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RACIAL JUSTICE IN THE 1980'S

A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY
FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

I. Racism in the 1980's

As Christians who are beneficiaries of Christ's sacrifices for all women and men, Presbyterians* have proclaimed through the Confession of 1967 that Christ's mission was one of reconciliation. This confession has led us in understanding our calling as agents of reconciliation (Book of Confessions, 9.06-.07) entrusted with responsibility for the abolition of racism and sexism (9.44,9.47):

In the light of our call to be reconcilers, Presbyterians have traditionally understood racism in individualistic terms, perceiving racial injustice as the result of personal prejudice, ethnocentric pride in one's own racial group, or strong negative feelings toward persons or groups who do not share our characteristics. Consequently, strategies for racial justice have been directed toward reconciliation of individuals and uniting of persons of different racial groups.

However, in recent years, a deeper understanding of racism had emerged. Participants in a worldwide consultation on "Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's" declared, "While individual change and commitment are essential, it is institutional racism which is causing the greatest suffering to the greatest number of people today, and it is the collective power of the Churches and other groups which are required to combat institutional racism." ("Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," World Council of Churches, p. 43.) Presbyterians made a similar declaration in 1981. Racism "has pervaded and infected our society, our institutions, including the church, and our individual lives." (*Minutes, 1981, Part I, p. 197.*)

In the new light of these deeper understandings of racism, we now understand racism as any self-perpetuating, systemic, and sustained use of power by one ethnic group over another. The following "working descriptions" provide additional insight into institutional racism:

- Racism is first and foremost a system of domination and oppression ("Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," p. 44);
- Racism is the use of racial identity or supposed racial characteristics to separate, isolate, denigrate, and exploit others because they are different. The sin of racism of the society and church in which we participate is that which places an uncritical priority on being white and speaking English. Because Whites control the overwhelming majority of the financial resources, institutions, and levers of power in our society, white racism is a special curse of our society. Institutional racism can be understood as the way organizational, institutional, societal, political, economic and even religious structures and activities serve to perpetuate racial injustice apart from the question of individual attitudes or intentions. Intended or not, the mechanisms and functions of these entities may serve to perpetuate racism (*Minutes, 1981, Part I, p. 197*);
- Racism is both overt and covert. It is enforced and maintained both consciously and unconsciously by the legal, cultural, religious, educational, economic, political and military institutions of society ("Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," p. 44);
- Racism confers certain privileges on the dominant group. It is the creation and defense of these group privileges that sustains and perpetuates racism (*Ibid.*);
- Racism can be a matter of result rather than intent. Dominant group actions—intended or unintended—can produce patterns of racial domination (*Ibid.*);
- Racism is one of at least three major subsystems of domination in the modern

*Editor's note: In the original minutes of the 195th General Assembly (1983), Part I, pp. 459-471, the members are referred to as "United Presbyterians."

world. It interacts with classism and sexism to produce the broad pattern of oppression and exploitation that plagues the world (Ibid.);

—Women are victimized by racism even more than men are, most notably under the systems of migrant labor and apartheid. The links between racism and sexism, and the role of theology in perpetuating both, require more profound attention (“Combating Racism in the 1980’s,” Report of Central Committee, World Council of Churches, August 1980).

These descriptions enable our perception of racism in its systematic, institutional dimensions. They also remind us that a comprehensive strategy for racial justice for Presbyterians needs to address these dimensions.

II. Obstacles to Racial Justice

In addition to developing new understandings of racism, another necessary prelude to the design of a comprehensive strategy is the identification of obstacles to racial justice. Observations and findings emerging from recent consultants and surveys are helpful in this identification task.

(1) *Loss of Will*: A Presbyterian Panel survey indicated that a majority of Presbyterians, while agreeing with the importance of racial justice as a concern of the church, nevertheless characterized the most likely responses of the majority of the membership toward racial justice issues in the 1980’s as “weariness,” “apathy,” and “frustration,” and the least likely response to be “enthusiasm.” (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 205.)

(2) *Lack of understanding of the nature and depth of racism*: The loss of will expressed by respondents in the Presbyterian Panel may result from a lack of insight and perspective. The 193rd General Assembly (1981) noted that

Despite the good intentions and significant involvements of the United Presbyterian Church in race issues, racial injustice continues to plague the church and society...

In many ways the Church’s failures have been due to a lack of understanding, or perhaps naivete, as to the nature and depth of racism. Whereas it was once assumed that racial justice was merely a function of overcoming individual attitudes and bigotry, it is now clear that racism also exists in complex and subtle institutional ways. Despite the well-intentioned and nonracist attitudes of individuals, our religious and societal institutions, structures, and systems can and do perpetuate racial injustice. The point to be made is that irrespective of motives, often the final impact of our institutional styles of organization and management serve to exclude racial-ethnic groups from full and just participation. Too often our professed desires for authentic community and justice are sacrificed for the sake of institutional... success. “Business as usual” perpetuates “racism as usual.” (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p.201.)

Presbyterians have discovered in their racial justice involvements their own parallel to Peter’s experience of racism. In Antioch, Peter had begun to enjoy fellowship with Gentiles. However, upon the arrival of certain Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, he reverted to separating himself from the Gentiles. His behavior influenced other early Jewish Christians to similar rejection of Gentiles. In response, Paul rebuked Peter for not walking “upright according to the Gospel.” (Galatians 2:11-14.) The overcoming of racism is not simply a once-for-all matter, a simple conversion. In Peter’s experience, as with others, the truth that emerges teaches Christians about the depth of racism.

