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Minutes of the Mission Council, held at St. Joseph's, Upholland, Skelmersdale from 16th to 18th March 1994, which was constituted by the Moderator, the Revd Donald Hilton, who presided. Worship and Bible study throughout the Council were led by the Chaplain, the Revd Duncan Wilson.

Members also met in groups for Bible study and for discussion of various items on the Agenda.

Friday 18th at 2.30 pm

94/1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES The Moderator welcomed members to the meeting. in particular those attending for the first time: Mrs Delyth Rees (substitute for Revd Joan Grindrod), the Revd Margaret Taylor (substitute for Revd Peter Flint) and Mr Brian Evans (substitute for Mrs Angela Hughes).

The Moderator gave a brief account of his January visits overseas.

94/2 ATTENDANCE There were 58 voting members present, with 11 staff in attendance, Mr Alan Hart present by invitation on Saturday 19th, the Revd Duncan Wilson, Chaplain, and Mrs Sheila Tull, Minute Secretary. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Ruth Clarke, the Revds Peter Flint, Joan Grindrod, Michael Hubbard, Sheila Maxey, Janet Sowerbutts, Mrs Marlene Hunter, Mrs Angela Hughes and Professor Malcolm Johnson.

94/3 AGENDA AND TIMETABLE The General Secretary explained that some very complex business for the Council had only arrived during the current week; the printed Agenda and timetable were therefore presented after the tea interval and were then approved.

94/4 MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 1994, which had been circulated, were approved and signed. It was noted that the Nominations Committee report should be amended as follows: Nominations to Teaching Staff (Westminster College) Convener: delete Mrs Elizabeth Jupp - 1993; insert the Revd John Sutcliffe - 1999.

94/5 COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mrs Mary Marsden presented a report revised since the January meeting of the Mission Council. The report had been restructured; there was some new material, some amendments had been made following the January meeting and the list of Committees and Task Groups had been revised. She asked whether the new report reflected the remit of Mission Council and whether there were further questions which now needed to be addressed before the report was presented to the Assembly.

One of the immediate questions was raised by the Secretary of the Nominations Committee. He said that there would be significant problems if the report was accepted by the Assembly and new committee membership was required starting in January 1995. Further comments and discussion were received at later stages in the Council's meeting.

94/6 A BIENNIAL ASSEMBLY

A report from the Mission Council Advisory Group was presented by the Revd Tony Burnham. The matter had been raised at the March 1993 Mission Council meeting and referred to the Mission Council Advisory Group, which reviewed previous consideration given to this matter in 1977 and 1987 and looked at arguments for and against change now. It was the unanimous view of MCAG that arguments against change outweighed arguments in favour of change and therefore no action be taken on this matter.

The Mission Council accepted this advice, which would be reported to the Assembly.

94/7 ELECTING THE ASSEMBLY MODERATOR

The Mission Council had been asked to consider this matter by the General Assembly in 1993 and had referred consideration of it to MCAG. It was recommended that major changes should not be made to the present procedure. However, a procedure was suggested by MCAG which, after discussion, comment and amendment was agreed in the following form:

1. A very general job description will be made available to encourage synods to propose appropriate persons. The role does change according to the gifts of an individual and according to the needs of the church in a particular year.
2. Nominees will be informed by the synod clerk of the nomination before the synod takes a decision.
3. Synod clerks will be given clear guidance as to the categories of information to be presented in the CV to be forwarded with the nomination. Information on the person's skills in relation to the role ought to be given.
4. Voting will take place early in the Assembly, probably during the first morning session.
5. The result will be given as soon as possible. The person elected, if present, will be greeted but will not speak.
6. The moderator-elect will briefly address the Assembly at the final session.

Suggestions that a recent photograph be included in the CV and that nominees be present at the Assembly so that members of Assembly could meet them informally were not taken up.

This would be the substance of the Mission Council report on this matter to Assembly.

94/8 WORK

On behalf of Church and Society Committee the Revd Peter Brain presented a paper on a significant initiative which originated within the Urban Bishops' Group of the Church of England and which was now being developed ecumenically. The plan was for a 'Commission on Unemployment and the Future of Work' with wide-reaching terms of reference which we can make available. It would have a senior civil servant as secondee; this happened with 'Faith in the City' and without it the project could not be handled by the churches. It would

work over two years from this summer, concentrating on country-wide visits and hearings, examining some new projects of job creation, and leading to a statement of some kind - or other form of communication - on the best approaches to tackling long-term unemployment and the fundamental changes now being experienced in the pattern of employment, unemployment and underemployment.

It is hoped that a resolution would be brought to the CCBI Church Representatives meeting in May 1994, with a view to establishing a Sponsoring Group which would then set up the Commission and oversee its work. The URC is asked to contribute a nominal amount to the running costs of the Commission's work (max. £1,000 for each of three years) and to find a leading URC person to serve on the Sponsoring Group.

After discussion and questions, it was proposed:

"Mission Council welcomes the proposal to establish a Churches' Commission on Unemployment and the Future of Work and authorises the Convener and Secretary for Church and Society, in consultation with the General Secretary, to seek suitable nominations for a United Reformed Church representative to serve on the Sponsoring Group."

This resolution was carried unanimously.

94/9

CATHY, GET LOST

The Revd Peter Brain for Church and Society drew attention to the paper entitled "Cathy, get lost", relating to the campaign by SHELTER and other organisations against the current Government Green Paper on "Access to Local Authority and Housing Association Tenancies". The Churches National Housing Coalition is inviting denominational responses in addition to their ecumenical one. The Government Green Paper takes us back before the 1977 Act; it is both flawed and wrong. The deprived will be pitted against the desperate, the poor against the very poor in the scramble for the supply of decent low-cost housing which is declining again after a modest rise last year, down to 25,000 p.a. It would actually cost no more and in every other way be better to put the equivalent expenditure into increasing the supply.

Recent research commissioned by Church and Society revealed that a quarter of local United Reformed Churches have some involvement with a local housing association. This implies a widespread concern for bad housing and homelessness across the church and suggested that we might legitimately offer a response to the Government on this matter.

It was agreed:

"Mission Council authorises the Secretary and Convener for Church and Society, in consultation with the General Secretary, to submit a response to the Government Green Paper on 'Access to Local Authority and Housing Association Tenancies'".

94/10

THE RURAL CONSULTANT

The Convener of the MEW at Home Committee, Mrs Marsden, reported that, following the review of the rural consultant, the Revd Michael Cruchley, which recommended that he be re-appointed for a further 5

years from January 1, 1995, clauses (III) and (IV) of 94/11, the Staffing Advisory Group's report, were considered by a group representing the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee, the Support Committee, the West Midlands province and the Arthur Rank Centre.

The group recommended that:

- (a) The post be made full-time from January 1, 1995, to allow the better use of the Consultant throughout the country at weekends.
- (b) This post ought NOT to take one of the 30 places allocated for Special Category Ministers.

This was agreed.

