

01-GS-37 VOTED with abstentions: The Twenty-third General Synod adopts the pronouncement “A United Church of Christ Ministry and Witness with Micronesians” and the proposal for action.

## **A PRONOUNCEMENT ON A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MINISTRY AND WITNESS WITH MICRONESIANS**

### **I. SUMMARY**

For the last fifteen years, the United States of America’s relationship to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has been defined by Compacts of Free Association (CFA). The Compacts for the FSM and the RMI are up for renewal in the year 2001. Although Guam, Belau, and the Northern Marianas are considered part of Micronesia, this pronouncement will deal only with the FSM and the RMI because of the urgent nature of the present, ongoing Compact renegotiations.

When the Compact was signed in 1986, Micronesians were not aware of the dire consequences that serving forty years as U.S. colonies and another fifteen years as neocolonies would have for the long term self-sufficiency and true independence goals of the FSM and the RMI. Furthermore, because of “dependency” systems and inequities—in the areas of health, education, and jobs—exacerbated and enlarged by U.S. trusteeship of the FSM and the RMI, many Micronesians are in exile in Hawaii and on the continental U.S. by economic necessity. For example, many Micronesians have moved to North Carolina and other places in the south to work on corporate chicken farms and in low-wage fast food service jobs.

Since the United Church of Christ Marshall Islands is the major denomination in the RMI, and the Congregational Church in Kosrae, United Church of Christ in Chuuk, United Church of Christ Pohnpei, and the Namoneas Congregational Churches Association all have partner relationships with the United Church of Christ (U.S.A.), the majority of Micronesians living in the United States consider themselves members of the United Church of Christ. Accordingly, this Pronouncement calls upon the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to welcome the Micronesians in our midst and to minister with our Micronesian sisters and brothers within our churches and our communities. The Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) has seen the significant participation and growth of Micronesians in the activities of PAAM in the last four years.

This Pronouncement also calls upon our UCC local churches and regional and national bodies to commit themselves to work towards full and just compensation for Micronesian peoples and the overturning of unfair provisions in the agreements during this crucial period of Compact renegotiations in the year 2001.

### **II. BACKGROUND**

#### **A. The Federated States of Micronesia**

The Federated States of Micronesia is comprised of four island groups: Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, and Yap. In 1983, citizens of the FSM were asked to vote in a plebiscite on the Compact of Free Association with the United States. Pohnpei and Chuuk voted against the Compact, but Yap and Kosrae voted in favor of the Compact. While the Compact promises independence, its subtext reveals otherwise. As researched by British scholar Jane Dibblin in a book entitled *Day of Two Suns*, the Compacts of Free Association for both the RMI and the FSM were in fact a virtual U.S. annexation of the FSM and the RMI for military purposes, a denial of self-determination, and a shuffling-off of responsibility for past actions.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. has full authority and responsibility for security and defense matters, which includes the option of establishing military bases and facilities on the islands. Nuclear-armed ships, planes, and submarines have the right to pass through and stop over. Since U.S. security interests overshadow every consideration, self-determination is not a reality in the Compact. Pohnpei and Chuuk voted against the Compact because the people were desirous of a truly nuclear-free Pacific, free from any form of nuclear weaponry.<sup>2</sup>

On May 24, 1984, then Ambassador to Micronesia, Fred Zeder, testified to the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources that U.S. grants and services, which cannot be matched from other sources,

would ensure that Micronesia would not be able to break free until the U.S. chooses to cut the knot of dependency.<sup>3</sup> A paper was developed by Glenn Alcalay of Rutgers University in 1986 entitled “From Subsistence to USDA: Strategic Economic Dependence in Micronesia.”<sup>4</sup>

The military thinking behind keeping the FSM and the RMI economically dependent on the U.S. is clearly seen to benefit U.S. security interests. The

U.S. is separated from Russia and China by the Pacific Ocean and the islands of Micronesia. The forward bases of Micronesia were also intended to draw fire away from the U.S. mainland, protecting it like “pawns in front of the king on a chessboard”<sup>5</sup> in the event of war.