(3) *Ignorance of racism within the church*: The church itself has been an obstacle to racial justice. The World Council of Churches has declared that

We confess there is too little evidence of any dramatic improvement in the commitment of the churches against racism and too few churches perceive the

racism implicit in their own structures... We therefore call the churches again to repentance and to a renewed self-examination, particularly of the way Church structures themselves incorporate and perpetuate racism. ("Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," p. 15.)

(4) *Perception of racial justice efforts as a threat to church unity:* A 1980 Presbyterian Panel survey revealed that although a substantial majority of Presbyterians believe that the church should be involved in racial justice, there was wide variety in opinions about the degree of involvement and the type of involvement. (Summary of August 1980 Presbyterian Panel, December 1980, p. 2.) The World Council of Churches' Program to Combat Racism has noted this reality among many churches:

When it comes to the actual involvement of the church in fighting racism, the divided mind of the churches comes evident... Unity cannot be pursued as a merely interdenominational and interconfessional matter. The churches may achieve a measure of conciliar unity on baptism, the eucharist, or ministry, but this is not the end of the road to unity. The real test of the integrity of that unity arises as the churches are confronted with issues of the human community such as racism. Can the unity of the churches expressed in theological agreements stand the test of involvement of the church in its prophetic ministry to the poor and the oppressed? Can we consider the churches united when some of them practice racism? These are the questions that will haunt the ecumenical movements in the 1980's... The unity of the churches in Christ which fails to eradicate racism in the practice of faith is a pseudo-unity. This applies not only to the churches in Southern Africa, but also to the churches in other parts of the world. ("Racism and the Unity of the Church," PCR Reports, 1980, no. 4, pp. 3,4,7.)

(5) *Lack of information:* The 1980 Presbyterian Panel survey on racial justice revealed that a disturbingly high number of Presbyterians were uninformed about denominational commitments and policies and unaware of racial justice resources (programs, funds, staff, and caucuses). Such a lack of awareness points to the need for a more effective system of communication within the denomination. As stressed by the World Council of Churches, an informed membership is essential to racial justice.

It would appear imperative that greater attention be given to the dissemination of information to the membership, not just the leaders, of the European and North American churches... The people must be informed. (*Race: No Peace without Justice*, 1980, pp. VIII-IX.)

(6) *Lack of understanding of racial-ethnic concerns:* The 193rd General Assembly (1981) acknowledged that

The United Presbyterian Church has also failed to understand the concerns of its racial-ethnic members. It has held on to simplistic stereotypes of racial-ethnic persons and has not attempted to understand and appreciate them in their fullness. The church has failed to realize or acknowledge the depths and complexities of racial oppression and its impact on peoples over a long span of time. With regards to attempts to overcome racial injustice, the church has failed to accept the perceptions, expectations, and evaluations of racial-ethnic groups in determining the adequacy, appropriateness, success, or failure of those attempts. Concurrently, the church has failed to recognize or accept the gifts that racial-ethnic peoples have to bring to its being and mission. Thus, ... the racial-ethnic caucuses are often misunderstood as negative and disruptive entities. (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 201.)

(7) *Inability to accept economic risks of racial justice.* Related to the institutional racism within the church is the reality of the church's complicity in racial injustice through

investments in companies that exploit or support oppressive governments. Although the *Reunited Church** has established a Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment and has often adopted the recommendations of this committee concerning shareholder resolutions and divestment, criticism from within the denominational membership bears out the truth of a recent observation that

All together, the actions taken by churches and their organizations against economic involvement with South Africa and Namibia make quite an impressive list...But seen in the context of their massive and direct involvement, through shareholdings and accounts with banks, in institutions that perpetuate racism in South Africa, the church's record on this issue still looks very disappointing. As one European stated quite frankly, "It is a great shock to us to realize that at least some of the prosperity which we take for granted is a direct result of racist exploitation." The western churches are familiar enough with the idea that it is easier for a camel to get through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The trouble is they have never thought of themselves as rich. (*Race: No Peace Without Justice*, 1980, pp.24,27.)

(8) *Reduction of Racial Justice Efforts to Education*: Many of the traditional strategies for racial justice are educational in nature: utilization of study guides, Bible studies, sermon series, discussion groups, etc. As a contemporary parallel to the gnosticism of biblical times, the rationale of such strategies is that racism can be "educated away." However, one important finding of the 1980 worldwide consultation on racism was

One important advance had been away from the assumption that racism could be overcome simply by preaching the brotherhood of man and the sisterhood of women, and by the spread of education. Through their experience, the churches have had to realize that racial injustice is often the very foundation of the societies in which they operate, at the local, national and international level. They have had to come to terms with deafness and blindness of their own people to the suffering of oppressed groups that is the other side of their own prosperity and security. (*Race: No Peace without Justice*, 1980, p.90.)

(9) *Inability to effect policy translations into actions*: The 193rd General Assembly (1981) acknowledged that institutional racism continues to be experienced by racial-ethnic men and institutional racism-sexism to be experienced by racial-ethnic women as the United Presbyterian Church's churchwide affirmative action-equal employment policies and just representation commitments continue to achieve less than churchwide results. (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 201.)

(10) *Disengagement from experienced racial injustice*: The 193rd General Assembly (1981) noted that

Another shortcoming is that in the 1970's the United Presbyterian Church was relatively isolated from racial justice issues in society. The church's racial concerns have been focused largely on matters affecting its internal life. (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 201.)