The group recommended further practical ways of carrying out the above proposals in relation to the work of the rural consultant and his relationship to the Arthur Rank Centre and the other denominations involved in the team there.

The General Secretary said that there should be greater clarity about the Special Category Ministers. There should be recognition of a position that already exists. For example, the post of National Aids Advisor is in the special ministries category because the Assembly so decided.

At 7.30 pm

94/11 TRIO

The Revd Bill Wright presented, with overhead projector, the TRIO (The Responsibility is Ours) programme; and gave a sample presentation as it might be used within the context of worship.

Some members of Mission Council in congregations which had used or were currently using TRIO, endorsed the success of the programme.

94/12 VISION

The General Secretary reported that a letter had been received from the Croydon District Council asking the Mission Council to produce "a vision for visible growth of the Church and the spiritual growth of members".

The Moderator asked for a general expression of view on the idea of producing a "Mission Statement". A general discussion ensued and among the points made were the following:

It should be in terms of the Kingdom of God; it should be in layman's terms and simple English; it must be in the context of pressing realities; each local church must define its own mission statement; what role are we to play as the URC - a bridge-building church in the community and ecumenically? Where is our focus? Liberal, deeply committed to social issues?

One of the present problems is that churches do not understand what the Mission Council is and think it is to provide missionary impetus. Distinguish between 'vision' and 'mission'. We do have a role in helping to give people a vision locally.

We have the statement in the Basis of Union (para. 11) but it is not made clear how it relates to the local church. The vision has to be grasped locally.

The General Secretary asked how we could carry forward this idea.

Some suggestions were that young people be asked to get together and provide such a statement - looking again at the URC and bringing their own fresh ideas for discussion by the Mission Council. Written suggestions might be given to the Moderator by the end of the weekend. It is the people with passion and enthusiasm who should be encouraged. We have tried to be vision-led rather than crisis-driven. Our vision has to be tested by Bible study and prayer - earthing the vision to reality - belonging to a committed community. There is a challenge that we should bring to the church. We could simply inform the Croydon District of the agreed items concerning us at this meeting.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell suggested that the reflecting time at the end of the Council meeting would give us a further opportunity.

Worship was led by the Chaplain.

Saturday 17th March

Worship and Bible study were led by the Chaplain and group Bible study followed.

94/13 PATTERNS OF MINISTRY

The Revd Malcolm Hanson presented the draft interim Assembly Report 1994 on "Patterns of Ministry" and asked that it be accepted by the Mission Council.

There were budget implications in that the working party's consultative report was likely to be up to 32 pages long and in addition there was a theological paper which would be issued in the Autumn to be discussed by the Mission Council in October. A representative consultation was planned for January 1995.

After discussion, it was agreed to re-arrange the proposed timetable to allow more time for responses from councils, churches and others (14th December 1994 instead of 30th November as the deadline); to omit referral to the Mission Council in March 1995.

It was agreed:

- (a) to circulate the theological paper with the other papers
- (b) to provide a study guide
- (c) to fund the consultation in January 1995 and the printing of the full report for wide circulation.

94/14 TRUST DIRECTORS

At the request of Thames North Synod, the Mission Council agreed that Mr Brian Hosier and the Revd Martin Truscott be appointed as directors of the URC Thames North Trust and the Hertfordshire Congregational Union (Incorporated).

94/15 NEXT MEETINGS

The General Secretary proposed that the January 1995 meeting be held at Yardley Hastings if the meeting room was not deemed to be too cramped. He was authorised to seek an alternative venue if needed. It was likely that the January 1996 meeting would be held in Milton Keynes. The following venues were agreed:

17-19 March 1995 at St. Joseph's, Upholland
29 September 1995 at Damascus House, Mill Hill

94/16 BUDGETS 1994 AND 1995

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Alistair Black, presented a paper from the Financial Resources Committee on the Budgets for 1994 and 1995. He said that a budget was a tool to assist decision-taking; a useful discipline; an opportunity for challenge. It should not be a strait-jacket.

It should be recognised that payroll costs account for 85% of the total costs. Central church costs are usually kept within budget, but there are fluctuations on the number of full-time stipendiary ministers which are difficult to calculate and on which there should be control.

1994 Budget

The projected deficit for 1994 was now £53,000. To achieve this restraint on the deficit it was proposed to use the unused part of the £248,000 from Memorial Hall Trust; to make savings in Ministerial Ecumenical Grants of £25,000, and to keep CWM grant at the 1993 level for both 1994 and 1995. The Financial Resources Committee view was that it was essential to control payroll numbers, taking into account newly ordained ministers, and retirements and deaths.

1995 Budget

It was suggested that income be boosted by using £235,000 from Memorial Hall Trust. Account had been taken of the average increase of 3.39% over 1994 from Provinces.

Costs include Stipends at £13,428 per minister
Ministerial Ecumenical Grants £91,400. saving £25,000
CWM grant held at 1993 level

In the light of the necessity to effect these savings no provision for a Children's Advocate had been made.

The Treasurer stated that non-stipendiary ministers are a valuable resource of the Church which must not be ignored.

Also on the positive side there is still an opportunity for increased giving by church members and the TRIO programme should be advocated by members of the Mission Council and of the Assembly.

The Clerk advised the Mission Council of decisions made by the General Assembly and the Mission Council in relation to the proposed appointment of a Children's Advocate. He also advised that the calling of ministers is a function of the district council and only the General Assembly can inhibit the District Council. The Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration has no inhibiting clause in it.

The General Secretary asked if it could be said that there is sufficient urgency for Mission Council to act now in this matter, between meetings of the Assembly. The action here proposed bears upon the clear right of district councils. The present Plan for Partnership states that there is a general reserve available to be drawn upon if needed.

It was clearly understood that the proposal to restrict the number of ministers and lay staff on the payroll was a short-term measure while trying to find the means of controlling the problem.

After a full discussion the Clerk advised that it would be possible to for the Mission Council to take emergency action enabling the budgetting and the number of ministers on the payroll within a particular year to be held together. In that case there must be a presentation to the General Assembly indicating that the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration needed to be revised. The Moderator suggested, and it was agreed, that a group comprising the Clerk, the Honorary Treasurer, the Revd Michael Diffey and the Revd John Waller be asked to prepare a revised version of the proposed resolutions on the Budget, for consideration after the lunch interval.

94/17

REPORT FROM EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING GROUP

Mr Alan Hart, who was present by invitation, spoke on the draft General Assembly paper on Equal Opportunities Policy and an amendment sheet which had been tabled at the meeting. It was considered right to include matters of gender, race and disability which have some statutory backing. The focus should be on education and implementation. The "Charter for the Church" is a good example of the sort of document which implements our equal opportunities policy.

The General Secretary drew the Council's attention to resolutions from from the Synod of Southern Province and from the Synod of Thames North Province relating to these issues. The Revd Peter Brain reported that on "Charter for the Church" Thames North and Southern Synods had since agreed to a composite resolution to be put to the General Assembly.