Since the FSM does not have a key base like Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands, it has fewer bargaining chips in Compact renegotiations. Under the present Compact, citizens of the FSM and the RMI can enter the U.S. readily without going through the usual immigration and naturalization processes. However, because the word “nonimmigrant” is used to describe the presence of FSM and RMI citizens in the U.S., the U.S. Attorney General’s office has chosen to interpret the word nonimmigrant as meaning not eligible for federal housing and food stamp subsidies. Therefore, FSM and RMI citizens are forced to pay market rents in public housing so that many families are forced to pay approximately 50-60 percent of their gross income to live in public housing units. Furthermore, Micronesians are not eligible for Section 8 housing subsidies. Just recently, FSM residents in Hawaii were sent letters by the Hawaii Dept. of Human Services stating that effective November 1, 2000, food stamps would be eliminated for Micronesian children who were not born in the U.S. This action was taken despite the fact that FSM citizens are not deemed to be illegal residents in the

U.S. And because the FSM has fewer bargaining chips than the Marshall Islands, U.S. negotiators are putting pressure on FSM negotiators to accept smaller compensation packages and to put the issue of unrestricted entry into the U.S. on the bargaining table, despite the fact that the access issue is not on the formal Compact negotiations agenda (i.e., not legally on the table). If unrestricted access to the U.S. is terminated for FSM citizens, the effects would be disastrous in the FSM. Everything from remittances to education to commercial ties could be hurt.<sup>6</sup>

## **B. Justice for Federated States of Micronesia**

On April 18, 1962, President Kennedy signed a National Security Action Memorandum which set forth as U.S. Policy the movement of Micronesia into a permanent relationship with the U.S. within our political framework.<sup>7</sup> In order to implement the plan, Kennedy turned to Harvard economist Anthony Solomon, asking him to write a survey of Micronesia and to recommend how best to proceed. Solomon’s commission visited the islands of Micronesia during the summer of 1963, and the Solomon Report, as it is known, was issued in October of the same year. The Solomon Report was immediately classified and has remained so ever since with only a sanitized version being made available to the public. The Report called for achieving minimum but satisfactory social standards. Solomon recommended a quick injection of cash and then a plebiscite before the results of the aid faded, in effect, aid was to be used to buy votes—and once success was ensured, aid would be abruptly terminated. At the same time, “Washington should facilitate the general development of . . . loyalties to the U.S.”<sup>8</sup> That was to be done by bringing leaders to the U.S., introducing a U.S.-oriented curriculum and patriotic rituals into the school system, and increasing college scholarships for Micronesians to study in the U.S. He also urged the launching of a massive Peace Corps program in Micronesia. At one point, there was almost one Peace Corps volunteer for every one hundred Micronesians.<sup>9</sup> Justice for the FSM, therefore, calls for overturning the U.S. imperialism inherent in the Solomon Report.

It is clear to see that the negotiations presently going on between the FSM and the U.S. are not on a level playing field. Because of forty years of official colonization and fifteen years of unofficial colonization through strategic economic dependency, citizens of the FSM are being told not to rock the boat, especially during this sensitive period when the Compact is being renegotiated. FSM citizens residing in Hawaii have expressed frustration that their own government will not support them in their struggle to be considered qualified legal residents in the U.S. and thereby eligible for the federal food stamp program and for federal

housing subsidies. FSM residents in the U.S. feel that they are being sold down the river because the U.S. negotiators have an unfair advantage at the Compact table over FSM negotiators. To further strengthen the U.S. position at the bargaining table, the U.S. has recently audited FSM expenditures of Compact monies and raised questions about corruption by FSM government officials in Pohnpei and Chuuk.

Victims of U.S. colonization need to be supported by people of good will in the U.S. who understand the long-term psychological and economic effects of colonization.