This tendency has not been reversed. In a recent consultation on racial-ethnic concerns, several black participants observed that the *Reunited Church* had lost touch with person suffering from racial injustice; the denomination was addressing racial justice issues, not as experienced problems but from a vantage point outside the situation of injustice. Participants in a 1980 World Council of Churches consultation acknowledged that many churches set up "research" or "discussion groups" to review racial justice issues. One of the problems exposed was the danger of such research and discussion becoming ends in themselves rather than means of reaching a decision on racial justice action. (*Race: No Peace without Justice*, 1980 p. 22.)

*Editor's note: In the original minutes of the 195th General Assembly (1983), Part I, pp. 459-471, the name of the Church is stated as the "United Presbyterian Church."

III. Comprehensive Strategy for Racial Justice in the 1980's

Preface

The *Reunited Church's* commitment to racial justice and racial-ethnic ministries is not a newly adopted policy nor a recent decision. The 193rd General Assembly (1981) noted that "The United Presbyterian Church and its predecessor bodies have a long history of involvement in racial-ethnic ministries and racial justice." (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 198.)

Yet, only in relatively recent times has our denomination understood and responded to the need for a comprehensive and coordinated denominationwide approach toward such mission and ministries. In 1963, the 175th General Assembly (1963) established the Commission on Religion and Race (CORAR) to (1) be the focal point for the United Presbyterian Church's concern for race relations and the issues of religion and race and (2) design a "comprehensive strategy" for direct and cooperative action by congregations, judicatories and agencies of the denomination. (*Minutes*, 1963, Part I, pp. 141-142.) In 1968, recognizing that racism was not a short-term problem but instead one calling the church to broad and sustained commitment and action, the 180th General Assembly (1968) reorganized the Commission on Religion and Race as the Council on Church and Race (COCAR), again designating this body to be the focal point for Presbyterian combat against racism. (*Minutes*, 1968, Part I, pp. 159-160.) No new or revised comprehensive strategy was designed at that time.

In 1979, acknowledging the need to renew its commitment to racial justice, the 191st General Assembly (1979) concurred with an overture from the Presbytery of San Francisco calling for review of "The status and condition of racial-ethnic ministries and the commitment to matters of racial-ethnic justice with the United Presbyterian Church and development and projection of "new directions for entering the decade of the 1980's, which would establish and implement racial-ethnic ministries that effectively and creatively address the changing times." (*Minutes*, 1979, Part I, p. 518.) In 1981, upon receiving the report of the General Assembly Mission Council in response to the action of the 191st General Assembly (1979), the 193rd General Assembly (1981) adopted seven "Directions for the United Presbyterian Church's Witness in Racial Justice and Racial-Ethnic Ministries":

1. The United Presbyterian Church must recommit itself to racial justice in both the church and society...
2. Every unit of the United Presbyterian Church must, in all activities, be sensitive to racism and racial injustice...
3. The United Presbyterian Church shall increase financial and programmatic support for racial/ethnic ministries...
4. The United Presbyterian Church shall affirm the work of the Racial-Ethnic Caucuses...
5. Congregations must deepen their understanding and increase their involvements in racial justice issues...
6. The United Presbyterian Church shall prepare and equip its leaders to reflect a commitment to racial-ethnic ministries and racial justice...
7. The United Presbyterian Church shall reaffirm its commitment to equal employment practices and to just representation at all levels of the church. (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, pp. 202-204.)

Consistent with these directions, the 193rd General Assembly (1981) reconstituted the Council on Church and Race as the "primary agent" for racial justice in the United Presbyterian Church (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, pp. 206-208) and authorized it to "develop a comprehensive strategy on racial justice for the United Presbyterian Church for the decade of the 1980's." (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 401.)

The comprehensive strategy that follows is consequently an approach to racial justice within and by the *Reunited Church* in the light of:

- New understanding of the multidimensional nature of racism within our church and society;
- The recognition by Christians (in Presbyterian and ecumenical circles) of current obstacles to racial justice;
- The commitment of the denomination to involve all of its members, judicatories, and entities in mission toward racial justice;
- The seven "Directions for Racial Justice" adopted by the 193rd General Assembly (1981).

Consequently, the components of the comprehensive strategy include

- A. A vision of racial justice based upon the Kingdom of God anticipated by biblical persons and embodied by Jesus Christ.
- B. A comprehensive goal for this decade based upon the hope that Presbyterians will demonstrate their vision of racial justice in their individual and corporate lives.
- C. A four-fold set of objectives for this decade that specify the insights and skills essential to realization of the comprehensive goal.
- D. An identification of obstacles to racial justice that have hindered the ability and effectiveness of the *Reunited Church* in its racial justice efforts.
- E. A set of directions for the 1980's, which are translations and extensions of the "Directions for Racial Justice" adopted by the 193rd General Assembly (1981) and which emphasize the necessity of tasks directed toward overcoming obstacles to racial justice in order to make genuine progress toward such justice.
- F. Suggested activities within each direction for congregations, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly agencies and councils.
- G. A description of the role of the Council on Church and Race in implementing this strategy, consistent with the mandate given to it by the 193rd General Assembly (1981).

A. Our Vision

As persons who pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God and the doing of God's will on earth, Presbyterians' vision of the Kingdom is informed by our

- Knowledge of the God in whose image all men and women are created, the God who "treats everyone on the same basis...no matter what race he or she belongs to" (Acts 10:34-35, *Today's English Version*)
- Following of the Christ who proclaimed and previewed the Kingdom of God; the Christ whom we proclaim as Prince of Peace, Lord of Life, and Servant of Justice; the Christ who calls us not only to pray for but to seek the Kingdom of God.
- Alertness to the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit who anoints servants "to preach good news to the poor...to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed..." (Luke 4:18.)

