most efficiently, so world production is maximized.

Full-cost pricing: A method of setting prices to include the full costs of production and consumption, including the "external" costs not usually included. See Externalities.

G-7 Governments: Also known as "The Group of Seven," this group is composed of the world's seven leading economic powers, often led by Germany, Japan, and the United States.

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT): An international, negotiated series of contracts embodying a code of practice and rules to orchestrate fair trading in global commerce that first came into force in 1948. See also World Trade Organization.

GDP: Growth is usually measured by Gross National Product (GNP) or by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It is designed to measure a country's output as priced in competitive markets.

Global economy: A descriptive term to emphasize the interconnectedness of all national economies.

Global warming: Global warming, mainly occurring as a result of the build-up of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, has been identified by many scientists as a major environmental threat to the future of the world.

Gross National Product (GNP): The value, at current market prices, of all final goods and services produced within some period by a nation (without any deduction for depreciation of capital goods).

Human capital: The stock of technical knowledge and skill embodied in a nation's workforce, resulting from formal education and on-the-job training.

IMF: See International Monetary Fund below.

Import substitution: A deliberate effort to replace major imports by promoting the emergence and expansion of domestic industries, such as textiles, shoes, and household appliances.

Infrastructure: The basic facilities and structures upon which continued economic growth is dependent. These might include schools, highways, communication systems, financial systems, transportation, and power facilities.

Inputs: Goods and services—raw materials, man-hours of labor—used in the process of production.

Integrated pest management: The substitution of natural predators for chemicals to control agricultural pests.

Integration: The act of bringing together a number of various disciplines or economics into a harmonious whole.

Internalized costs: Costs paid for by those who produce them. See full-cost pricing.

International Monetary Fund (IMF): Established at the same time as the World Bank (see below), the IMF is responsible for maintaining orderly exchange rates between national currencies. It provides short-term loans to countries experiencing financial emergencies.

Investment: That part of national income or expenditure devoted to the production of capital goods over a given period of time. Direct investment is investment across national borders.

Just and sustainable human development: It is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all (present and future), involving the integration of the economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

Liberation theology: Theology that is generally developed from the perspective of the oppressed. God is understood in liberation theology as having a "preferential option for the poor" and the "poor" are empowered to struggle for God's justice.

Liquidity: The favorable conditions whereby buying and selling in a market system does not produce unmanageable fluctuation in the markets for foreign exchange.

Macroeconomics: The field of economics that explores and provides analysis of the various economic pressures effecting the interrelationship of large aggregates of the economy. These might include employment/unemployment income.

Maturities: Loan or note payment becomes due at a specific time period.

Microenterprises: Very small entrepreneurial businesses.

Multilateral: Multilateral means many-sided, and refers here to organizations whose membership consists of multiple national governments. In general, a multilateral organization facilitates exchanges of information, money, or control between countries.

Multinational corporation: An international corporation with headquarters in one country but branch offices or production facilities in a wide range of both developed and developing countries.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA): A trade agreement negotiated between Canada, Mexico, and the United States embodying a code of practice and rules to orchestrate trading between the partner countries.

OPEC: This stands for the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Opportunity cost: In production, the real value of resources used in the most desirable alternative.

Output: Some measure of the monetary value of final goods and services produced in a particular time period, e.g., the GNP.

Overconsumption: Consumption levels in excess of material sufficiency in order to share with neighbors and live within nature's limits.

Overpopulation: Population levels in excess of nature's carrying capacity.

Perverse incentives: An incentive to borrow money without the means to repay and with the anticipation that the debt might be forgiven, thus leading to increased bad debt and harm to the overall economy.

Physical capital: Tangible investment goods (e.g., plant and equipment, machinery, building). See also Human capital.

Political economy: The attempt to merge economic analysis with practical politics—i.e., to view economic activity in its political context.

Privatization: The process of enlarging the part of an economy whose activities are under the control and direction of nongovernmental economic units such as households and firms. Each economic unit owns its own resources and uses them mainly to maximize its own well-being.

Protectionism: National policies designed to favor domestic interests over foreign sellers.

Protracted arrears: Unpaid or overdue debts that have existed over a drawn-out duration of time.

Public sector: That portion of an economy whose activities (economic and noneconomic) are under the control and direction of the state.

Renewable resources: Natural resources that can be replaced, e.g., forests and fisheries, so that the total supply is not fixed for all time, as in the case of nonrenewable resources, e.g., iron ore and coal.

Social system: The organizational and institutional structure of the society, including its value premises, attitudes, power structures, and traditions.

Structural adjustment: These are economic austerity measures often required by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as conditions for developing countries to receive new loans or to reschedule earlier loans. Such measures often include decreasing

wages, reducing government services and subsidies, increasing export production, devaluing the currency, and the privatization of government-owned enterprises.

Sustainable development: Stated very simply, sustainable development is making use of the planet's resources in such a way that all people today and in the future can have happy, healthy lives. It connotes a comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all (present and future), involving the integration of the economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

Theology: Literally, "the study of God." Generally, theology is the systematic presentation of the major faith beliefs concerning God and the Church.

Throughput: The process whereby primary matter and energy from the ecosystem become input to the economic system and go through it until they become output as waste matter and energy. In a steady state economy, the stock of material wealth is kept constant and the throughput is minimized, so that the stock is kept useful for meeting needs as long as possible. Similarly, the stock of people is kept constant by balancing births and deaths while maximizing life expectancy.

Tradeoff: The necessity of sacrificing ("trading off") something in order to get more of something else. See also Opportunity cost.

Transparency: Open to public scrutiny.

Trickle-Down: The notion that development is purely an economic phenomenon in which rapid gains from the overall growth of GNP would automatically bring benefits (i.e., "trickle-down") to the masses in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities.