Mr Hart replied to questions and comments.

The proposed resolutions to the Assembly were put before the Mission Council. The General Secretary queried whether it was necessary to set up a new standing committee for the purpose of monitoring, suggesting that the onus should be on all the councils of the church and their officers to monitor and implement the policy. He proposed the deletion of the section 4 on Implementation of Policy and the substitution of "The Assembly calls on Synods, Districts and local churches to implement the policy".

Mr Hart stressed that unless there is a specific body or person having responsibility it is general experience that no action is taken.

The motion was seconded but was lost.

It was proposed that "committee" be replaced by "task group". However, it was decided that it was for the Assembly to decide whether it wanted a new standing committee to be set up.

Amendments to the draft were made as follows:

1. delete "a comprehensive", substitute "an".
 4. add, after "appointment, call", "representation" of women, black people and people with disabilities; delete "in positions".
- Insert new number "2." before "Assembly resolves to appoint a committee...." and changes previous 1-4 to (i)-(iv).

The Mission Council then agreed the text of the resolutions as amended; with these changes the paper was transmitted to Assembly.

94/18

RESOLUTIONS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The following were noted:

Vocations Committee re: ministers of the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council

East Midlands and Northern re: control of expenditure (covered by the Budget resolution of Mission Council)

East Midlands re: members' costs at Assembly

New local Churches: Christ Church, Estover, Plymouth
Holy Trinity, Bradley Stoke, Bristol

Schedule C: ratification of decision made in July 1993

* LMS/CWM (The two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the London Missionary Society) as circulated to the Mission Council

* Church and Society re: i) Selective Amnesty and ii) Arms Trading

* Finance - 8 financial resolutions

Equal Opportunities (see 94/17) and resolutions from Southern Synod
Thames North Synod: re listening to people of different cultural backgrounds

Children's Work Committee re: Good Practice and a resolution from Northern Synod. (It was proposed that these be amalgamated and led by Northern Synod).

* Thames North 3 resolutions re: Ministry. It was proposed that these be remitted to Patterns of Ministry.

* Thames North re: Financial provision for students in higher education

Mersey Synod re: Encouragement of Mission

Thames North re: Use of the word "minister"

Thames North re: A full-time special multi-racial ministry post

From FURY Council/Youth Committee re: national training scheme to provide First Aid cover for church events

Southern re: change to the Basis of Union on co-options to district councils and synods

Standing Orders

Rules of Procedure. Two verbal amendments were later agreed (see 94/22).

Those items marked * were considered in groups.

94/19

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ON MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY

The Clerk introduced the proposed revised resolutions agreed by the small group deputed to prepare them. He said that the resolutions relate to a strictly limited moratorium; they do not affect anyone who is already a URC minister; steps should be taken to make more detailed information available.

The Clerk stated that this moratorium would affect a very small number of ministers; that it was being made as an emergency action; there

would be a proposal to the General Assembly recommending that methods be found

- (a) to enable a more accurate estimate of numbers numbers of stipendiary ministers;
- (b) to avoid an excess of ministers over the numbers budgetted.

The Moderator invited discussion on item (1).

It was noted that the resolution was being proposed to Mission Council by the Treasurer and seconded by the Revd John Waller. Only the finally agreed text is printed in these minutes.

It was proposed that the words "by a Provincial Moderator" be added between "introduced" and "to a URC pastorate".

This proposal was lost.

It was proposed to add the sentence: "Any question of interpretation of this resolution shall be settled by the General Secretary in consultation with the appropriate Synod Moderator".

This was carried unanimously.

The Moderator called for discussion of item (2).

It was proposed to add to the remit contained in the motion for Assembly reference to "quality of ministry".

After discussion it was agreed to add:

"and (c) to consider any other relevant issues not covered by the Patterns of Ministry working party."

This amendment was carried.

The Revd Malcolm Hanson undertook that "quality of ministry" would be taken into the terms of reference of the Patterns of Ministry working party if that would be the wish of the Mission Council. This was agreed.

After further discussion the resolutions were agreed for transmission to the Assembly as follows:

(1) Mission Council, acting for the General Assembly in the light of the potential large overspend for 1994 on the Ministry and Mission Fund and the consequent difficulty in establishing the 1995 budget, resolves that from Monday, 21st March 1994 until the 1994 General Assembly, no one who is not already on the URC roll of ministers or CRCWs shall be introduced or inducted to a stipendiary pastorate or a CRCW post in the United Reformed Church except (a) students completing a course of training for URC ministry in a college or course, (b) ministers of other churches who have at the 21st March 1994 already been introduced to a URC pastorate with a view to a call. Any question of interpretation of this resolution shall be settled by the General Secretary in consultation with the appropriate Synod Moderator.

(2) Mission Council proposes to the General Assembly the following motion:

"The General Assembly instructs Ministries in consultation with Synod Moderators, the Patterns of Ministry working party and Finance (and with power to consult more widely) to submit to the General Assembly, or the Mission Council, regulations for stipendiary ministry, including any necessary revision of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, which shall

- (a) enable a more accurate estimate of future numbers of ministers available for call,
- (b) ensure that (with some possible tolerance for small and temporary variation) there cannot at any time be an excess of ministers and CRCWs to be paid from the Maintenance of the Ministry account over the full time equivalent number used in calculating the current year's budget; and
- (c) provide for a deployment policy in terms of needs and potential of churches and situations as well as financial resources.

(3) Mission Council instructs Ministries to begin forthwith the process of consultation described in (2) above, on the assumption that the 1994 General Assembly will accept (2) or an amended form of it.

(4) Mission Council authorises its officers, if (as is likely) the regulations required by (2) above cannot be prepared in time for submission to the 1994 General Assembly, to propose to the 1994 General Assembly the extension of the moratorium imposed by (1) above until the Mission Council or the General Assembly can adopt such regulations. If such an extension is needed, the officers of the Mission Council will consider in proposing the extension any suggestions for further additions, exceptions or other changes to the moratorium which are brought to their attention.

94/20 APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET FOR 1994 (see also 94/16)

The Honorary Treasurer asked that the items detailed to the Mission Council be accepted as changes to the Budget 1994 and proposed that the revised Budget be submitted to the Assembly for decision.

This was agreed.

94/21 1995 BUDGET

The Honorary Treasurer proposed that the draft Budget for 1995 be recommended to Assembly 1994.

In relation to the proposal to exclude funding for a Children's Advocate, the Revd Dr Philip Morgan said that because of the process which has been followed, including the presentation to Assembly and later to the Mission Council, the item should be included in the Budget for 1995 and if necessary later excluded by the Assembly.

The Clerk stated that it would be necessary to rescind the decision made in March 1993 by the Mission Council. In order to rescind a decision it has to be judged that there has been a sufficient change to re-open the question.

The Treasurer believed that the changed situation was important enough to justify rescinding the decision to appoint a Children's Advocate.

The Moderator suspended consideration of the resolution on the Budget.