Thus informed, we know that faithfulness to God involves participation in the Kingdom of God. With prayer-filled hope we look forward to the Kingdom of peace, love, and justice. With hope-filled expectation, we commit ourselves to ordering faithfully our church and our life in ways that embody this Kingdom until it fully comes. With renewed commitment, we focus our thoughts and actions upon ways in which our mission in racial justice can reflect this Kingdom.

B. Comprehensive Goal for Racial Justice in the 1980's

The comprehensive strategy on racial justice for the 1980's requested by the 193rd General Assembly (1981) communicates the *Reunited Church's* commitment to the kind of faithful ordering, worship, discipleship and apostleship, and individual and corporate life necessary for the church of Christ to witness the Kingdom of God. Such an awareness is informed by the discoveries by recent General Assemblies of the depth and pervasiveness of racism. Thus, even a comprehensive and coordinated effort for the duration of this decade will not effect the eradication of racism within the church and the world. Racial justice requires commitment and effort beyond the limits of one program, one commission or council, one special fund. A comprehensive strategy in the 1980's is therefore an approach to racial justice for just one segment of the long journey that is still before us in the quest for such justice.

In the light of this understanding, we see the need for a goal that enables the charting of a course in this quest. Guided by new awareness of the nature of racism, including the knowledge that it has "pervaded and infected our society, our institutions, including the church, and our individual lives" so that "organizational, institutional, societal, political, economic, and even religious structures and activities serve to perpetuate racial injustice apart from the question of individual attitudes or intentions" (*Minutes, 1981, Part I, p. 197*), we commit ourselves to a goal that is comprehensive in relating to the breadth and scope of racial justice.

Guided by the call from Christians across the globe exhorting, in the name of the Christ who sacrificed himself for all women and men, regardless of race, "all those who are on Christ's side" to fight racism openly in both its individual and collective manifestations ("Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," World Council of Churches, September 1980, p. 5), we commit ourselves to a goal that is comprehensive in relating Presbyterians to racial justice.

Guided by the growing awareness that racism cannot be overcome "simply by preaching...and by the spread of education" (*Race: No Peace without Justice, 1980, p. 90*); we commit ourselves to a goal that is comprehensive in relating Presbyterians to the importance of variety, creativity, and resourcefulness in the quest for racial justice.

Therefore, within the Comprehensive Strategy on Racial Justice, the comprehensive goal for this decade calls for:

1. A *Reunited Church* actively striving for racial justice in each of its dimensions.
2. A *Reunited Church* engaging and enabling all its entities in mission for racial justice.
3. A *Reunited Church* resourcefully utilizing a variety of activities and tactics in its racial justice work.

C. Objectives for Racial Justice in the 1980's

Active striving for racial justice; engaging and enabling persons and entities in racial justice work; resourceful utilization of activities and tactics in service to racial justice—these dimensions of the comprehensive goal for racial justice in the 1980's emphasize action. In order for the *Reunited Church* to engage effectively in such action, we shall need informed insight, renewal in church life and lifestyle, renewal in our witness in society, and continuous efforts in including new persons in such action.

Consequently, the comprehensive racial justice goal for this decade will be achieved when Presbyterians develop and utilize capacities and abilities for mission toward racial justice. The comprehensive goal can be translated into four such capacities:

1. The capacity to discern racial justice issues: identify racial justice needs; develop responses to institutional racism in church and society (Racial Justice Perspective).

2. The capacity to order the life of the church in a variety of ways reflecting genuine inclusiveness of racial-ethnic persons and authentic racial justice (Witness in Church Life).
3. The capacity to channel the church's energies in varieties of mission that proclaim and act out the justice of God (Witness in Society).
4. The capacity to enlist and enable persons in varieties of mission toward racial justice (Leadership Development).

D. Obstacles to Objectives for Racial Justice

The *Reunited Church* will be involved in racial justice in a comprehensive way when we have individually and corporately acquired these four capacities. Development of these capacities requires addressing the obstacles to racial justice indentified in recent studies by the Presbyterian Panel (August, 1980) and the World Council of Churches ("Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," 1980)

1. In order to nurture an informed racial justice perspective, we need to address:
 - a. The loss of will to work for racial justice expressed by many Presbyterians.
 - b. Our lack of understanding of the nature and depth of racism, especially institutional forms and dimensions of racism.
 - c. The ignorance of many Presbyterians about racism within the church.
 - d. The misperception of many Presbyterians that discussion of or action toward racial justice threatens the peace and unity of the church.
 - e. The problem of lack of information provided Presbyterians about current racial justice issues, efforts, opportunities for involvement, and resources available.
 - f. The problematic lack of genuine understanding among Presbyterians of racial-ethnic persons and their concerns.
2. In order to develop the capacity to witness to authentic inclusiveness and justice in the corporate life of our church, we need to address:
 - a. The lack of understanding among Presbyterians of racial-ethnic persons, their concerns, and the caucuses they have organized within the church.
 - b. The inability of many Presbyterians, individually and corporately, to accept the economic risks concomitant with racial justice commitments and actions.
 - c. Our inability to effectively translate pronouncements and policies into programs and actions.
 - d. Our inclination to limit racial justice activities to education.
3. In order to develop fully the capacity to witness actively to racial justice in the world, we need to address:
 - a. The inability of many Presbyterians to accept the economic risks of racial justice involvement.
 - b. Our inclination to confine racial justice involvement to educational research activities.
 - c. Our inability to effectively translate policy positions into sustained action.
 - d. Our predicament of being disengaged from direct and shared experiences of racial injustice.
4. In order to develop the capacity to enlist and enable effectively other persons and groups in mission toward racial justice, we need to address:
 - a. The problem of reducing approaches to racial justice involvement only to educational strategies.