### **C. Republic of the Marshall Islands**

During numerous hearings before the U.S. House Resources Committee (previously known as the Department of Interior), the RMI has brought Marshallese citizens to testify about the horrors, the pains, and the sufferings the people endured as a result of their exposure to radiation from U.S. weapons-testing. Marshall Islanders also have testified to the continuing suffering and near-genocide of the people through their exposure to radiation and subsequent dislocation from their homelands. Public Law 99-239 in the Compact of Free Association was the first attempt by the U.S. government to accept responsibility for “. . . compensation owing to citizens of the Marshall Islands . . . for loss or damage to property and person . . . resulting from the nuclear testing program which the Government of the United States conducted . . .” (Section 177[a] of the Compact). The U.S. Government also accepted responsibility and liability for the consequences of all of the tests— sixty-seven (67) in all—conducted from June 30, 1946 to August 18, 1958.<sup>10</sup>

The United States took over the Marshall Islands from Japan in one of the bloodiest Pacific campaigns of World War II and then governed the region until 1986 as part of a U.N. trusteeship agreement. In 1946, the people of Bikini and Enewetak atolls were evacuated to make way for a series of nuclear tests. The people of the two atolls were told they could return within a few years, once the testing was completed. The people of Bikini were told by a U.S. military officer in 1946 that their atoll was needed for a project “for the benefit of all mankind.”<sup>11</sup> The Marshallese people would never have consented to the testing if the truth had been known or told to them. After the tests on Bikini and Enewetak, the bombs grew larger and more destructive, culminating in the 1954 hydrogen bomb test that rained fallout on the people of Rongelap and other neighboring atolls. The bomb, known as Bravo, was 750 times more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The 15 megaton blast vaporized the test island, eradicated parts of two adjacent islets, and created a mile wide crater. Recently declassified documents show that U.S. officials were aware 72 hours before the Bravo test that the winds in the area were shifting and that if the test was carried out, radiation would fall on Rongelap and other atolls downwind from the test site.<sup>12</sup> The military went ahead with the test, knowing that human beings in the downwind atolls would suffer radiation poisoning. In addition, the food source for the people would be irradiated—no one knew for how long and to what extent. Thus, the declassified documents indicate the willingness of U.S. officials to knowingly put at risk the lives of thousands of men, women, and children—not just in 1954 when Bravo was detonated, but for many generations to come. This callous disregard for human life and for all habitat in the region is a U.S. legacy which all Christians are called to address.

Were the Marshallese people being used as guinea pigs to study the long-term effects of radiation poisoning? The declassified documents point in that direction. In 1956, Dr. G. Failla, chair of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Advisory Committee on Biology and Medicine, wrote to AEC head Lewis Strauss: “The Advisory Committee hopes that conditions will permit an early accomplishment of the plan to return the Rongelap people. The Committee is also of the opinion that here is the opportunity for a useful genetic study of the effects on these people.” Three years later, Dr. C. L. Dunham, head of the AEC’s Division of Biology and Medicine, reiterated the AEC’s interest. Studying the Rongelap victims of the Bravo blast will, he wrote, “. . . contribute to estimates of long-term hazards to human beings and to an evaluation of the recovery period following a single nuclear detonation.”<sup>13</sup> Having established the near-perfect long-term human radiation experiment in 1954, the Department of Energy still continues to compile data from their Marshallese subjects. On February 24,

1994, Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources, convened a hearing on Bravo. Recalling weather data that demonstrated prior knowledge that islanders would receive substantial fallout, Rep. Miller declared that “We have deliberately kept that information from the Marshallese. That clearly constitutes a cover-up.”<sup>14</sup>

Christians and peace activists throughout the world have long acknowledged the devastation of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima during World War II. However, most U.S. citizens have not been told the story of the 67 atomic bombs detonated in the Marshall Islands and the devastation still continuing to the more than 60,000 people living on its 29 islands in the year 2001. According to Dr. Neal Palafox, who heads a team of doctors who monitor the health of residents in the Marshall Islands on an annual basis, “the radiation from the testing equaled about 7,000 atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima.”<sup>15</sup> Dr. Palafox goes on to state that the cancer originated from the testing has reached alarming levels. He concluded that the cancer rates—alarming as they are—at the same time are probably underestimates of the true cancer incidence rates.<sup>16</sup> Dr. Palafox’s study provides the first comprehensive data analysis on the incidence rates for certain cancers in the RMI.