Two-Thirds World: Countries other than the Western industrial nations. There is no consensus when it comes to the language of development. Some will talk about the first, second, and third worlds. Some will talk about developed and developing countries. Others characterize countries as north or south, or One-Third or

Two-Thirds World. Others still will speak of the majority world, since the vast majority of people on this planet do not live in the highly developed Western nations.

UNCED: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, often known as the "Earth Summit" at Rio de Janeiro, June 1992.

Unilateral action: Unilateral means one-sided, and refers here to a situation where agencies of a national government make a decision to initiate some action on its own to facilitate the exchange of information, money, or control between itself and another country or countries.

Value added: As raw materials are processed or manufactured into consumable goods or for further production, it is said that they increase in value.

World Bank: The World Bank was established by the Western industrialized countries after World War II to assist other countries to develop through the flow of funds from capital-rich to capital-poor countries. It makes loans for infrastructure (such as dams, power stations, roads, and so on) and development projects in poor countries.

World Trade Organization: A new multinational agency established in 1994 at the conclusion of the "Uruguay Round" of GATT. It facilitates implementation of agreements reached in the Uruguay Round, provides a forum for future agreements, and provides means for dispute settlement over international trade issues. See also General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

A STUDY GUIDE ON HOPE FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE: TOWARD JUST AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by James W. Kuhn, chair, Task Force on Sustainable Development, The Reformed Faith & U.S. International Economic Policy, with the help of William Gibson, member, and Peggy Andrews, consultant for the study guide.

Just and sustainable human development requires of all people an effort to enhance the quality of life for all—not only for the present generation, but also for those of the future. Sustainable human development may require, especially for the desperately poor of the world, more material goods; but it may also entail, especially for the favored rich, using those already available in more equitable and just ways.

Purpose:

To study the needs and demands of just and sustainable human development as opportunities for the fulfillment of both local and global responsibilities. Participants should use their knowledge of politics, economics, and community, as well as their understanding of their faith, to examine existing policies and programs, and to consider (or pose) new strategies and approaches.

Goals:

Two questions that the participants might keep in the forefront of their thinking about just, sustainable human development are:

1. As concerned, thoughtful Christians, informed by the Scriptures, what goals does just and sustainable human development offer us?

2. What dilemmas must be resolved and what difficult, intractable tradeoffs must be confronted as we seek to implement practical development programs in pursuit of just, human sustainability?

Statement: **The Interdependence of Rich and Poor in an Interacting, Embracing Environment:**

When the scale of human activity—in both its production and consumption—grows large relative to the biological systems' carrying capacity, limits to growth become evident, as human history has demonstrated again and again in various parts of the Earth. Human activity will be cut back—by conscious effort or by natural constraints.

Ecological degradation generates interwoven, often unexpected and indirect effects that adversely affect people and other living things in their many interdependent relationships. Many, if not most of the effects pose problems—dilemmas and difficult trade-offs—requiring both local and global responses. Solutions almost always demand social, economic, and political adjustments, as well as an appreciation of environmental consequences.

The rich, in their enormous consumption, and the poor, in their great numbers, both impose heavy demands on nature and threaten the degradation of the environment. Alone, neither can avoid damaging exactions that undermine the future of all. Only together, through mutual respect and common endeavor, can they both exploit their joint environment without undermining the ability of their environment to support them all.

Guidelines for the Facilitator

Introducing the Course:

1. Explain the course content and stress there are no right and wrong answers. Encourage the participants to refer to Chapter 5 (p. 59) for biblical and theological pointers and Chapter 7 (p. 95) for the policies and principles that the 208th General Assembly (1996) has approved.
2. Point out that in the study the issue of women's position and rights are highlighted as a key to any and all just, sustainable human developments.

3. You will be asked to form at least three groups. They will work together throughout the course.

Suggestions for Group Dynamics:

1. It is VERY IMPORTANT to start on time. Arrange the chairs in a circle when possible. Create an environment where people will feel free to share different points of view and know their views will be respected. When dividing into small groups, try to have a balance between genders.

2. Group discussions should be at least twenty minutes long (thirty minutes is preferable). Some of the more difficult issues may profitably use forty-five minutes. Be sure to reserve enough time at the end to bring the small groups together for reports from each, with a brief summary by the instructor/ facilitator, who should also write key summary terms on a flip chart. Be sure to save all the flip-chart summaries, for they will be used in Session VI.

3. During the discussion periods at the end of each session

   a. write on newsprint some of the key ideas and statements that the participants make and

   b. list all of the Bible passages referred to.

4. You may want to have someone else do the writing while you facilitate the discussion.

5. When having groups report back, take only one idea at a time from each group going around the circle several times. This helps prevent the last group from being squeezed by time constraints.

6. You might want to have the assignments written on handout papers to save time at the end of the session.

Materials Needed:

Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development and Study Guide (for each participant)
Bibles (suggest each bring their own)
Newsprint
8x11 sheets of white paper cut in half
3x5 cards that can be used as commitment cards—Session VI
Markers (have on hand several different colors and use all of them)
Masking tape
Easel
Reusable name tags (3x5 cards with yarn to hang around their necks; color code them so that there are three groups with as equal numbers as possible)

SESSION I

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF CONCERN .. .

Some prosper, others languish.
"Laz' arus, full of sores, desires to be fed,
but Dives does not look."
God in creation wills
for all to be filled with good things.
But the fruitful land becomes a desert,
bonds of community break,
the hungry and displaced
are scarcely noticed.
Those with much grow weary of charity,
oblivious to justice.
Those anxious before unsettling change turn inward,
resisting insight and compassion.
O God, we care, help our
unconcern!(p.3)

Biblical Reference: 2 Corinthians 8:13-15

Pray for a Renewal of Concern:

God who loves all creation and called it good: we pray that we may learn to see the role we play in keeping people in poverty, how we are overconsumers, and why we are destroying your creation—the earth. Help us to hear you as you speak to us during this time of study and give us the courage to work with you in renewing your world to be a just and sustainable place to worship you. In the name of your son Jesus Christ. Amen

Introduction

- Take time for introduction of the participants. Ask each BRIEFLY (two sentences) WHO they are and WHY they are coming to this study group. (Stress the sentence limit.)