- b. The problem of lack of information for Presbyterians on current racial justice issues, efforts, opportunities, and resources for involvement.

E. Directions for Racial Justice in the 1980's

In designing a positive plan of action for its racial justice work in this decade, the Presbyterian Church does not resign itself to obstacles to such justice. Instead, we view such obstacles as indicators suggesting specific points of focus for our efforts. To work toward racial justice is to move toward identified obstacles to such justice. Consequently, within this comprehensive strategy, obstacles to racial justice point toward directions for specific efforts for racial justice. Development of capacities for racial justice work in the 1980's will therefore involve the *Reunited Church* in movement in the following mission directions.

1. Development of an informed racial justice perspective will involve movement
 - a. Toward individual and corporate recommitment to racial justice within church and society.
 - b. Toward development of sensitivity to situations and conditions of racism (especially institutional racism).
2. Development of church life that reflects genuine inclusiveness and authentic racial justice will involve movement
 - a. Toward development and exercise of sensitivity to racism within the church
 - b. Toward affirmation of racial-ethnic diversity and of racial-ethnic caucuses within the church.
 - c. Toward increased program and financial support of racial-ethnic ministries.
 - d. Toward effective practice of affirmative action-equal employment policies and just representation policies.
 - e. Toward congregational lifestyles that support and reflect racial justice.
 - f. Toward denominational, judicatory, congregational, and individual willingness to risk economic comfort and security in racial justice work.
 - g. Toward development of new church traditions, structures, and processes reflecting racial justice commitment (with or without Reunion between the Presbyterian Church in the United Presbyterian Church
3. Development of church witness in society that proclaims and acts out the justice of God will involve movement
 - a. Toward development and exercise of sensitivity to racism in the world.
 - b. Toward congregational mission that includes racial justice work locally and globally.
 - c. Toward denominational mission that speaks to and acts for racial justice regionally and globally.
 - d. Toward denominational mission that works for racial justice ecumenically.
4. Development of effective enlistment and enabling of persons to join in mission for racial justice will involve movement
 - a. Toward recommitment to racial justice in both church and society.
 - b. Toward preparation and equipment of church leadership that reflects a commitment to racial justice and racial-ethnic ministries.
 - c. Toward effective practice of affirmative action-equal employment policies and just representation policies.
 - d. Toward congregational lifestyles that reflect and support racial justice.

F. Activities and Resources for Racial Justice

In moving toward the directions for racial justice delineated above, the *Reunited Church*, through its General Assembly agencies, councils, committees, synods, presbyteries, and congregations, will develop projects and programs in the areas of: church and lay education, congregational development, witness in the whole of life, ecumenical mission and relations, church leadership, churchwide personnel system, denominational communication and unified information systems, and mission funding.

Suggestions for specific activities are listed in Section IV.

G. The Role of the Council on Church and Race within the Comprehensive Strategy on Racial Justice in the 1980's

As bearers of the Reformed and reforming tradition, Presbyterians understand ministry to be everybody's business. As a denomination striving to understand the Kingdom of God to be incarnate in the Prince of Peace, who is both Lord of Life and Servant of Justice as the body of Christ, we know that racial justice is every Presbyterian's business. As persons aware of the pervasiveness of racism within our world, we realize that racial justice is every ministry's business.

In the light of these understandings, the 193rd General Assembly (1981) adopted churchwide directions for racial justice in the 1980's. With these directions, the General Assembly reconstituted the Mandate of the Council on Church and Race, assigning to the council the purpose of being "the primary agent within the United Presbyterian Church in the United States with the following responsibilities:

1. To call the church to act upon a biblically based vision of racial justice and of God's will for the liberation of all humanity.
2. To provide leadership for the United Presbyterian Church response to racial injustice.
3. To develop experimental and emergency responses to critical situations involving racial justice.
4. To develop and maintain coalitions with ecumenical and secular groups in order to address racial justice matters at state, national, and international levels.
5. To identify and develop policies and strategies for racial justice issues that are crucial for church and society.
6. To initiate responses to confront racial injustice in church and society in cooperation with General Assembly agencies, synods, and presbyteries.
7. To assure that racial justice concerns are injected into the review and development of policies and strategies at all levels of the church.
8. To fulfill the basic responsibilities to the General Assembly. This will include but not be limited to:
 - a. Presentation of an annual report to the General Assembly with opportunity for review and comment by the General Assembly Mission Council.
 - b. Presentation of specific recommendations, if any, to the General Assembly.
 - c. Advice and counsel on issues related to racial justice and racial-ethnic ministries to the annual meeting of the General Assembly.
 - d. Preparation of an annual budget proposal to be submitted to the General Assembly Mission Council, within the General Assembly Mission Budget. (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, p. 206.)

Through its membership, which includes representatives from synods, representatives from each of the five denominational racial-ethnic caucuses, and at-large members with specific expertise in racial justice work, the council identifies current and emerging issues and explores appropriate responses in policy and action. Through its participation via

appointed representatives on the General Assembly Mission Council, Committee on Mission Directions and Priorities, Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, Program Agency, Support Agency, and Vocation Agency, and through its working relationship with the Advisory Council on Church and Society and the Advisory Council on Discipleship and Worship and with ecumenical and secular agents, the council channels these responses to racial justice issues and situations.