He and the other officers of the Council would decide whether there was a case for considering rescinding the resolution on the appointment of a Children's Advocate.

On resumption after lunch, at the Moderator's request the Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

The Treasurer set out the reasons why the Financial Resources Committee wished to rescind the decision.

In the light of the reasons given the officers of the Mission Council decided that the matter of rescinding could properly be considered.

The Clerk reminded the Council of the wording of Assembly Minute 1993, the report from the Staffing Advisory Committee in January 1993 and the Minutes in March 1993.

After a full discussion, in which the importance of appointing a Children's Advocate was stressed and in which it was stated that the Financial Resources Committee believed that it would not be proper to add to the staff while there was an inability to meet payment to existing ministers, it was proposed:

"that the post of Children's Advocate be not included in the 1995 Budget".

The Treasurer and Chief Accountant were requested to bring other options before the Mission Council on the following day.

Suggestions were made for achieving the necessary saving on the budget to allow for the appointment of a Children's Advocate.

94/22 RULES OF PROCEDURE

The following amendments were agreed:

1 (3) to read: "All meetings of the Assembly shall be convened and held as provided by these rules."

At 6(2)(iii) to delete the words "after the 31st day of August".

94/23 ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS (See also 94/18)

Group reports were received on proposed resolutions and comments were noted by those responsible for their presentation to Assembly.

94/24 LENGTH OF SERVICE ON ADVISORY GROUPS

It was proposed that, based on the votes received at the first election, with the last name in each group added at the second election, the following serve until Assembly in the year stated:

<u>MCAG</u>		<u>STAFFING ADVISORY GROUP</u>	
Sandra Lloydlangston	1994	William McVey	1994
David Butler	1995	*Elizabeth Scopes	1995
Elizabeth Caswell	1996	Angus Duncan	1996
Janet Turner	1997	*John Maitland	1997

*not members of Mission Council.

It was also proposed that (i) if a member leaves Mission Council, this will automatically end their service on Mission Council Advisory Group but not on the Staffing Advisory Group; (ii) at the end of four years' consecutive service, a member is not eligible to stand for re-election in the following year.

After discussion, these proposals were accepted.

Sunday 20th March

A Service of Holy Communion was held at 7.30 a.m.

94/25 THE BUDGET 1995 (continued)

The Treasurer reported that he and the Chief Accountant, with the help of Mr William McVey, had reviewed the draft Budget proposals in the light of additional expenditure which would be incurred by the inclusion:

of the Children's Advocate appointment - £34,000 - towards which Faith and Life had offered to contribute £5,000;
Patterns in Ministry - consultation and printing, etc. £10,000;
Westminster College CAFcert Consultancy Services (if agreed) - £15,000.

They had looked at the various suggestions made by members of Mission Council and discounted a number of proposals such as reducing the stipend increase proposed. An increase of 3.2% in stipend would barely cover cost of living increases. They suggested that the shortfall be taken from the Ministerial Training Fund in 1995.

The Treasurer warned that if a similar extraction were made from the Ministerial Training Fund in future years, by the year 2000 the whole cost of ministerial training would fall on the Ministry and Mission Fund. He suggested the setting up of a committee to try and decide the number of ministers required by the URC and also obtain more accurate information on training costs. The greater use of TRIO or other similar stewardship programmes should be pursued. He suggested that the Budget should be accepted with an estimated deficit of £90,000, although it could not be commended as a long-term solution.

The Mission Council agreed to accept the proposed Budget for 1995 for recommendation to the General Assembly.

94/26 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE (Continued)

Mrs Marsden made some general points:

(a) There had been consultation with staff and if the Council accepted the recommendations today there would be fuller consultation before the Assembly.

(b) There would be a gradual transition of committee members to the new structure. On 28th April there would be a consultation with present committee members and the Nominations Committee. In June the Nominations Committee would draw up lists for presentation at Assembly.

(c) Budgets for 1995 would not be larger in total than they would be under the present committee structure.

(d) There was emphasis on mission throughout the structure.

(e) Local churches might be asked to consider and report what they require from committees.

(f) This scheme should not cause any great conflicts with our ecumenical partners.

(g) Sub-committees exist already and committees should have flexibility in the way they work, the governing factor being keeping within budgets.

(h) A suggestion that there should be no separate Doctrine Committee was resisted.

(i) Should there be a task group on the use of new technology in the church?

(j) The Youth and Children's Work Training Committee should not be appointed by Assembly but be a sub-committee if required..

Mrs Marsden proposed that

Mission Council accept this report for recommendation to the General Assembly.

In discussion it became apparent that there were strong arguments in favour of retaining Doctrine and Worship and Prayer as one committee; and that there were strong arguments for the separation of Doctrine from the Worship and Prayer Committee.

It was proposed that we seek to retain Doctrine and Worship and Prayer as one committee.

The proposal was lost, the voting being 20 in favour, 28 against.

The Council considered whether it would be helpful for the Assembly to hear a minority view from the Mission Council as well as the proposal from the Structures Committee, in which case this item should be taken as a separate issue. It might be possible to suspend Standing Orders and consider each committee in turn, as was done with discussion of Schedule C at the 1993 Assembly.

Other alterations to the committee list were accepted by the Convener.

The implications of information technology for the church could not be included at present, but would be put on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

So far staff consultations have been with the General Secretary, but it was agreed that the staff are free to consult with others if they so wish.

It was explained that FURY Council was not an Assembly standing committee and therefore should not be included on that list; however, it was agreed that it could be included with a footnote of explanation. No change in the status of FURY Council could be considered until the 1995 Assembly since a clear decision on it had been taken by the 1992 Assembly.

The Mission Council resolved to remit the Report, duly amended, to the General Assembly for decision.

The Moderator, on behalf of the Mission Council, thanked Mrs Marsden not only for her work on the Structures Committee but for her wise counsel in the first years of the Council's work and wished her well in her pending retirement.

94/27 THE TRAINING NETWORK

Miss Janet Turner presented a paper produced on behalf of the Training Network for the Mission Council and the Training Review. The training network is made up of people from theological colleges, provincial directors of training, YLTOS, staff engaged in training, the Windermere Centre and includes Mrs Rosemary Johnston.

The Moderator thanked the Training Network for this paper.

94/28 CAFcert CONSULTANCY SERVICES - WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

The General Secretary introduced a report on CAFcert Consultancy Services (which had not been seen by Westminster College).

The report listed terms of reference, the work plan, time scale and cost, consultants' profiles and quality control for a review of the future of Westminster College.

The General Secretary proposed that

Mission Council accepts the proposals of CAFcert Consultancy Services and invites the consultants suggested to assist the Council in reviewing the future use of Westminster College.

This was carried, with the intention that the review would be carried out in a single stage.

It was also proposed that

Mission Council appoints the General Secretary, the Convener of the Training Committee (the Revd John Sutcliffe) and Mrs Ruth Clarke to act as a reference group for the consultants.

This was carried.

