United Methodist Bishops Denounce Iraq War as “Immoral”

The Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church, at its November meeting, nearly unanimously approved a resolution condemning the U.S. military presence in Iraq. A separate unofficial statement, signed by over half of the active U.S. bishops, even more harshly denounced the “unjust and immoral invasion and occupation,” while charging that Americans are being “used to fall into evil and be killed.”

At the same meeting, the bishops approved a brief statement on the crisis in Darfur. They also passed a resolution criticizing the Sudanese government for its “criminal behavior of genocide and mass murder.”

The United Methodist Church has 8.6 million members in the United States, including Bishop George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney. The bishops’ official statement on Iraq faulted the U.S. government for claiming that Saddam Hussein had arms of mass destruction and “gross violations of human rights of prisoners of war.” There was no mention of Saddam Hussein’s human rights record nor of the type of reparations that would result if the insurgents in Iraq prevailed. The statement urged the withdrawal of all U.S. military troops and bases from Iraq while awaiting a genuine, United Nations-monitored election.

In the unofficial statement, signed by 43 active and retired bishops, Iraq was described as “landscaped by the dead.” But the bishops did not identify who was killing the most Iraqis (i.e., the insurgents), nor did they demand that those who were killing “fall into evil and be killed.” Neither of the statements from the bishops mentioned the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis killed by the war and occupation.
Lesbian Minister Defrocked

The official Council of Bishops statement partially neglected to acknowledge the very next sentence of the Judicial Council’s ruling in the case ofUnited Methodist pastor Ed Johnson, which states that war might be justly “employed only as a last resort in the prevention of such evils as genocide, brutal suppression of human rights and unprovoked international aggression.” The Johnson trial was only the most recent in a series of United Methodist Judicial Council cases (involving 24 United Methodist clergy, 10 of them women) that have addressed the issue of homosexuality.

The Board of Church and Society routinely lobbies the White House, Congress, and the FBI, as well as state and local governments, urging a larger welfare state, and urging more stringent anti-terror laws. But United Methodist Building on Capitol Hill.

Agency Rejects Church & Society Audit Over Methodist Building

A controversial Washington, D.C., lobby office of the United Methodist Church is facing growing suspicion over how it spends money, according to a new audit.

The United Methodist Building, a $40 million complex of offices and conference rooms in Washington, D.C., is the “legal successor agency” to the Old Temperance Union, established in 1844. It is owned by the United Methodist Church and Society.

Church and Society must be devoted to alcohol and temperance issues. But United Methodist Building and Society director Jo Ann Fukumoto expressed “doubt” about whether the amount next year.

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Action: Contact the Council of Bishops and share your thoughts about the church's Apostles. Bishop John R. Simelton, Secretary, the Council of Bishops, 100 Maryland Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20002; Phone 202-547-6270; Fax 202-547-6272; e-mail: cob@umc.org.

Group Episcopal Panels Cancel Event at Lake Junaluska

The New Testament Church Missionary Center (NWCCMC) is an advocate for evangelical missions and is preparing to ask the Board of Church and Society for funding to continue its Longhorn and Junaluska events. In September, the Audit and Review Committee of the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) over use of income from its prominent headquarters building on Capitol Hill. The Audit and Review Committee ruled that the United Methodist Building and other assets transferred to Church and Society had “sought sound legal advice over the years” to justify their spending temperance money on general operating expenses. Church and Society rejected the committee’s findings and requested that an independent auditor review the spending of the general operating expenses, which are intended to cover the expenses of the Board of Church and Society. Church and Society also requested an independent audit to justify their spending temperance money on general operating expenses. The Audit and Review Committee ruled that the United Methodist Building and other assets transferred to Church and Society had “sought sound legal advice over the years” to justify their spending temperance money on general operating expenses.

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T he United Methodist Church’s highest court de-

clined to issue a special section about the United Methodist Building crisis springing from the 2003 consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson, an openly gay man, in the Episcopal Church. Steinmiller, Director, New Wineskins Missionary Network, 488-5620; Fax 202-488-5619; e-mail jwinkler@umc-gbcs.org.

Bishop James W. James Winkler was dismissed of the church court’s rulings. “Frankly, I think it is purely a political ruling,” he said. “The judicial decision is not a matter that is happening in the Supreme Court, and I think its purely a sham of a purpose.”

October Church and Society directors meeting, Church and Society had “sought sound legal advice over the years” to avoid “interpreting” how that agency may spend income from the United Methodist Building Endowment Trust Funds. “We continue to use the money exactly as intended,” insisted James Winkler, General Secretary of Church and Society. But Winkler was dismissive of the church court’s rulings. “The United Methodist Church says two things are incompatible with Christian teaching: war and homosexuality. The United Methodist Church for 40 years has been studying 40-year-old documents. He asserted that the mon-
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At the same meeting, the bishops approved a brief statement on the crisis in Darfur. That brief prayer for the situation, but passively refrained from urging the United Nations Security Council to impose sanctions on Sudan’s leader, the extensive genocide.”

The United Methodist Church has 8.6 million members in the United States, including Bishop George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney.

The bishops’ official statement on Iraq filed the U.S. government for considering “the continuation of that regime that would result if the insurgents in Iraq prevailed. The statement also concluded that the United States for its “horrific war crimes and gross violations of human rights of prisoners of war.”

The United Methodist Church has been active in the anti-war movement, and its bishops have spoken out against the war in Iraq. A separate statement, signed by 15 active and retired bishops, urged the withdrawal of all U.S. military presence in Iraq. The statement was signed by over 150 bishops and former bishops.

In the unofficial statement, signed by the bishops, the United States for its “invasion and occupation” of Iraq. The statement condemned the U.S. government for its “war crimes and gross violations of human rights of prisoners of war.”

The United Methodist Church is the largest denomination in the United States, with over 8 million members. The bishops’ official statement on Iraq was signed by over 150 bishops and former bishops, and was widely condemned by other denominations and religious leaders.

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