Consonant with the mandate adopted by the 193rd General Assembly (1981), the Council on Church and Race, within the Comprehensive Strategy for Racial Justice for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the 1980's, will fulfill its responsibilities and organize its work around the tasks of

1. Coordinating racial justice efforts in the *Reunited Church*.
2. Initiating experimental and model projects designed to confront racial injustice.
3. Assisting individuals and groups in their struggles to overcome racial injustice.
4. Reviewing the policies and programs of the *Reunited Church* with respect to racial justice.

In performing these tasks, the council will seek to

1. Facilitate the development of capacities essential to mission in racial justice.
2. Facilitate the employment of capacities essential to mission in racial justice.
3. Facilitate the development of the persons, units, and resources of the church in such response.

Such tasks will involve the council in the continuing activities of reviewing churchwide work toward the objectives of the comprehensive strategy for racial justice, identifying areas still in need of work, consulting with and assisting units of the church with capability for response to these needed areas, and, in appropriate cases, exploring response through experimental projects.

Throughout its work, the council will be attentive to the importance of

1. Comprehensiveness in Presbyterian efforts toward racial justice in its many and varied dimensions within the church and within the world.
2. Comprehensiveness in involvement of all Presbyterian members, judicatories, and resources.
3. Comprehensiveness in utilization of varied approaches, activities, and tactics.

IV. Appendix: Suggested Activities and Resources

Preface

The emphasis of this comprehensive strategy is: a strategy particular to the *Reunited Church*; a strategy goal, objectives, and directions particular to the decade of the 1980's. A list of activities within this strategy, however, cannot be particular and comprehensive, since many studies, projects, and programs that constitute Presbyterian action toward racial justice are yet to be conducted, designed, and developed.

Consequently, as the Presbyterian Church begins to implement this Comprehensive Strategy for Racial Justice in the 1980's, "first step" activities to be taken would be:

- Study of this report by General Assembly agencies, councils, and committees; racial-ethnic caucuses; mission councils, committees and racial justice instrumentalities (sometimes known as "Overture 141 groups," a title referring to the overture adopted by the 184th General Assembly (1972) mandating the establishment in each synod of instrumentalities for ministry among racial-ethnic minorities (*Minutes*, 1972, Part I, p.

110); sessions and congregational committees; exploration by such groups of areas of work in response to this strategy.

- Where possible, consultations between judicatory councils or committees and racial-ethnic caucuses; between judicatory councils or committees and racial justice instrumentalities to identify critical areas of racial justice work and priorities in such work.
- Research by appropriate agents in each judicatory and by sessions to develop "inventories" or "audits" of the degree of activity currently engaged in by the judicatory or congregation within each of the four racial justice objectives (Perspective, Witness in Church Life, Witness in Society, Leadership Development) and concomitant racial justice directions to identify needed areas of work.

Following such first steps, review of the following lists of activities and resources would be "next step" efforts. The activities delineated are intended to be suggestive of the kinds of efforts and events, projects and programs in service to the accomplishment of our racial justice objectives for this decade.

Activities: Development of Racial Justice Perspective

A. Issues for Study

1. Racism in theology
2. Racism in church education
3. Racism in the media
4. Racism in institutional forms
5. Violence inherent in racist institutions and systems; question of violence and nonviolence in the struggle for racial justice

B. Activities

1. Study of the report by the Joint Commission on Theology and Racism (*Minutes*, 1975, Part I, pp. 318-324) and the report of the Special Committee on Theology of Liberation and Renewal (*Minutes*, 1977, Part. 1, pp. 260-277).
2. Development of church education materials and programs that deal with racism in its theological implications.
3. Development of materials and educational events addressing the distinctions and relationships between racial-ethnic ministries and racial justice advocacy.
4. Study of groups and projects receiving grants from national and local committees for Self-Development of People (SDOP); loans from the Presbyterian Economic Development Corporation (PEDCO, Inc.); individuals receiving grants from the Fund for Legal Aid; and shareholder resolutions recommended by the Committee on Mission Responsibilities Through Investment of the General Assembly Mission Council, to develop new understandings of the nature, dimensions, and forms of racial injustice, new issues in racial justice, etc.
5. Utilization of Education for Mission, Internationalization of Mission, Moderator's Conferences, and other such programs to provide arenas for interaction, education, and mutual support between United Presbyterians and oppressed peoples, nationally and internationally.
6. Utilization of communications, information, interpretation offices, and denominational periodicals to nurture, among Presbyterians, deeper understandings of racism (especially institutional racism) and to develop alertness to racial injustice.