How did radiation affect women’s reproductive systems? Some women who became pregnant in the years following Bravo found they suffered an unexpectedly high number of miscarriages and severely deformed babies, often referred to as “jellyfish babies.” Katherine Jilej, a midwife and a grandmother, stated: “We are very angry at the U.S. and I’ll tell you why. Have you ever seen a jellyfish baby born looking like a bunch of grapes, so the only reason we knew it was a baby was because we could see the brain? We’ve had these babies—they died soon after they were born. Our first baby was born in October 1960, after the bomb, when we’d returned to Rongelap. He was born with a big lump on his head and died very, very young. All the food we were eating was irradiated but we didn’t know. I wasn’t even on Rongelap the day the test happened but I went back there in 1957 and I was irradiated from eating the food. I think that’s why my son died.”<sup>17</sup>

For many years, the U.S. Department of Energy contracted with Brookhaven National Laboratory to be the sole agency to study the health of Marshall Islanders following exposure to radiation. More recently, there has been a request by the Marshallese people for independent studies conducted by health experts from countries outside of the United States. Studies conducted by Brookhaven have been seen by the people as suspect and inadequate. When people were moved back to Rongelap prematurely in July 1957, Brookhaven National Laboratory scientists reported: “Even though the radioactive contamination of Rongelap Island is considered perfectly safe for human habitation, the levels of activity are higher than those found in other inhabited locations in the world. The habitation of these people on the island will afford most valuable ecological radiation data on human beings.”<sup>18</sup>

#### **D. Justice for Marshall Islanders**

The U.S. government has not played fair in the compensation paid to the Marshallese peoples, nor in the information given to the affected communities. This came to light when people of Bikini were told that it was safe to return to Bikini. Experts demonstrated how radiation levels could be lowered to scientifically-acceptable levels—an annual exposure of 100 millirems per person—as long as people avoided eating large amounts of local food. While Bikinians were told that 100 millirems per person was safe, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had quietly adopted a 15 millirem standard for the resettlement of radiologically contaminated sites in the United States.<sup>19</sup> This 15 millirem standard has recently been adopted for the Marshall Islands, but only after the attorney for Enewetak Atoll, Davor Pevec, found out about the EPA standard for U.S. residents. This double standard is also seen in the compensation levels. While Congress has spent \$12 billion in Hanford, California, without even putting a shovel in the ground for environmental cleanup there, the island of Bikini has only received \$90 million thus far from the United States for cleanup.<sup>20</sup>



Recently declassified U.S. nuclear test studies show that 22 atolls (no longer just the four atolls mentioned for compensation in the Compact: Rongelap, Enewetak, Utrik, and Bikini) received nuclear test fallout above maximum permissible safety levels.<sup>21</sup> This information was not provided to Marshall Islands negotiators when the Compact of Free Association, with its \$150 million nuclear compensation to survivors, was agreed upon in 1983. While greater compensation was given to American citizens living downwind of the Nevada Test Site as a one-time lump sum, amounting to a billion dollars, the \$150 million was not adequate to cover the claims filed by the victims of radiation poisoning in the RMI—approximately \$7 billion dollars of compensation claims are still languishing in the U.S. courts today<sup>22</sup> and most victims who have been compensated have been compensated only partially and in small monthly payments. Fully one third of the 1,574 Marshall Islands recipients of nuclear test awards have died without receiving full compensation.<sup>23</sup>

The Marshall Island government is asking, in the renegotiation of the Compact of Free Association, an additional \$2.7 billion for damage caused by American nuclear testing. When seen in the light of \$12 billion for Hanford (just for environmental cleanup), the amount being requested by RMI is very modest. No amount of money will ever compensate for the suffering of the Marshallese people; however, an amount equivalent to or more than the \$12 billion spent on cleanup at Hanford would be more just.