24/29 REVIEW OF TRAINING

A discussion document for Mission Council from the review of training was presented by the Revd Julian Macro on behalf of Mrs Ruth Clarke, the Revd Dr Philip Morgan and himself.

Comments were made on training being informal as well as formal; the relationship with other comparable bodies; the need for consumers of training also to be consulted.

The Mission Council accepted the timetable for the Review Group's work and the membership of the Group as set out in item 3 of the report.

94/30 STAFFING ADVISORY GROUP

The Revd Angus Duncan on behalf of the Staffing Advisory Group spelled out its objectives under the headings: Mission Priorities; Economy; Ecumenical Possibilities; Decentralisation; Readiness to Change; Objectives for next period; Job Description; Budget.

94/31

EDITOR OF REFORM AND MEDIA OFFICER

The Staffing Advisory Group proposed

"That a new post be created as from September 1995, which merges those of Editor of REFORM and the Press/PR Officer. This post would be situated in Church House with secretarial support, also dealing with REFORM subscriptions."

It was noted that Mr Norman Hart would be retiring as Editor of REFORM in September 1995.

Mr Duncan replied to questions and comments.

The resolution was agreed.

94/32

ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

Mrs Wilma Frew brought a number of items from the Assembly Arrangements Committee for the attention of the Mission Council.

(a) The business of the Assembly would start at 2.30 pm on Thursday 7th July and end at 12 noon on Monday 11th. There would be the option of a packed lunch if ordered and paid for in advance. The proposed timetable would enable a saving of £17 per member and result in a total cost per member of £131.

(b) There would be a short act of worship led by the Revd Donald Hilton at the start of the Assembly.

(c) On Sunday at 8.45 am there would be a substantial act of worship, (led by the Revd Donald Hilton with participation by the Revd Dr J.R. McKelvey), including holy communion and act of commemoration. Part of the service would be broadcast.

(d) Bible study would be led by Professor Graham Stanton, to be handled in small groups before lunch on Friday and Saturday leading up to lunch; the groups would also be used to assist discussion on the year of the family.

(e) Dr Rukmini Rao, Director of the Deccan Development Society; and the President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Leslie J. Griffiths, had been invited to address the Assembly.

These arrangements were confirmed.

It was agreed to hold three sessions of the Assembly on "the Family". This was a year for listening and sharing and reflection; 1995 would be the time for policy-making.

The General Secretary informed the Mission Council that Toller URC might be bringing an Appeal to the Assembly. If so, he suggested that the Appeal might be heard by a Commission of the Assembly if the Synod and Toller URC agreed to this procedure.

It was proposed that a Commission of five people be set up to hear any Appeal which might be brought to the Assembly, the Commission to consist of the Moderator, or a former Moderator; a Provincial Moderator; a District Secretary and two members of the Mission Council, to be appointed by the officers of the Mission Council (the General Secretary to be commission secretary and the Assembly Clerk to be in attendance).

The Revd David Lawrence proposed that one member of any such Commission should be appointed with the approval of those bringing the Appeal.

The Legal Adviser said that an Appeal to the General Assembly was a judicial procedure. On being put to the vote the proposal was lost.

94/33 WEEKEND OR WEEKDAY MISSION COUNCIL MEETINGS

At the request of the Mission Council Advisory Group the General Secretary asked the Council's view on weekend or weekday meetings, having regard in particular to the difficulty of finding venues large enough to accommodate the Council at weekends at a reasonable cost.

The Moderator called for a straw vote on the options of a weekend; weekdays; no strong feelings either way; alternating weekend and weekdays. Different views were apparent.

It was agreed that the first residential meeting in 1996 should be held at a weekend.

94/34 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell had been invited to reflect on the Mission Council's work. At previous residential meetings someone from outside the Mission Council had been invited to offer theological reflections, and she recalled some of what they had brought to the Council's attention. We should be sure to act on the message received; there is no use looking at your reflection if you do not act on what you see. Change is the order of the day. Time should be allowed to reflect on what is shown to us. Mrs Caswell asked for reflection to be done in groups, each bringing a brief note which she would collate.

94/35 THANKS

The Moderator expressed, on behalf of the Mission Council, thanks to those who had made presentations, in particular Mrs Mary Marsden who was retiring at this time, to the Revd Duncan Wilson and Mrs Carol Rogers for the worship sessions, to the Revd Elizabeth Caswell for theological reflections; those who prepare for Mission Council - the Revd Tony Burnham and Mrs Gill Mason; the Clerk and Minute Secretary.

Thanks were given to the Moderator for chairing the meeting and for his leading of worship in the communion service.

Closing worship was led by the Chaplain.

MOTIONS ON MAINTENANCE
OF THE MINISTRY

- (1) Mission Council, acting for the General Assembly in the light of the potential large overspend for 1994 on the Ministry and Mission Fund and the consequent difficulty in establishing the 1995 budget, resolves that from Monday, 21st March 1994 until the 1994 General Assembly, no one who is not already on the URC roll of ministers or CRCWs shall be introduced or inducted to a stipendiary pastorate or a CRCW post in the United Reformed Church except (a) students completing a course of training for URC ministry in a college or course, (b) ministers of other churches who have at the 21st March 1994 already been introduced to a URC pastorate with a view to a call. Any question of interpretation of this resolution shall be settled by the General Secretary in consultation with the appropriate Synod Moderator.
- (2) Mission Council proposes to the General Assembly the following motion:

"The General Assembly instructs Ministries in consultation with Synod Moderators, the Patterns of Ministry working party and Finance (and with power to consult more widely) to submit to the General Assembly, or the Mission Council, regulations for stipendiary ministry, including any necessary revision of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, which shall

 - (a) enable a more accurate estimate of future numbers of ministers available for call,
 - (b) ensure that (with some possible tolerance for small and temporary variation) there cannot at any time be an excess of ministers and CRCWs to be paid from the Maintenance of the Ministry account over the full time equivalent number used in calculating the current year's budget;
 - and (c) to consider any other relevant issues not covered by the Patterns of Ministry working party.
- (3) Mission Council instructs Ministries to begin forthwith the process of consultation described in (2) above, on the assumption that the 1994 General Assembly will accept (2) or an amended form of it.
- (4) Mission Council authorises its officers, if (as is likely) the regulations required by (2) above cannot be prepared in time for submission to the 1994 General Assembly, to propose to the 1994 General Assembly the extension of the moratorium imposed by (1) above until the Mission Council or the General Assembly can adopt such regulations. If such an extension is needed, the officers of the Mission Council will consider in proposing the extension any suggestions for further additions, exceptions or other changes to the moratorium which are brought to their attention.



A Paper for Mission Council and the Training Review

Produced on behalf of the Training Network

The Training Network is an informal meeting of those employed by the United Reformed Church as providers of training in and on behalf of the denomination. At the residential meeting in December 1993, the group worked at theological issues relating to training and offer this paper as a result of its work together and as a contribution to the training review.