Activities: Development of Racial Justice Witness in Church Life

A. Issues for Study

1. Racism in Church Structures and Processes
2. Racism and Economic Implications
3. Racism in Church Education
4. Role of Racial-Ethnic Caucuses in the Church

B. Activities

1. Study of documents from World Council of Churches' Consultation: "Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's"; report, *Race: No Peace Without Justice*. (World Council of Churches, 1980.)
2. Study of report "Review of Racial Justice and Racial-Ethnic Ministries." (*Minutes*, 1981, Part I, pp. 196-205.)
3. Annual review by General Assembly agencies, councils, committees, and sessions of their involvement in racial justice.
4. Use by congregations of Christian education curricula developed by racial-ethnic persons and groups.
5. Events presenting descriptions, examples, and experiences of roles of, and contributions by, racial-ethnic caucuses in worship and mission of the church.
6. Consultations on mission, evangelism, and racial justice by caucuses and Chapter XXVIII organizations, such as Presbyterians United for Biblical Concerns.
7. Designation of special days or seasons to examine racial issues, proclaim commitment or recommitment to racial justice, celebrate racial pluralism of the *Reunited Church*; inclusion of such dates in the Presbyterian Planning Calendar and Bulletin Service.
8. Congregational and presbytery events to celebrate inclusiveness and diversity, to declare repentance from racism, and to establish covenants for racial justice work.
9. Review by mission funding committees of guidelines, criteria, procedures, time frames, and evaluation techniques for racial-ethnic new church development, church redevelopment, mission development grants, and synod and presbytery projects, to ensure that processes are racially just.
10. Development of interracial and intercultural youth programs and development and support of programs aimed specifically at racial-ethnic youth.
11. Review by funding agents of financial support for racial-ethnic ministries. (This may necessitate a deliberate amendment of funding procedures to meet the special needs and styles of racial-ethnic ministries.)
12. Regular gatherings of racial-ethnic staff (national agencies and middle judicatories) to share program resources, nurture support, and develop cooperative efforts.
13. Utilization of communications, information, and interpretation units and denominational periodicals to highlight celebrations of pluralism, inclusiveness, covenanting for racial justice, etc.

Activities: Development of Church Witness in Racial Justice in Society

A. Issues for Study

1. Racism and Economic Implications
2. Racism in Public Education
3. Racism Justice Issues and Legislation
4. Racism in the Criminal Justice System
5. Racism in Police Practices

6. Racism and the Reemergence of Racial Hate Groups
7. Racism and Native American Treaty Rights
8. Racism and Migration Issues
9. Racism and National Security Doctrines
10. Racism and the Rise of Militarism
11. Racism and Rights of Self-Determination for Oppressed Peoples
12. Racism and the Question of Violence vs. Nonviolence in the Struggle for Racial Justice

B. Activities

1. Study of documents from consultation, "Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," sponsored by the World Council of Churches (June 1980); report, *Race: No Peace Without Justice* (WCC, 1980); issues presented in *PCR Information*, periodical of the Program to Combat Racism, World Council of Churches. Such study might include focus upon the following issues: independence and self-determination for Namibia; self-determination for Puerto Rico; national state for Palestinians; self-determination for Micronesia; racial justice implications of involvement in Latin America, Africa, Asia.
2. Study and use of material produced by Council on Interracial Books for Children (New York) concerning racism in children's literature and textbooks.
3. Study of curricula on the Ku Klux Klan by the National Educational Association and the Anti-Defamation League.
4. Study of shareholder resolutions recommended by Presbyterian members and groups to explore economic examples of racism and implications for individual and congregational stewardship.
5. Studies nurturing understanding of racism in a global context and of global linkages with national and local racial justice issues.
6. Review of international grants by the National Committee on the Self-Development of People to identify new global issues of racial justice.
7. Individual and congregational study of racial justice efforts via withdrawal of funds from banks involved in South Africa; consideration of personal or congregational withdrawal of accounts from such banks.
8. Identification and analysis by congregations and judicatories of specific racial incidents in their communities and the development of strategies both to educate and to mobilize their constituents to be advocates for racial justice.
9. Development of ministries that enable congregations to respond to emergency racial injustice situations and that create more contact between racial-ethnic and white congregations in order to work toward solving common community problems.
10. Involvement by congregations in local community coalitions opposing racial hate groups and fostering community unity and reconciliation.
11. Congregational use of the study guide "Doing Racial Justice: A Methodology." (Church and Society, March-April 1982, pp. 46-56.)
12. Design of an annual report form for use by congregations on the status of pluralism and racial justice. This report would include data on the community and its employment patterns, the status on housing, education and health-care services, and affirmative action and equal employment performance in the presbytery and its congregations.
13. Continuation and extension of denominational cooperation in ecumenical and secular networks and coalitions to increase effectiveness in racial justice work.
14. Utilization of Education for Mission, Internationalization of Mission, Moderator's Conferences, and other such programs to provide mutual support between the

- Reunited Church* and oppressed peoples, nationally and internationally.
15. An annual report of the church's activities in racial-ethnic ministries and racial justice to be published in *A.D.*

Activities: Development of Leadership in Mission Toward Racial Justice

A. Issues for Study

1. Racism in Theology
2. Racism in Church Education
3. Racism in Church Structures

B. Activities

1. Development of new models of theological education that have the flexibility to address racial justice, intercultural perspectives, and the special needs and styles of racial-ethnic ministries.
2. Employment by seminaries of more racial-ethnic faculty and staff to provide information, analysis, and courses on racial-ethnic issues in the training of church leaders.
3. Provision of adequate scholarship assistance to racial-ethnic students preparing for professional church leadership.
4. Development of criteria for ordination that take into account the special needs and skills for racial-ethnic ministries.
5. Continued monitoring and work toward hiring and placement of racial-ethnic persons in all church vocations.
6. Monitoring of the status of the ordination of racial-ethnic women, particularly as it relates to the *Plan for Reunion*.
7. Continued or increased support of institutions that recruit and train racial-ethnic leadership for racial-ethnic and other ministries.
8. Convening seminars on the psychological, sociological, and cultural dynamics of racism and race relations to sensitize church leaders to racial-ethnic experiences and perspectives.
9. Inclusion of racial-ethnic concerns and perspectives in orientation programs for pastors, elected agency and council members, and judicatory staff.
10. Provision of more resources and effective methods for judicatories and congregations to interpret and implement affirmative action and equal employment opportunity policies and programs.
11. Development of networks that identify and nurture persons and groups involved in racial-ethnic ministries.
12. Consultation by General Assembly agencies and middle judicatories with the caucuses in order to articulate the role of the caucuses in the life and work of the church.
13. Regular consultation by General Assembly agencies and middle judicatories with the caucuses to identify current racial justice issues and to develop timely programmatic responses.
14. Increased attentiveness to the need for genuine inclusion of racial-ethnic persons in all arenas of decision-making by nominating committees.
15. Study of and training in different tactics in combating racism, including conflict management, negotiations, etc.
16. Use of ecumenical and secular agencies for training Presbyterians involved in racial justice (e.g., local human rights commissions; state civil rights offices).