The U.S. is now trying to stop lawsuits arising out of the irradiation of the Marshallese from being heard in court. The Compact of Free Association contains an espousal clause, stipulating that the U.S. has paid a lump sum of \$150 million for damages and from now on all responsibility falls on the shoulders of RMI. This unjust clause in the Compact must be overturned in the light of classified information that was not made available to RMI negotiators at the time the Compact was being negotiated and which now reveals the real extent of the testing and the fact that Marshall Islanders were knowingly put at risk during the Bravo test.

### **E. The Church and the Pacific Islanders of Micronesia**

The United Church of Christ has a historic ministry to Pacific Islanders and the people of Micronesia. It began in 1852 when missionaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) headquartered in Honolulu and Hawaiian missionaries were sent to Micronesia to spread the Gospel to the inhabitants of these remote islands and convert them to Christianity.

The Missionaries first landed on the island of Kosrae where they established a station. As the Kosraens became more God-fearing people, the missionaries began reaching out to the other Micronesian islands of Kiribati, Phonpei, Chuuk, and the Marshall Islands. However, Kosrae remained the home-base of operation.

A mission training school was established on Mwot, Kosrae, to train men and women in church ministry. Pupils were recruited from different islands and sent to this school to study and prepare for ministerial duties. At the completion of a four-year training session, they returned home full-fledged, ordained ministers and, if so selected, were assigned to nurture new churches in villages, districts, and different atolls.

During the period prior to the breakout of World War II in the Pacific, the Congregational Church in Micronesia, as it was then known, was one of the only two major denominations in Micronesia, and it garnered a larger membership. That was a time when the church was very productive and quite influential in the islands. The church was the center of every community daily activity. The Micronesians were always dedicated and faithful members of the church. They were taught to be good Christians by practicing the Golden Rule.

As the war broke, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) recalled its overseas missionaries. All of them returned to the United States with the exception of one, the Rev. Carl Heine. The departure of the missionaries also brought the closure of the mission training school on Mwot, and it created autonomy for each of the Micronesian island churches.

Presently, there are many other denominations that were sent to the region of Micronesia and which have since established strong ties and influence in the communities. However, the denomination that the missionaries first started in the islands, at present known as the United Church of Christ, still has its individual churches in each district on Chuuk, Kosrae, and Phonpei of the FSM. The United Church of Christ is still the major denomination in the Marshall Islands with at least one church on each atoll and two or three on the major islands.

After World War II, the administration of these Pacific Islands shifted from the regime of the Japanese Imperial Army to the protection of the U.S. Navy and afterwards to the Department of the Interior. Under this protection, Bikini and Enewetak atolls in the Marshall Islands were used as nuclear testing sites of 67 atomic bombs.

Fifteen years ago, under separate agreements, these Pacific Islands of Micronesia negotiated their Compacts of Free Association with the U.S., which created the independent countries of the FSM and the RMI. The compacts allow for free entry (immigration) of FSM and RMI people into the United States to live, find employment, attend schools, receive better medical care, and better themselves.

As one of the newest immigrant groups to Hawaii and the rest of U.S., Pacific Islanders daily face numerous difficulties socially and economically. Many of these difficulties must be addressed by our church and people of conscience. The need to establish places of worship so Pacific Islanders can worship in their respective languages is one priority. The UCC needs to renew and strengthen its commitment to the Pacific Islanders in its new church starts and assist in providing training in the new setting.

Over the years, with assistance from the Hawaii Conference UCC, some Micronesian ministries on different islands of Hawaii were started. At present there are eight Chuukese ministries, two Kosraens, three Marshallese, and a new Pohnpeian ministry. This new church, with its newly assigned pastor, will begin its ministry this November on Maui.

In his June address, the FSM Consul General reported that there are 12,000 people from the FSM who reside in Hawaii. There are at least 2,000 Marshallese according to another source.