MISSION STATEMENT

To share with people in the continuous discovery of what it means to be the People of God in the world and the church - by liberating each other to use our different gifts in response to the love of God in Christ and the call of the Spirit.

COMMENTARY ON THIS MISSION STATEMENT

TO SHARE

1. The statement puts forward a collaborative view of training: not of knowledge being loaded by a trainer into trainees; but rather of people learning together, so that the insights of each contribute to the training experience that others gain.

WITH PEOPLE

2. The mode of training proposed sits comfortably within the conciliar polity of the URC. We believe - and we find - that truth, guidance and wisdom are often best discerned when Christians meet and speak together, seeking the mind of the Holy Spirit.

CONTINUOUS

3. Christians should always be ready to learn and to grow. Our training is never complete. It must be continuous. Yesterday's discovery may not be adequate to meet tomorrow's need and opportunity.

DISCOVERY

4. To a large extent training is open-ended. God may have new things to teach us, again and again. We discover our potential, and God's path, a step at a time.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

5. Training in the Church is corporate in its vision. We belong together as one body in Christ. We serve, even when we serve separately, as part of the Church's whole life and witness. Good training fosters that awareness, and rejoices in the strength it provides. So we shall want to learn and grow as a people; training is never an individual hobby or trip.

This corporate aspect implies - among other things - an ecumenical breadth to our vision and, where possible, to our training.

IN THE WORLD

6. Our outlook is missionary. We are a people sent: to serve and show Christ. Effective training takes seriously that Christians live for Christ in the world, in a host of varied activities and situations, revealing and encountering Christ in many different places and ways.

LIBERATING EACH OTHER

7. Training is intended to liberate: to release gifts; to expand horizons; to free people to live as God intends; to open people to a wider vision of God and a deeper joy in service.

OUR DIFFERENT GIFTS

8. Training is not cloning. We are diverse, in creation, in Christ, and in the wide spectrum of the Spirit's gifting grace. We start from different places in our pilgrimage, and discover different gifts as we grow in Christ, appropriate to the varied opportunities that open to us in God's world.

IN RESPONSE TO THE LOVE OF GOD

9. All true Christian faith and service is responsive. We are a people loved, by God in Jesus Christ. We love because he first loved us. We want to give because we have received much. We live in a holy relationship - with God and with each other. Training values that understanding and works to strengthen it, so that as faith grows, a deepening Christian commitment may be natural and unforced.

THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST AND THE CALL OF THE SPIRIT

10. Our statement is Trinitarian. We stand within the mystery, confidence and expectancy of the Church's ancient faith, serving a God who made and loves us, who lived, died and rose as one of us, and who continues to stir, prompt and lead us.

THE CONTEXT FOR TRAINING

We identified seven aspects, which intertwine, and have different emphases in various times and places:

1. The Church, as people of God, is set within God's world and called to play a full part in its life. Our horizons, and our awareness of the world - in all its variety, and with all its needs - must broaden continually.
2. Love is the driving power in all we, as the people, will do and be, in our relationships with God and with one another, and as we seek to discern what it means to be the Church.
3. We are a worshipping people. Christian life is a life of worship, directed towards the glory of God, responding to the grandeur and grace of God. We are called to celebrate God, to explore the mystery of God, to deepen our experience of God, to be humble and joyful before God. As we worship, we participate in the community of faith and are bound together in Christ.
4. As disciples, Christians live as a community of learners, and need to develop a learning culture. We must aim to motivate our people, to make resources available, to encourage curiosity, to remove stumbling blocks, and to offer samples and tasters in our programme to sharpen people's appetite to learn.
5. We are one people who share different skills and gifts. Therefore, undertaking training should not set people apart or above, but deepen their involvement and commitment within the common life and witness of the whole Church.
6. There are several different kinds of learning. Good training enables people to acquire knowledge, to develop and practise skills and to examine, challenge and reshape attitudes.
7. Who sets the agenda? Learning does involve change and that may necessitate the breakdown of old assumptions and their replacement with new understanding, but this is something which must come from within the person who is learning. People in the local church and context know their own situations best, and can see local needs. But specialist trainers can have a prophetic role: alerting people to important issues that they may have overlooked; disseminating experience, visions and dreams within the Church; and taking people forward to discern and realise fresh aims.

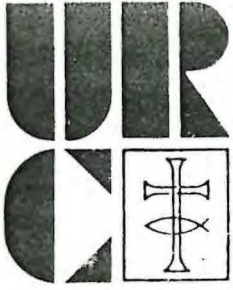
THE ROLE OF THE TRAINER

The work of training is, of course, the general responsibility of the whole Church, and the particular responsibility of many people within it. However, we believe that trainers have a distinctive role to play in the Church's life and work in relation to these responsibilities.

We seek to bring:

- a) Expertise and experience in training methods which are appropriate to the exploration of the reality of God and the nature of our discipleship within and outside the Church;
- b) Specialised knowledge;
- c) A consultancy role;
- d) The ability and skill to run good training courses, that work.

*Prepared on behalf of the Training Network by
John Proctor, Janet Turner and Margaret Taylor
February 1994*



The United Reformed Church

86 Tavistock Place London WC1H 9RT

Telephone 071-916 2020

Fax number 071-916 2021

General Secretary The Revd Anthony G. Burnham BA

To: District Secretaries

24 March 1994

Dear Colleagues

Mission Council - March 18-20, 1994

The following self-explanatory resolution was agreed by the Mission Council at its meeting last weekend.

"Mission Council, acting for the General Assembly in the light of the potential large overspend for 1994 on the Ministry and Mission Fund and the consequent difficulty in establishing the 1995 budget, resolves that from Monday, 21st March 1994 until the 1994 General Assembly, no one who is not already on the URC roll of ministers or CRCWs shall be introduced or inducted to a stipendiary pastorate or a CRCW post in the United Reformed Church except (a) students completing a course of training for URC ministry in a college or course, (b) ministers of other churches who have at the 21st March 1994 already been introduced to a URC pastorate with a view to a call. Any question of interpretation of this resolution shall be settled by the General Secretary in consultation with the appropriate Synod Moderator."

If you have any questions about this, they should be addressed in the first instance to your provincial moderator. This is intended to be a temporary halt on ministers coming from other denominations at home or abroad. Other resolutions dealing with this matter will be presented to the Assembly.

Committee Structure

I enclose a copy of the resolutions and report which will be printed in the book of Annual Reports to the Assembly. In my letter to you (20 December 1993) I asked you to 'pencil into the District Council's timetable an opportunity to consider (this) report before Assembly'. It is hoped to mail the Annual Reports to the Assembly during the week beginning 9 May.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony G. Burnham

Copies to:-
Provincial Moderators
Synod Clerks



The United Reformed Church

86 Tavistock Place London WC1H 9RT

Telephone 071-916 2020

Fax number 071-916 2021

General Secretary The Revd Anthony G Burnham BSc

11 March 1994

To Members of Mission Council

Dear Colleagues,

Mission Council - 18-20 March 1994
St Joseph's Upholland, Skelmersdale

Here is the second and final mailing. Regrettably there may still be some papers tabled next Friday.