- Use the CALL TO A RENEWAL OF CONCERN, Scripture passage, and the prayer for renewal of concern for opening the session.

Method

Ask participants to examine the summary of past Presbyterian efforts to grapple with the opportunities and problems of Just and Sustainable Human Development. (See Appendix C, "Prior General Assembly Policy on 'Sustainable Development,' " p. 173. There are twenty-one paragraphs in this section of the report.) All should be familiar with these church policies, since the report and recommendations are based on them. The General Assembly approved the policy statement with the full recognition and understanding that they follow from, but extend the intent and purposes of earlier, existing declarations.

Suggest to participants that they will find helpful to their understanding and discussion of the topics the relevant General Assembly declarations and decisions. Those who prepared, reviewed, and approved the report were familiar with them; the policy recommendations continue—and extend—a history of concern, commitment, and policies already adopted and published.

In Appendix C, "Prior General Assembly Policy on 'Sustainable Development,' " p. 173, there are twenty-one paragraphs. Each paragraph may be assigned to one of four categories:

- General Issues of Sustainability (paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 15)
- Human Rights and Development (paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 17, 18, 19)
- Population and Migration (paragraphs 11, 13, 16)
- Relevant Government Policy (paragraphs 7, 10, 12, 14, 20, 21)

Ask the participants to choose one of three groups—Human Rights and Development; Population and Migration; and Relevant Government Policy. All participants should be asked to read and discuss (1) the paragraphs on General Issues of Sustainability and (2) the particular categorized paragraphs of their selected group.

Process

Each member should be given photocopies of her or his group's relevant paragraphs. Each should take time to read the paragraphs,

reflect on their meaning and the apparent purposes served in receiving approval by General Assemblies. Then allow thirty to forty minutes for group discussion of the prior policy declarations.

A. Members should be encouraged to disagree as well as agree with the earlier policies. They should seek to understand how the "Presbyterian policies" reflect our common faith and have shaped or influenced the assemblies' approach to issues relating to sustain-ability.

- Special attention should be paid to how sustainability is affected by the policy category considered—what have human rights to do with sustainability? Or how does population and migration impact sustainability? Groups may also want to consider the question: What opportunities are perceived and what problems are likely, as sustainability is pursued?

B. Call the groups back to plenary session, and ask a spokesperson from each to report on the following: (using newsprint, on which you have the four categories of policies statements, and four columns of group responses) list summary words that describe the policy in column 1; in the second column, note questions or disagreements, doubts, or approval. Finally, in the third and largest column, briefly note how the policies contribute to, or make more difficult, the realization of sustainability, as the members understand the term.

C. End with a list of further questions, problems, or issues that the participants have discovered that will help them understand the promise of sustainability.

Assignment for Session II

Read Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, G. Ethical Universality with Cultural and Religious Diversity (p. 120); Chapter 5: "Theological and Ethical Foundations," A. God's World and Human Responsibilities (p. 59), B. Image of God and Dominion (p. 62), C. Justice in Covenant (p. 63), D. Sin and Judgment (p. 67), E. The Church's Mission and Hope (p. 70). Ask all participants to clip

news articles that they think relate to the study and bring and share with the groups.

Closing Prayer

Close with prayer asking for guidance and discernment as you continue in the study.

Additional Suggestions for the Sessions

If you find you have time and group interest, ask group members to read Appendix A, Item "D. Feedback Response from the Educational Churchwide Study" (p. 159), and/or Appendix B, "Our Journey in Honduras" (p. 164), focusing on #2 in Appendix D, "God of Accompaniment" (p. 161), and the section entitled "Christ Accompanies" in Appendix B (p. 168). Ask members of the groups to discuss how they believe a faith rooted in the Accompaniment of God/Christ relates to the issues of just, sustainable human development.

SESSION II

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF HUMILITY

The modern spirit falters,
confidence fades.
Technology and aid, trade and development
were dispatched to make all nations modern.
Yet poverty persists, disparities widen, nature revolts.
The Cold War ends in cold, fragmented peace. Promise
of progress and prosperity
extended to the world with pride
but without sacrifice, without sharing,
without acknowledgment of limits,
turns to dust.
0 God, we repent of pride, help our continuing
presumption! (p. 3)

Biblical Reference: Micah 6:8

Pray for a Renewal of Humility:

Humbly God, we come to ask for forgiveness for those things we have done that sets our lives on edge with your will. We know there are things that we should have done, but out of apathy, busyness, and lack of understanding, we have not done. Please forgive us. As we study and discuss, help us to come closer to understanding your will for all of creation and lead us out of our own self-centeredness as an individual and as a nation. In the name of the one who humbled himself on the cross we pray. Amen.

Introduction

- Introduce any new members and make sure each person has a name tag. Suggest that, as they are seated, they sit with their group in the designated area.

- Use the CALL TO A RENEWAL OF HUMILITY, Scripture passage, and the prayer for renewal of humility for opening the session.

Readings

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, G. Ethical Universality with Cultural and Religious Diversity (p. 120); **Chapter** 5: "Theological and Ethical Foundations," A. God's World and Human Responsibilities (p. 59), B. Image of God and Dominion (p. 62), C. Justice in Covenant (p. 63), D. Sin and Judgment (p. 67), E. The Church's Mission and Hope (p. 70).

Method

Ask if any participants have news articles that they think relate to the study and bring and share with the groups. Ask for a brief description of the issue, and offer to make copies for distribution to all members, either later during this session or during Session III.