The Micronesian population is greater in the continental United States than in Hawaii, yet there are only five Marshallese Ministries throughout the continental United States. There is one Chuukese ministry in Portland, Oregon, and one called the Micronesian Outreach Ministry of the U.S., based in San Diego and started by Pacific Islander seminarians to address this lack of island churches and ministries. Thus, the national setting of the UCC needs to make concerted efforts to address the needs of Micronesians and other Pacific Islander groups in the United States and offer assistance as they try to establish and supply their own pastors.

As in similar cases with other ethnic minority groups who have immigrated to the United States, the Marshallese and the citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia have come to the United States to seek better schooling for their children, better employment opportunities, and currently advanced medical services. Under a separate Compact of Free Association treaty with the U.S. Government, the Micronesians are free to enter, seek employment, live anywhere, and enlist in the Armed Forces in the U.S.

### **III. BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND ETHICAL RATIONALE**

“I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.’ You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes

to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen, and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches” (Rev. 3:15–22, NRSV).

The Prophet Amos says, “Let Justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.” It is just one of the forty pairings of righteousness and justice that are found in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>24</sup>

God expected rulers to rule righteously and justly. Those in positions of power were expected to care for those least able to care for themselves. Wicked rulers did not care to keep harmony among the people and exploited the weak. Henry Kissinger is quoted in 1969 to have said, “There are only 90,000 people out there. Who gives a damn?”<sup>25</sup>

Since the Commission for Racial Justice was the originator of environmental justice and linked the dumping of toxic waste with people of color, the United Church of Christ, in all its settings, must take seriously the issues of justice and righteousness in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. The United Church of Christ, in seeking environmental justice, must advocate for restoring these nations to justice.

Micah 6:8 says, “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” The radiation from nuclear and atomic testing still affects Marshallese daughters. Like the Canaanite woman in the Gospel according to Matthew, these daughters are asking for healing. The United Church of Christ, in all its settings, must be party to the healing of the brothers and sisters in the Marshall Islands.

Jesus says, “Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (Matt. 25:40 NRSV). For more than 150 years, the United Church of Christ, through its antecedent bodies, has been in Micronesia. The American Board for Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent missionaries, some of them indigenous Hawaiians, to spread the Gospel in Micronesia. In more recent history, the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Common Global Ministries Board have sent missionaries to Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. But the people of the United Church of Christ have lost any knowledge of the people or the churches that are in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. Many of these people are still victimized by warheads of spent uranium which landed a mere five miles from their homes.

#### **IV. STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN CONVICTION**

The God of the Holy Bible requires of us to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, was moved by the response of the Canaanite woman who argued for him to help her daughter severely possessed by a demon. The radiation from nuclear and atomic testing, that even today squeezes the life from Marshallese daughters, is a demon that needs to be addressed. Christians in churches in the U.S. are being asked to help heal their brothers and sisters in the Marshall Islands, many of whom are Christian and members of the United Church of Christ in the Marshall Islands. It is incumbent upon the United Church of Christ, in all its settings, to become aware of the injustice that still prevails, to work toward the restoration of justice, and to stand in solidarity with those who suffer in the Marshall Islands and in Micronesia.

As the United Church of Christ seeks to live in faithful solidarity with our Micronesian sisters and brothers in Christ, we confess our silent complicity as United States’ citizens in perpetrating nuclear poisoning and economic exploitation of the people and environment of Micronesia. We extend our heartfelt and formal apologies for these sins and ask for forgiveness from our Micronesian sisters and brothers and from God. By

making this confession, we pray that the blinders will be removed from our eyes and our silent complicity transformed into empowered discipleship through this Pronouncement.

\_\_\_\_\_ 24. Gen. 18:19; 1 Kings 10:9; 2 Chron. 9; Job 29:14, **References** 37:23; Ps. 33:5, 72:1, 2, 89:14, 97:2, 99:4, 106:3;

1 Jane Dibblin, *Day of Two Suns: U.S. Prov. 1:3, 2:9, 8:20, 21:3; Eccles. 3:16; Isa. 1:21, Nuclear Testing and the Pacific Islanders* 27, 5:7, 16, 9:7, 16:5, 28:17, 32:1, 16, 33:5, 56:1, (New York: New Amsterdam Press, 1988), 3. 59:9, 14; Jer. 9:24, 22:3, 15, 23:5, 33:15; Ezek.