It would help you to collate your papers in two parts and in the following order:

(*sent in first mailing)

MC Business


Review of Training*
CAFcert Consultancy Services
(Westminster College)
Work/Cathy get Lost*
Staffing Advisory Group - i) Rural Consultant
A Biennial Assembly

GA Business

Committees of the GA
Patterns of Ministry
Equal Opportunities Monitoring*
1994 Year of the Family*
MEW Abroad
Church & Society
Finance ✦
Financial Resources Report
Standing Orders of the Assembly
Rules of Procedure

See you at St Joseph's! Lunch is at 1.00

Yours sincerely,


Anthony G Burnham



Business From
MCAG

1. A Biennial Assembly A separate paper has been circulated. It is recommended that no action be taken.
2. Electing the GA Moderator. It is recommended that major changes ought not to be made to the present procedure. However the following procedure is suggested:
 1. A very general job description will be made available to encourage districts and synods to propose appropriate persons. The role does change according to the gifts of an individual and according to the needs of the church in a particular year.
 2. Candidates will be approached by the synod clerk before the synod takes a decision.
 3. Synod clerks will be given clear guidance as to the information to be presented in the CV to be forwarded with the nomination. Information on the person's skills in relation to the role ought to be given.
 4. The information paper distributed to GA members will contain a recent photograph.
 5. Voting will take place early in the Assembly, probably during the first morning session.
 6. The result will be given as soon as possible, probably during the subsequent session. The person elected, if present, would be greeted but would not speak.
 7. The moderator-elect would briefly address the Assembly at the final session.

It is recommended that this be the substance of our report on this matter to the General Assembly.
3. MC 1996. It was decided to test the feeling of MC regarding the use of weekends in 1996 onwards. Amongst the points noted were:
 - i) finding accommodation at the weekend is difficult and gives us a restricted choice;
 - ii) Friday is an expensive rail fare day;
 - iii) meeting on a Sunday is difficult for some ministers and their churches;
 - iv) weekends are easier for some lay people who work during the week;
 - v) weekends are easier for some young people
 - vi) some lay people prefer to reserve weekends for the family.

In order that a decision may be reached, the General Secretary will propose that :

MC will continue to meet in 1996 and in subsequent years at weekends.

4. Length of service on Advisory Groups. It is proposed that, based on the votes received at the first election, with the last name in each group added at the second election, the following serve until Assembly in the year stated:

<u>MCAG</u>		<u>Staffing Advisory Group</u>	
Sandra Lloydlangston	1994	William McVey	1994
David Butler	1995	*Elizabeth Scopes	1995
Elizabeth Caswell	1996	Angus Duncan	1996
Janet Turner	1997	*John Maitland	1997

*not members of MC.

It is also proposed that (i) if a member leaves MC, this will automatically end their service on MCAG but not on the Staffing Advisory Group; (ii) at the end of four years' consecutive service, a member is not eligible to stand for re-election in the following year.

5. Vision. A letter had been received from the Croydon District asking MC to produce a vision for visible growth of the church and the spiritual growth of members. It was noted that working parties on Patterns of Ministry and Authority ought to give some elements of the vision while a presentation of TRIO would point to a process. In addition MEW at Home are working on a response to The Unity We Seek an exploration by CTE.

MCAG recommend that this be aired in a plenary session to see if a preliminary statement bringing together these and other matters could be part of our report to the Assembly this year.



A. Draft motion for the General Assembly:-

"The General Assembly, aware that the (draft) budget for 1995 provides for only a limited number of ministers (equivalent to an average of xxx through the whole year):

1. Instructs Ministries to prepare, in consultation with Finance, amendments to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, based on revised provincial deployment quotas for all ministry, including part-time ministers and CRCWs, which will ensure that the maximum number of persons to be paid from the Maintenance of the Ministry account does not exceed the number included in the budget agreed by the General Assembly.

2. Instructs the Mission Council at its October 1994 meeting to consider such amendments to the Plan for Partnership and, with any appropriate further amendment, bring them into immediate effect."

B. Draft motion for the Mission Council:-

"The Mission Council instructs Ministries, in consultation with Finance, to begin work in accordance with the above draft motion".

"Pending decisions by the General Assembly and the October 1994 meeting of the Mission Council on amendments to the Plan for Partnership, the Mission Council most strongly advises District Councils, Synods and any appointing Committees that the number of ministers and staff employed be limited to the number presently being paid from the Maintenance of the Ministry account (xxx) and that apart from those completing their training for URC ministry in recognised Colleges and courses, no persons due to be paid from that account be appointed.

GROUPS

The Chair will be taken by the first person on the list.

The Reporter is the second person.

A

Butler
Caswell
Allen
Duffy
Goodier
Healey
Morgan D
Sanderson
Trippier

E

Jenkins
Hart
Brain
Buxton
Cressey
Forster
Hanson
Lloyd Langston
Rogers
Wright

B

Duncan
Frew
Marsden
Cook
Gordon
Husselbee
O'Neill
Schaffery
Tull

F

McVey
~~Macroeconomics~~ Macro
Andrew
Clare
Foreast
~~Evans~~ Gathercole
Harderich
McKelvey
Stacy

C

Helyar
Garrow
Burnham
Curry
Rees
Jackson
Oldham
Sinclair
Webb

G

Morgan P
Poulter
Waller
Duncan
Fairburn
Franklin
Hamison
McKay
Taylor

D

Humphreys
Meekison
Black
Church
Gunn
Lawrence
Nimmo
Singh
Wilson

H

Turner
Bending
Bainbridge
Coates
Evans
Frank
Head
Bakley
Thomas

MISSION COUNCIL 18-20 MARCH 1994	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>
<u>FRIDAY</u> 12.00 Check in	8.30 Breakfast	7.30 Communion 8.30 Breakfast
	9.15 Prayers & Bible Study 10.30 Training Network Westminster College Training Review	9.30 ----- 10.45 Theological Reflections
	11.00 Coffee	11.00 Coffee
	11.15 Groups on training issues 12.00 Plenary 12.45 Close	11.15 Theological Reflections - groups 12.00 Synod groups 12.30 Prayers 12.45 Close
	1.00 Lunch	1.00 Lunch
2.00 Welcome and apologies Opening worship and Bible Study 2.45 Our Agenda 2.55 MC Business Committee Structure	3.00 Equal Opportunities and related resolutions 3.15 Groups 3.50 Plenary	
4.15 Tea	4.15 Tea	
4.30 Groups - committee structure Patterns of Ministry Budget and related Synod Resolutions 6.15 Close	4.30 CCBI Assembly Staffing Advisory Group Assembly Arrangements Committee The Family 6.15 Close	
6.30 Supper	6.30 Supper	
7.30 TRIO 8.15 Our vision 8.45 Prayers	7.30 GA Resolutions - all <u>except</u> No 8 8.45 Prayers	