A. Ask the participants to form three discussion groups, each taking one of the following questions for twenty to thirty minutes of discussion; having selected a spokesperson, the group will report afterwards to the plenary session on their answers or conclusions, with explanation.

Group 1:

Read **Chapter 5**, third paragraph of Item E. (pp. 70-71), "The church is called to be an effective expression of the ultimate goal of God's ministry . . .” The report, in the fourth paragraph of Item D. (p. 68) of **Chapter 5**, asserts that "Sin is manifested not only in individuals, but in social institutions and cultural patterns. . . ." What "environmental and ecological sins" are institutionally and culturally nourished? (Prepare a list of the most common and obvious ones.) Why and how must they may be "corrected" or "rightly ordered" by instituting a system of "benevolent care and use?"

Group 2:

Read **Chapter 5**, the third paragraph of Item B. (p. 62) of the report, and compare with **Chapter** 5, the sixth paragraph of Item D. (p. 69) of the report. Insofar as God gave human beings dominion

over the world, how is humankind to resolve the problems of economic disparities and ecological degradation? What opportunities and problems confront individuals, as well as societies, in responding to God's injunctions?

Group 3:

Chapter 7, the ninth paragraph of Item A. (pp. 97-98) gives a definition of "The economic goal of human development is not "prosperity" or maximum production and consumption, but a sustainable material sufficiency as necessary for the comprehensive fulfillment of life for all in community. For the affluent, the challenge is to find meaning in the idea of sufficiency and to seek alternatives to a pursuit of growth that violates community and environmental values." Relating this goal to Paul's assurance in 2 Corinthians 9:8 ("And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work"), how do we as Christians address the affluency of our society?

B. Call the plenary together, and listen to reports from each group; end with general questions about the reports and with a summary of general ideas and contributions.

Assignment for Next Week

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, B. Full Respect for All Human Rights (p. 100), C. Just and Effective Governance (p. 106), D. Universal and Adequate Education (p. 109); **Chapter 2:** "Maldistribution and Acute Global Poverty," A. How Four-Fifths of the World Live (p. 17), B. Causes of Poverty (p. 19); **Chapter** 3: "Overconsumption and Overpopulation," A. Scarcity and Overconsumption (p. 35), B. A Dangerous Progression (p. 36),

C. What Can Be Done? (p. 38); Chapter 6: "What Is Just and Sustainable Human Development?", D. Frugality (p. 85); and from Appendix C, note relevant past policies of General Assembly—paragraphs (Development) 5, 6 (pp. 174-75); paragraphs (Population Stability) 11, 13, 16 (pp. 176, 177, 178).

Closing Prayer

Close with prayer asking for the humility and grace to see our own affluency as part of the unjust poverty in the world.

Additional Suggestions for the Sessions

A. At the beginning, before you break into small groups, have each person write on a slip of paper the reasons why they believe that issues of human rights and self-determination, particularly for the poorest countries, might be importantly related by Christians to issues of sustainable development. Ask those who will, to share their reasons.

B. At the end have each person write a prayer that can guide them through the next week as they reflect on humility and hope.

SESSION III

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF FRUGALITY.....

God of all people and places,
whose presence accompanies us
always as we journey,
We offer thanksgiving for insights
into ourselves and our life together;
For new and fresh understandings
as well as those that are made deeper and,
hence, are owned more dearly by us;
For the vision of the faithful life given us by Jesus;
For the church where life-giving relationships
are supported and nurtured.
Help us now to continue to journey
into the presence of Christ Jesus,
That we might discover ways to rebuild broken community
into the oneness that your Spirit nurtures.

Biblical Reference: Exodus 16:13-20.

Pray for Renewal of Frugality:

Almighty God,
in giving us dominion over things on earth,
you made us coworkers in your creation.
Give us wisdom and reverence
to use the resources of nature,
so that no one may suffer from our abuse of them,
and that generations yet to come
may continue to praise you for your bounty;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Introduction

- Introduce any new members and make sure each person has a name tag. Suggest that, as they are seated, they sit with their group in the designated area as in the previous session.

- Use the CALL TO A RENEWAL OF FRUGALITY, Scripture passage, and the prayer for renewal of frugality for opening the session.

Readings

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, B. Full Respect for All Human Rights (p. 100), C. Just and Effective Government (p. 106), D. Universal and Adequate Education (p. 109); **Chapter 2:** "Maldistribution and Acute Global Poverty," A. How Four-Fifths of the World Live (p. 17), B. Causes of Poverty (p. 19), **Chapter 3:** "Overconsumption and Overpopulation," A. Scarcity and Overconsumption (p. 35), B. A Dangerous Progression (p. 36), C. What Can Be Done? (p. 38); **Chapter 6:** "What Is Just and Sustainable Human Development?", D. Frugality (p. 85); and from Appendix C, note relevant past policies of General Assembly—paragraphs (Development) 5, 6 (pp. 174-75); paragraphs (Population Stability) 11, 13, 16 (pp. 176, 177, 178).

Method

A. Divide the participants into three groups according to their assignments from last week. If there are new people, let them choose which group they will be in. Review last week's discussion, and give each group ten minutes to compare notes regarding the reading and questions given them last week and any sustainable-relevant news articles brought in.

B. Pose the following dilemmas, one for each group:

1. If Americans and those in other industrial countries live more frugally than at present, do you believe that peoples in developing countries and poorer nations are likely to be economically hurt by reduced exports on which their manufacturing employment and earnings depend? (And if Americans and those in other industrial countries live more frugally than at present, will not many of their fellow citizens be hurt by declining production and sales, along with rising unemployment?) Are these reasonable questions to pose? If "No," why? If "Yes," how is frugality to be promoted equitably?