2 U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and 45:9; Hos. 2:19; Amos 5:7, 24, 6:12. See also Natural Resources, May 24, 1984. Deut.16:19, 32:4; Job 8:3, 34:17; Ps. 37:28, 30,

3 *Ibid.*, 182. 82:3, 94:15, 112:5–6, 140:12–13, 146:7–8; Prov.

4 Glenn Alcalay, "From Subsistence to 18:5, 21:15, 29:26–27; Eccles. 5:8; Isa. 10:2, USDA: Strategic Economic Dependence in 59:15–16; Jer. 4:2; Ezek. 18:8–9; Hab. 1:4; Zeph. 3:5. Micronesia," paper for the Dept. of Anthro 25. Quote from Donald F. McHenry, "Micronesia: pology, Rutgers University, New York, 1986. Trust Betrayed," Carnegie Endowment for Interna 5 Petery Hayes, Lyuba Zarsky, and Walden tional Peace, Washington, D.C., 1975. Bello, *American Lake: Nuclear*

*Peril in the Pacific* (New York: Penguin, 1986), 22. **A PROPOSAL FOR ACTION ON A UNITED**

6 Floyd K. Takeuchi, "What Micronesians **CHURCH OF CHRIST MINISTRY AND WIT-Really** Want," *Pacific Magazine* (Nov./Dec. NESS WITH MICRONESIANS2000): 30.

7 Dibblin, *Day of Two Suns*, 170.

8 Anthony Solomon, Report by the U.S. I. SUMMARY

### *Government Survey Mission to the Trust*

*Territory of the Pacific Islands*, The White This Proposal for Action outlines ways in which all House, Washington, D.C., 9 October 1963. the ministries of the United Church of Christ may as

1 Dibblin, *Day of Two Suns*, 172. sist in restoring justice and righteousness to the people

2 H. E. Tony A. deBrum, "Statement to the of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the House Resources Committee," Washington, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) in developing D.C., 11 May 1999, new Micronesian Ministries and assisting their com

3 Quoted in Dennis O'Rourke, *Half Life: A* munities as they make the transition into their new

*Parable for the Nuclear Age*, U.S. Film homelands in Hawaii and the United States of America. Festival Winner, Australia, 1985.

1 Colin Woodward, "Marshall Islands Resi-II. **BACKGROUND STATEMENT** dents Still Waiting for U.S. to Clean Up Its Mess," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 Decem-This Proposal for Action is based upon the Pronounceber 1999, A10. ment on a United Church of Christ Ministry and Wit

2 *Nuclear Testing in the Marshall Islands: A* ness with Micronesians. The Pronouncement presents *Brief History*, Majuro, Micronitor News and a policy statement for the United Church of Christ's Printing Co., August 1996. work with Micronesians, specifically people of the RMI

3 Todd Ensign and Glenn Alcalay, "Duck and and FSM. This Proposal for Action provides for the Cover(Up): U.S. Radiation Testing on program directions, mechanisms for implementation, Humans," via the Internet. and funding.

4 Scott Ishikawa, "Wahiawa Doctors Extend

Practice to Marshalls," *Honolulu Advertiser*, **III. IMPLEMENTATION: DIRECTIONAL** 24 June 1999. **STATEMENTS AND GOALS**

16. Neal A. Palafox, "Site-Specific Cancer

Incidence in the Republic of the Marshall The Twenty-third General Synod gives the responsi-Islands," paper delivered at the 6th Biennial bility for the implementation of the Proposal for Ac-Symposium, "Minorities: The Medically tion to the Pacific Islander and Asian American Imple-