Some Resources for Study and Action

"Report and Recommendations: Review Committee on Racial Justice and Racial-Ethnic Ministries," *Minutes*, 1981, Part I, pp. 196-208.

Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's, World Council of Churches, 1980.

Rogers, Barbara, *Race: No Peace Without Justice*, Program to Combat Racism, World Council of Churches, 1980.

"Baptized into One Body," *Church and Society*, March-April 1982.

"Racism and the Unity of the Church," *PCR Information*, 1980. no. 4, pp. 2-8.

Ku Klux Klan curriculum (National Education Association, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036).

Ku Klux Klan curriculum (Anti-Defamation League, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, New York).

"Report on Racial, Ethnic and Religious Violence in California," Governor's Task Force on Civil Rights, State and Consumer Services Agency, State of California, 1982.

Periodicals and Newsletters

"PCR Information," Program to Combat Racism, World Council of Churches, Geneva.

"Perspectives: the Civil Rights Quarterly," United States Commission on Civil Rights, Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office," Washington, DC 20492.

"Civil Rights Update," United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1121 Vermont Avenue N.W., Washington, DC 20425.

"Klanwatch," P.O. Box 10500, Atlanta, GA 30310.

Recommendations

The Council on Church and Race recommends that the 195th General Assembly (1983):

- 1. Receive Sections I and II of this report as background information.**
- 2. Adopt Sections III and IV of this report as the Comprehensive Strategy for Racial Justice for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the 1980's.**
- 3. Urge congregations, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly agencies and councils to study this report and accept it as a working document for their renewed involvement in work toward racial justice in this decade.**
- 4. Authorize the Council on Church and Race to develop, as it deems necessary and appropriate, additional appendixes suggesting racial justice activities for inclusion in this comprehensive strategy by future General Assemblies.**

Summary: Comprehensive Strategy for Racial Justice in the 1980's Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

VISION

A church and world embodying God's Kingdom of peace through love and justice

COMPREHENSIVE GOAL—1980's

A *Reunited Church* participating in and providing a preview of God's Kingdom through its work in each and every dimension of racial justice through its inclusion of all Presbyterian members and entities in such work, and through its creative use of a variety of activities and tactics to achieve such justice.

OBJECTIVES—1980's

Presbyterians developing and utilizing the:

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| I. Capacity to discern racial justice issues; identify racial justice needs; develop responses to institutional racism in church and society (RACIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE) | II. Capacity to order the life of the church in a variety of ways reflecting genuine inclusiveness of racial/ethnic persons, and authentic racial justice (WITNESS IN CHURCH LIFE) | III. Capacity to channel the church's energies in varieties of mission which proclaim and act out the justice of God (WITNESS IN SOCIETY) | IV. Capacity to enlist & enable persons in varieties of mission toward racial justice (LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT) |
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OBSTACLES—1980's

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| IA. Loss of will to work for racial justice | IIA. Lack of genuine understanding of racial/ethnic persons/groups (incl. caucuses) | IIIA. Inability to accept economic risks of racial justice | IVA. Reduction of racial justice efforts to education |
| B. Lack of understanding of nature & depth of racism (esp. institutional racism) | B. Inability to accept economic risks of racial justice | B. Reduction of racial justice efforts to education | B. Uninformed membership |
| C. Ignorance of racism within the church | C. Inability to translate policy into effective action | C. Inability to translate policy into effective action | |
| D. Misperception of racial justice work as threat to unity of church | D. Reduction of racial justice efforts to education | D. Disengagement from experienced racial injustice | |
| E. Uninformed membership with regard to racial/ethnic concerns and issues; resources and projects | | | |
| F. Lack of genuine understanding of racial/ethnic persons and concerns | | | |

DIRECTIONS—1980's

- IA. Recommitment to racial justice
- B. Development of sensitivity to situations and conditions of racism (esp. institutional racism)
- IIA. Exercise of sensitivity to racism within church
- B. Affirmation of racial/ethnic diversity; affirmation of caucuses
- C. Increased program & financial support of racial/ethnic ministries
- D. Effective practices of affirmative action/equal employment policies and just representation policies
- E. Congregational lifestyle supporting racial justice
- F. Denominational, judicial and congregational willingness to risk security in racial justice work
- G. Development of new church traditions, structures, and processes reflecting racial justice commitment (with/without Reunion)
- IIIA. Exercise of sensitivity to racism in the world
- B. Denominational mission that speaks to and acts on racial justice regionally and globally
- C. Congregational mission that includes racial justice work locally and globally
- D. Denominational mission that works for racial justice ecumenically
- IVA. Enlistment of all members in racial justice work
- B. Preparation & equipping of leaders for racial justice work