2. Poverty presses so hard upon billions of people that they are striving mightily to industrialize quickly, even if and as they massively increase local and global pollution. What is the responsibility of Americans, and citizens of other industrially advanced nations, to cope with the resulting consequences? (Remember that our own industrialization was enormously polluting; we began to "clean-up" only after we had become "rich enough" to "afford" to do it.) How might the poor gain "sufficiency" through more development, while the rich find adequacy in "sufficiency" through more frugality, and both contribute to a just, sustainable world?

3. The soaring, exponential rise in global population, combined with the rapid industrialization of populous countries, such as China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Taiwan, and South Korea, are inducing a significantly rising, worldwide draft on natural resources—both mineral and biological—as well as an unprecedented rise in global pollutants. How should the people of the developed countries, such as Americans, respond? Are these two sensible options: (a) Reduce our economic growth and polluting activities to help offset "their" contributions?; (b) Join with them, through assistance and aid, to promote production efficiencies and to reduce pollutants? Are there other options?

C. After twenty to thirty minutes of group discussion bring the participants together, with the spokesperson for each group reporting to the plenary its answers, resolution, or response to the dilemmas of sustainability. In summing up the responses, you may find it useful to point out that global answers may be so difficult, that partial, local solutions may have to be sought. Many different peoples and countries will have to experiment in a variety of ways to seek resolutions.

If they find the dilemmas difficult to resolve, they are truly wrestling with the "real world" issues of sustainability. Neither solutions to the political problems involved in sustainability nor answers to the economic questions confronting us will be easily discovered.

Assignment for Next Week

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, A. Sufficient Production and Consumption (p. 96), E. Population Stability (p. 111); **Chapter 2:** "Maldistribution and Acute Global Poverty," C. Debt Burdens (p. 20), D. Questions of Trade (p. 22), E. Multinational Corporations (p. 26), F. Speculative Capital Movements (p. 28), G. Economic Aid (p. 29); **Chapter 4:** "Ecological Degradation," A. Pollution (p. 45), B. International Risk Management (p. 47), C. Full-Cost Pricing (p. 48), D. Resource Exhaustion (p. 51), E. Biodiversity (p. 53).

Closing Prayer

Close with prayer asking for a world where justice is experienced by all.

Additional Suggestions for the Sessions

A. In **Chapter 5**, the last paragraph of Item A. (pp. 61-62), God's world and human responsibilities are discussed. How do the assurances stated there fit with your understanding of our responsibilities as Christians to creations and other human beings?

B. "The concept of the image of God provides a basis for Christian affirmations of [a] the dignity of individuals, [b] human rights, and [c] democratic procedures" (second paragraph of Item B. p. 62). On a sheet of paper list three ways the image of God provides an understanding for each of the three points made in the statement.

C. Does God's image provide an example for us to be frugal?

S E S S I O N I V

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF GOVERNMENT POLICY ....

We join with the earth and with each other.
To bring new life to the land
To restore the waters
To refresh the air
We join with the earth and with each other.
To renew the forests
To care for the plants
To protect the creatures
We join with the earth and with each other.
To celebrate the seas
To rejoice in the sunlight
To sing the song of the stars
To join with the earth and with each other.
To recreate the human community
To promote justice and peace
To remember our children
We join with the earth and with each other.
We join together as many and diverse expressions
of one loving mystery for the healing of the
earth and the renewal of all life.[1]

United Nations Environmental Sabbath Program

Biblical Reference: Matthew 4:1-9, 6:25-33; and Amos 4:1-3

Pray for a Renewal of Government Policy:

You give us prophets, holy God, to cry out for justice and mercy. Open our ears to hear them, and to follow the truth they speak, lest we support injustice to secure our own well-being. Give your

[1]"A Prayer for Healing," *Only One Earth,* 1990, United Nations Environment Program.

prophets the fire of your Word spoken with love. Though they speak for you, may they know that they stand with us before you, and have no Messiah other than your son, Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. Amen.

Introduction

- Introduce any new members and make sure each person has a name tag. Suggest that, as they are seated, they sit with their group in the designated area as in the previous session.

- Use the CALL TO A RENEWAL OF GOVERNMENT POLICY, Scripture passages, and the prayer for renewal of government policy for opening the session.

Readings

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, H. Dismantling Warfare and Building Peace (p. 124), I. Equitable Debt Relief (p. 128), J. Just and Sustainable International Trade (p. 131), K. More and Better Development Assistance (p. 137); **Chapter 2:** "Maldistribution and Acute Global Poverty," C. Debt Burdens (p. 20), D. Questions of Trade (p. 23), E. Multinational Corporations (p. 27), F. Speculative Capital Movements (p. 28), G. Economic Aid (p. 29); **Chapter 4:** "Ecological Degradation," A. Pollution (p. 45), B. International Risk Management (p. 47), C. Full-Cost Pricing (p. 48), D. Resource Exhaustion (p. 51), E. Biodiversity (p. 53).

Method

The issues involved in government policy are certainly among the most technical and difficult to analyze. First, they involve a wide range of problems—peacemaking, loans to developing countries by our own government or international agencies, government assistance to poor countries, the activities of American firms abroad, international trade, capital investments abroad, and international pollution and environmental degradation. The General Assembly focused on four of these issues for policy recommendations. You

may want to do the same—(1) peacemaking, (2) debt relief, (3) international trade, and (4) foreign aid. These involve politically sensitive matters such as those raised by the North American Foreign Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the loss of jobs in the United States due to "unfair" competition from low-wage, developing economies or, alternatively, the gains enjoyed by Americans who have secured new supplies of lower priced goods when income growth has slowed.

A. Ask the participants which of the four topics they would like to examine, and allow each to select the group he or she wants to join. Each group should seek answers to the following questions:

1. Who gets hurt under present policies affecting (trade/foreign aid/foreign debt/peacemaking) and who benefits? What are the likely effects on a just, sustainable human development, both domestically and abroad?