Underserved and Cancer,” Washington, D.C., Mentation Committee.  
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1       Dibblin, *Day of Two Suns*, 37. For the purposes of implementing the United Church  
2       Ensign and Alcalay, “Duck and Cover(Up)” of Christ Ministry with Micronesians, the Twenty-third  
3       Woodward, “Marshall Islands Residents Still General Synod: Waiting for U.S. to Clean Up Its Mess,”  
A10.  
4       Ibid., A12. Calls on the Wider Church Ministries (WCM) (includ  
5       Giff Johnson, “Marshall Islands Seeks ing the Common Global Ministries with the Disciples Compensation Increase,”  
*Pacific Islander* of Christ) and the Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) *Monthly*, November 1998. to plan joint strategies  
for restoring justice and righ  
6       Dibblin, *Day of Two Suns*, 184. teousness to the people of the RMI and FSM. WCM  
7       Annual Report to the Nitijela for the Calen- and JWM will work with the partner United Church of  
Claims Tribunal, Christ churches in the RMI and FSM, the Hawaii Con-

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ference UCC, with PAAM, and North American Pacific and Asian Disciples (NAPAD). Included in these strategies would be ways to pressure the

U.S. President, the U.S. Congress, and the related agencies of the U.S. government to provide a more just compensation for the Marshallese people affected by the nuclear and atomic radiation caused by 67 tests.

Calls on the WCM and the JWM to petition the

U.S. Government to justly compensate the FSM and the RMI for the cost of strategic economic dependency over the years.

Calls upon the WCM and JWM to collaborate with the United Methodist Church and other interested denominations to monitor the progress of the U.S. formal apology to the Marshall Islanders for personal injury and property damage from nuclear and atomic tests. The United Methodist Church, at its General Conference in April 2000, passed the resolution “Marshall Islands: U.S. Accountability,” similar to the UCC Resolution which was unanimously passed with one abstention at General Synod 22 in Rhode Island.<sup>1</sup>

Requests the Local Church Ministries (LCM) to monitor the status of people from the RMI and FSM living in Hawaii and elsewhere in the United States and to find ways and identify programs to help Micronesians as they make adjustments in their new homeland.

Requests that JWM in cooperation with partner churches work together to advocate for health care for survivors.

Requests the LCM and JWM, in cooperation with the Hawaii Conference UCC, to identify members who will begin a dialog with appropriate federal agencies to define citizens of the FSM and RMI as “qualified nonimmigrants” in order to be eligible for food stamps and housing subsidies. These benefits are being terminated and denied to them due to different classification.

Calls on the United Church of Christ to plan and implement a delegation from the United Church of Christ in the Marshall Islands and radiation survivors to travel to Washington, D.C., to lobby for more compensation. As part of this lobbying action, the LCM and JWM will jointly attempt to gather all UCC, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), United Methodist, and other Christian Congress people and/or their senior staff to hear a presentation from this delegation.<sup>2</sup>

Requests that the LCM develop a proactive, multiyear program for strengthening existing UCC Pacific Islander local churches and starting new churches among the fast growing Pacific Islander American populations.

Requests that the LCM, in consultation with PAAM, develop a comprehensive program for strengthening the educational ministries for lifelong learning in the varied settings of local churches and conferences. This program should place special emphasis on Pacific Islander histories and cultures and focus upon such areas as ministerial leadership recruitment and training and youth and young adult ministries.

Calls on the LCM to assist in the hiring and placement of Micronesian pastors who are bilingual and to develop support mechanisms for Pacific Islander churches.

Calls on the Office of General Minister and President to monitor the progress of this Proposal for Action through the Minister for Pacific Islander/Asian American Relations.

Urges all bodies in the United Church of Christ to consult with members of PAAM to secure Pacific Islander perspectives when making decisions which concern Pacific Islanders as well as the whole Church. Subject to the availability of funds.

#### **References**

1 United Methodist Church resolution, "Marshall Islands: U.S. Accountability," passed at its General Assembly in April 2000.

2 *In Register Citizen Opinion 2001: A Congressional Directory and Action Guide*, First Session/ 107th Congress, published by The Episcopal Church, Office of Government Relations, the following religious affiliations are listed: Disciples of Christ—2; Congress people, United Church of Christ—8; Congress people, United Methodist— 65; Congress people, Protestant—311; Congress people, total declared Christians—497.