2. Who benefits under present policies affecting these same policies? What are the likely effects on a just, sustainable human development, both domestically and abroad?

3. What ways would you propose to ensure the benefits and lessen the hurts, that would also contribute to just and sustainable human development?

B. In introducing the issues, note that

1. desperately poor people contribute greatly to environmental degradation (e.g. moving into unstable, ecologically stressed lands because of population pressure—into the mountains of Nepal or farming in the fall-short Sahel); until they better their economic condition, they can hardly afford to give thought to long-term ecological damage;

2. rapidly industrializing countries, such as India and China, with approximately 40 percent of world population, are so intent on bettering their peoples' standard of living, that they often allow the most polluting of technologies to flourish—e.g. burning soft coal that produces great quantities of global warming gases;

3. the people of developed countries can "afford" cleaner environments, and almost everywhere producers have found that more efficient, less polluting use of resources makes economic sense, and governments have responded to voters' demands by encouraging ecologically sound practices. Nevertheless, as pollution/unit of output goes down, total pollution is reduced much more slowly or actually increases as TOTAL OUTPUT rises with improved standards of living.

C. After the groups have discussed the issues for twenty to thirty minutes, ask each to report back to the plenary. Sum up the conclusions, recommendations, or dilemmas on a flip chart or blackboard.

Closing Prayer

Close with prayer asking for a world where justice is experienced by all.

Assignment for Next Week

Chapter 8: "Hope for a Global Future: Conclusion," A. The Necessary Questions (p. 145), B. Two Imperatives (p. 146), C. Revisiting Policies (p. 146), D. Understanding the Times—Anticipating the Future (p. 147), E. A Fresh Endeavor (p. 149), F. Hope for a Global Future (p. 149)

S E S S I O N V

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF HOPE ....

In light of the Resurrection
despair is always premature.
God has a project in today's events.
In paths we have not known God leads,
turning darkness into light.
We may follow, chastened but emboldened,
acknowledging the failures of development
but willing to reconceptualize it,
coming to terms with the radically new factor of sustainability,
realizing that the "developed" world does not have answers
for every "undeveloped" place,
but trusting that when justice is the central focus,
justice as a people's participation in sustainable sufficiency, we
can remove some roadblocks
to a community's own development
and accompany struggling, hopeful
people with enabling resources.
0 God, we trust and hope, help our hesitation! (p. 4)

Biblical Reference: Romans 8:24b-25, 28; Amos 5:18-24

Pray for a Renewal of Hope:

God: only you can give us hope that will lead to life. Only your justice will change the world. We pray that we will have hope for those things unseen as we look at the degradation of life and the world. We pray that we may be instruments of your justice so that it will roll down like mighty waters over all the earth. We pray this in the name of the only just one to live—Jesus. Amen.

Introduction

- Introduce any new members and make sure each person has a name tag. Suggest that, as they are seated, they sit with their group in the designated area as in the previous session.

- Use the CALL TO A RENEWAL OF HOPE, Scripture passage, and the prayer for renewal of hope for opening the session.

Readings

Chapter 8: "Hope for a Global Future: Conclusion," A. The Necessary Questions (p. 145), B. Two Imperatives (p. 146), C. Revisiting Policies (p. 146), D. Understanding the Times—Anticipating the Future (p. 147), E. A Fresh Endeavor (p. 149), F. Hope for a Global Future (p. 149).

Method

A. Each participant should refer to the two Balance Sheets of Progress and Deprivation—one for developing countries and for industrial countries to each participant. Also, point out Disparities in Human Development, found on p. 217. Request them to form their usual groups to discuss, in the light of the Balance Sheets, the following questions:

Group 1:

1. Reflecting the various chapters studied and earlier discussion about the causes of poverty and the problems of attacking them while maintaining the environment—where do we find any reason to have hope? Are there signs of hope and justice in developing countries? Are there signs of hope and justice for women? Are there signs of hope here in the United States? What are the bases for these hopes or lack of hope?

2. There are many Scripture passages cited in Chapter 5. Pick three that give a Christian reason for having hope with so much poverty around us.

3. How do we as Christians relate poverty to overconsumption and overpopulation and ecological degradation?

Group 2:

1. As an affluent country and people ourselves, what is the hope that we have for our overconsumption and overpopulation?

2. What hope is given in "The Report" for Christians in our materialistic overconsumptive society? Is there a special mandate about women and children? Is there justice to be found?

3. How do we as Christians relate overconsumption and overpopulation to poverty and ecological degradation?

Group 3:

1. **Chapter 7** presents the concept of "global ethic." With Christian ethics being a vital part of our faith, how does "global ethic" and Christian ethics relate?

2. How do we as Christians relate ecological degradation to poverty, overconsumption, and overpopulation?

Come together in one large group and ask each group to report on the hope it found. Summarize and itemize on a flip chart or blackboard.

Assignment for Next Week

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, A. Sufficient Production and Consumption (p. 96), E. Population Stability (p. 111); **Chapter 2:** "Maldistribution and Acute Global Poverty," C. Debt Burdens (p. 20), D. Questions of Trade (p. 22), E. Multinational Corporations (p. 26), F. Speculative Capital Movements (p. 28), G. Economic Aid (p. 29); **Chapter 3:** "Overconsumption and Overpopulation," C. What Can Be Done? (p. 38); **Chapter 4:** "Ecological Degradation," A. Pollution (p. 45), B. International Risk Management (p. 47), C. Full-Cost Pricing (p. 48), D. Resource Exhaustion (p. 51), E. Biodiversity (p. 53).

Closing Prayer

Close with prayer asking for a world where justice is experienced by all.

Balance Sheet of Human Development—Developing Countries

PROGRESS	DEPRIVATION
HEALTH	
• In 1960-93 average life expectancy increased by more than a third. Life expectancy is now more than 70 years in 30 countries.	Around 17 million people die each year from curable infectious and parasitic diseases such as diarrhea, malaria and tuberculosis.
• Over the past three decades the population with access to safe water almost doubled—from 36% to nearly 70%.	• Of the world's 18 million HIV-infected people, more than 90% live in developing countries.
•	
EDUCATION	
• Between 1960 and 1991 net enrollment at the primary level increased by nearly two-thirds-48% to 77%.	Millions of children are still out of school-130 million at the primary level and 275 million at the secondary level.
•	
FOOD AND NUTRITION	
• Despite rapid population growth, food production per capita increased by about 20% in the past decade.	• Nearly 800 million people do not get enough food, and about 500 million people are chronically malnourished.
INCOME AND POVERTY	
• During 1960-93 real per capita income in the developing world increased by an average 3.5% a year.	Almost a third of the population-1.3 billion people—lives in poverty.
•	

PROGRESS	DEPRIVATION
WOMEN	
• During the past two decades the combined primary and secondary enrollment ratio for girls increased from 38% to 78%. • During the past two decades fertility rates declined by more than a third.	• At 384 per 100,000 live births, maternal mortality is still nearly 12 times as high as in OECD countries. • Women hold only 10% of parliamentary seats.
CHILDREN	
• Between 1960 and 1993 the infant mortality rate fell by more than half—from 150 per thousand live births to 70. • The extension of basic immunization over the past two decades has saved the lives of about three million children a year. •	More than a third of children are malnourished. • The under-five mortality rate, at 97 per thousand live births, is still nearly six times as high as in industrial countries.
ENVIRONMENT	
• Developing countries' contribution to global emissions is still less than a fourth that of industrial countries, though their population is four times the industrial world's.	• About 200 million people are severely affected by desertification. • Every year some 20 million hectares of tropical forests are grossly degraded or completely cleared.
POLITICS AND CONFLICTS	
• Between two-thirds and three-quarters of the people in developing countries live under relatively pluralistic and democratic regimes.	• At the end of 1994 there were more than 11 million refugees in the developing world.

SOURCE: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 1996, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 20-21.

Balance Sheet of Human Development—Industrial Countries

PROGRESS	DEPRIVATION
HEALTH	
• By 1992 life expectancy was more than 75 years in 24 of 25 industrial countries.	• Nearly two million people are infected with HIV.
EDUCATION	
• Between 1960 and 1990 the tertiary enrollment ratio more than doubled - from 15% to 40%.	• More than a third of adults have less than an upper-secondary education.
INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT	
• Between 1960 and 1993 real per capita GNP grew by more than 3% a year. • The average annual rate of inflation during the 1980s was less than 5%. •	The total unemployment rate is more than 8%, and the rate among youths nearly 15%. More than 30 million people are seeking work. • The poorest 40% of households get only 18% of total income.
WOMEN	
• Between 1970 and 1990 the number of female tertiary students per 100 male tertiary students studying science and technology more than doubled—from 25 to 67. • Women now account for more than 40% of the labour force and about a quarter of administrators and managers.	• The wage rate for women is still only two-thirds that for men. • Women hold only 12% of parliamentary seats.

PROGRESS	DEPRIVATION
SOCIAL SECURITY	
• Social security expenditures account for about 15% of GDP.	• More than 100 million people live below the official poverty line, and more than 5 million are homeless.
SOCIAL FABRIC	
• There are more than five library books and one radio for every person, one TV set for every two people. One person in three reads a newspaper.	• Nearly 130,000 rapes are reported annually in the age group 15-59.
ENVIRONMENT	
• Aggressive conservation measures and more appropriate pricing policies dramatically reduced energy use per $100 of GDP between 1965 and 1991—from 166 kilograms of oil equivalent to 26 kilograms.	• Each year damage to forests due to air pollution leads to economic losses of about $35 billion—equivalent to the GDP of Hungary. • People in industrial countries consume nearly nine times as much commercial energy per capita as people in developing countries, though they constitute only a fifth of the world's population.

SOURCE: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 1996, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 20-21.

DISPARITIES IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development is the end—economic growth a means. So the purpose of growth should be to enrich people's lives. But far too often it does not. The recent decades show all too clearly that there is no automatic link between growth and human development. And even when links are established, they may gradually be eroded—unless regularly fortified by skillful and intelligent policy management. . . . Growth has been failing over much of the past 15 years in about 100 countries, with almost a third of the world's people. And the links between growth and human development are failing for people in the many countries with lopsided development—with either good growth but little human development or good human development but little or no growth.

Since 1980 there has been a dramatic surge in economic growth in some 15 countries, bringing rapidly rising incomes to many of their 1.5 billion people, more than a quarter of the world's population. Over much of this period, however, economic decline or stagnation has affected 100 countries, reducing the incomes of 1.6 billion people—again, more than a quarter of the world's population. In 70 of these countries average incomes are less than they were in 1980—and in 43 countries less than they were in 1970. Over 1990-93 alone, average incomes fell by a fifth or more in 21 countries, mostly in Eastern Europe and among the CIS countries. . . .

The advances have often been at rates exceeding anything seen since the start of the industrial revolution some two centuries ago. The declines have also been unprecedented, far exceeding in duration, and sometimes in depth, the declines of the Great Depression of the 1930s in the industrial countries.

The world has become more polarized, and the gulf between the poor and rich of the world has widened even further. Of the $23 trillion global GDP in 1993, $18 trillion is in the industrial countries-only $5 trillion in the developing countries, even though they have nearly 80% of the world's people.

- The poorest 20% of the world's people saw their share of global income decline from 2.3% to 1.4% in the past 30 years. Meanwhile, the share of the richest 20% rose from 70% to 85%. That doubled the ratio of the shares of the richest and the poorest—from 30:1 to 61:1.

- The assets of the world's 358 billionaires exceed the combined annual incomes of countries with 45% of the world's people. . . .

Policy-makers once debated whether they should choose economic growth or extensive participation, assuming that these were mutually exclusive. That debate is dead. People do not want one or the other—they want both. But too many people are still denied even the most basic forms of democracy and many of the world's people are in the grip of repressive regimes.

Voiceless growth can also be growth that gives women only a minor role in an economy's management and direction. As *Human Development Report 1995* showed, human development, if not engendered, is endangered. . . . In sum, Development that perpetuates today's inequalities is neither sustainable nor worth sustaining. . . .

Countries with similar levels of income and growth can have very different rates of advance in human development. During the past three decades both Tunisia and Congo enjoyed the same economic growth from similar stating points of income and human development. But Tunisia reduced its human development index (HDI, a measure of health, education & rights) shortfall by 60%, Congo by only 16% . . . . 37 countries in 1991, ranked by HDI, were 20 places higher or lower than their ranking by per capita income. Thailand and Columbia, for example, enjoy a high HDI ranking despite low incomes, $2,100 and $1,400 respectively. Two other countries, South Africa and Gabon, with considerably higher per-capita incomes, $3,000 and $5,000 respectively, displayed a much lower HDI rank.

The United Nations has concluded that poor countries can make human development advances, increasing education, widening rights and improving health, they can be sustained and enlarged only by further economic growth. Conversely, economic growth is not sustainable without further human development. Policy-makers everywhere need to focus on strengthening the links between economic growth and human development. They need to explore new approaches to expand and improve employment opportunities, so that people can participate in growth—and benefit from it.

The United Nations also notes that many poor in all countries may be income poor, but even poorer if measured by their lack of capabilities—in well-nourished children, health care for mothers, and female illiteracy. Thus in Bangladesh while almost half of its population are income-poor, over three quarters are capability poor. In India a quarter are income poor, but more than 60% are capability poor. And among those poor in these basic capabilities are women, and their children, almost always the poorest of the poor.

1. Were governments to provide health services—particularly for women, improve children's nutrition and widely extend basic education, to women as well as men, capability poverty could be significantly reduced and human development greatly speeded, at relatively low cost, compared with such unproductive as those on weapons and armies.

Adapted from UNDP, Human Development Report, 1996, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, Chapter 1, pp. 1-42.

SESSION VI

CALL TO A RENEWAL OF ACTION.....

Our power is in the confidence that God is empowering us for God's cause.

God's goal of a just and reconciled world is not simply our final destiny but a command to act for each of us and for all of us as the church—a present responsibility.

We must persevere in our efforts despite daunting defeats; pessimism is premature—persistence permits possibilities. With God, we must accompany the poor on the journey to justice.

In action we will work and share with the poor, learning from them, and testifying with them to the presence and power of God.

Biblical Reference: Matthew 25:31-46, James 2:14-26

Pray for a Renewal of Action:

O God of Action: you have called us to action in your world. As you groan in travail at what we humans have done to your creation, we ask for forgiveness. Help us to turn away from our own apathy, busyness, and ignorance. Allow us to find a faith so full of the Spirit that it knows no bounds to action. Help us to remember that both human and nonhuman creation is yours and you called it good. May our actions reflect your goodness as we take our own responsibility for your world. In the name of the one who showed us how to live action lives—Jesus--we pray. AMEN.

Introduction

- Introduce any new members and make sure each person has a name tag. Suggest that, as they are seated, they sit with their group in the designated area as in the previous session.

- Use the CALL TO A RENEWAL OF ACTION, Scripture passage, and the prayer for renewal of action for opening the session.

Readings

Chapter 7: Policies for Just and Sustainable Human Development: Principles, Guidelines, and Recommendations, A. Sufficient Production and Consumption (p. 96), E. Population Stability (p. 111); **Chapter 2:** "Maldistribution and Acute Global Poverty," C. Debt Burdens (p. 20), D. Questions of Trade (p. 23), E. Multinational Corporations (p. 27), F. Speculative Capital Movements (p. 28), G. Economic Aid (p. 29); **Chapter** 3: "Overconsumption and Overpopulation," C. What Can Be Done? (p. 38); **Chapter 4:** "Ecological Degradation," A. Pollution (p. 45), B. International Risk Management (p. 47), C. Full-Cost Pricing (p. 48), D. Resource Exhaustion (p. 51), E. Biodiversity (p. 53).

Method

A. As people arrive, have them look at the sheets of newsprint you have fixed to the walls with the summary of each week. Ask them to pick three or four statements particularly relevant to ACTION in support of just and sustainable human development.

B. Forming new groups of three to five people, ask each group to come up with a CAN DO List Towards Just and Sustainable Human Development on both the local and global level, keeping in mind that women and children suffer the most under unjust development: three things that **INDIVIDUALS** can do, three things that the **CONGREGATION** can do, three things the **PRESBYTERY** can do, three things the **NATIONAL CHURCH** can do, three more things that can be done **GLOBALLY**.

C. Share the list with the larger group, recording the ideas and marking all repeated ideas.

D. Give out commitment cards and ask each participant to make a commitment to do three things locally and three things globally. These can be individual things or with the congregations or two or three together. Encourage them to put them where they can see them and pray each day for the desire, courage, and understanding to carry out their commitment.

Closing Prayer

Close with prayer not just for yourselves to carry out your commitment but for those who suffer because we do not have a just and sustainable world.

Additional Suggestions for the Sessions

A. Using Chapter 5 as a resource, list Bible passages that reflect the ideas listed on the CAN DO list. Are there charges from God to work for a just and sustainable human development in the world that you had not thought about?

B. What does the Confession of 1967 have to say about our responsibility for action?