MOTIONS ON MAINTENANCE
OF THE MINISTRY

- (1) Mission Council, acting for the General Assembly in the light of the potential large overspend for 1994 on the Ministry and Mission Fund and the consequent difficulty in establishing the 1995 budget, resolves that from Monday, 21st March 1994 until the 1994 General Assembly, no one who is not already on the URC roll of ministers or CRCWs shall be introduced or inducted to a stipendiary pastorate or a CRCW post in the United Reformed Church except (a) students completing a course of training for URC ministry in a college or course, (b) ministers of other churches who have at the 21st March 1994 already been introduced to a URC pastorate with a view to a call. Any question of interpretation of this resolution shall be settled by the General Secretary in consultation with the appropriate Synod Moderator.
- (2) Mission Council proposes to the General Assembly the following motion:

"The General Assembly instructs Ministries in consultation with Synod Moderators, the Patterns of Ministry working party and Finance (and with power to consult more widely) to submit to the General Assembly, or the Mission Council, regulations for stipendiary ministry, including any necessary revision of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, which shall

 - (a) enable a more accurate estimate of future numbers of ministers available for call,
 - (b) ensure that (with some possible tolerance for small and temporary variation) there cannot at any time be an excess of ministers and CRCWs to be paid from the Maintenance of the Ministry account over the full time equivalent number used in calculating the current year's budget;
 - and (c) to consider any other relevant issues not covered by the Patterns of Ministry working party.
- (3) Mission Council instructs Ministries to begin forthwith the process of consultation described in (2) above, on the assumption that the 1994 General Assembly will accept (2) or an amended form of it.
- (4) Mission Council authorises its officers, if (as is likely) the regulations required by (2) above cannot be prepared in time for submission to the 1994 General Assembly, to propose to the 1994 General Assembly the extension of the moratorium imposed by (1) above until the Mission Council or the General Assembly can adopt such regulations. If such an extension is needed, the officers of the Mission Council will consider in proposing the extension any suggestions for further additions, exceptions or other changes to the moratorium which are brought to their attention.

Resolution and papers for Provincial Synod, Thames North from the Central and North London District Council:

re. financial provision for students in higher education.

Central and North London District Council was alerted to the financial difficulties being experienced by mature students and others in higher education by a resolution from the Church Meeting of the Hyde (Colindale) URC. The church has a mature student, Richard Alford, studying for the URC ministry at Westminster College, Cambridge and his experience and that of his contemporaries provided the background for the church meeting resolution.

Whilst aware of the wide-ranging concern for all levels of education and the resources being made available, our concern focuses on the situation of students in higher education and especially mature students who today form some 50% of all students in higher education.

During recent years the availability of higher education has increased very considerably, especially with the creation of new universities. The increase in the number of mature students is in part accounted for by the recession, by a greater need and willingness to change careers and by the larger number of women taking up this opportunity.

The financing of higher education, however, gives cause for concern. Whilst some students receive mandatory grants, others do not. The award of discretionary grants varies greatly from one local authority to another. Government 'pegging' of grants and the observed failure of a considerable number of parents to pay fully their contribution, for whatever reasons, contribute to a situation of increasing economic difficulty for many students in higher education.

When mature students enter college they find that their previous commitments (house, mortgage, etc.) and their personal relationships (spouse, children) can actively work against them.

This is because student grants, and some state benefits, are tied to a partner's earnings, which penalises many mature students. Many mature students are caught in a cleft stick as to whether or not the spouse goes to work to keep the home going. If they go to work then the student is penalised, if they do not then they face further hardship, because the few benefits that are available to do not cover the requirements of a home.

The current solution, that students should take up government loans, is in danger of creating an unhealthy dependence on debt, and increases burdens on mature students who may already have mortgages and other repayments to make.

Synod, March 12, 1994 - Resolution on Student Grants

Noting with dismay the continuing squeeze on student incomes, a major contributory factor being the inability of students in higher education, with very few exceptions, to claim any state benefits, with the result that people in many sections of society, and especially those of mature years, experience increased financial hardship in seeking to take up the advantages of higher education,

the General Assembly is requested

- to draw the attentions of members of the URC to this situation;
- to make representation to the Secretaries of State for Social Security and Education for a re-ordering of financial priorities to enable a greater equality of opportunity;
- and to encourage individual members and congregations of the URC to express this concern to their local Members of Parliament.

(to be proposed by Richard Alford on behalf of
Central and North London District)

CHURCHES COMMISSION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

A Call for Amnesty End Harsh Deportations

The increasing number of deportations is causing fear in black communities and friction with the authorities. The death of Joy Gardner was the tip of an iceberg. Deportations often affect families most seriously, and 1994 is the International Year of the Family. The Churches of Britain and Ireland believe there is a case for amnesty for people under certain restricted categories. Please therefore support this Petition for people to be allowed to stay

who have lived in the UK for over five years and who

either are the parent of at least one child born here who has lived here for 2 years

or are self-sufficient in terms of income and housing

The Government is also asked to exercise extreme caution in deciding to deport vulnerable people such as psychiatric patients, women who have left violent homes or exploitative employers, overseas students engaging in part-time work and asylum seekers from countries where there is persecution and/or conflict.

Please copy this form widely - it will be presented to the Home Office.

NAME	ADDRESS
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

CAFcert
Consultancy Services

**PROPOSAL TO
THE MISSION COUNCIL OF THE
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**



BACKGROUND

CAFcert has been approached by the Mission Council of the United Reformed Church to assist the Council in reviewing the future use of Westminster College and in making recommendations to the General Assembly.

Westminster College has a valued and long-standing place in the training of ministers for the United Reformed Church, and formerly for the Presbyterian Church of England. Questions have, however, arisen about its viability, its place within the wider provision of education and training for ministers and lay people, and its contribution to changing patterns of ministry. The General Assembly has therefore authorised the Mission Council to review the use made of Westminster College and to make recommendations regarding its future. The Mission Council has decided to seek help from independent consultants in collating and analysing data, canvassing opinions, formulating options and advising upon their feasibility.

The impending retirement of the College Principal makes the review timely before considering the appointment of his successor.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To assist in reviewing the future of Westminster College, with particular reference to :
 - a) its historic contribution to the Church's heritage
 - b) its present contribution to the ministry of the Church
 - c) its resources, including its staff, funds and premises, the uses to which they are put and might be put
 - d) its students, their needs and expectations of the College
 - e) its types of course
 - f) its administration and management
 - g) its financial viability.

2. To take into account:
 - a) contributions made by other centres of training
 - b) policies, plans and projections for:
 - training new entrants to the ministry
 - post ordination and in-service training
 - lay training
 - training students from overseas
 - c) current deliberations on patterns of ministry
 - d) the interests of the Cheshunt Foundation, its work and its relationship to the College.

3. To invite comments and suggestions regarding the future of the College.

4. To prepare options and make recommendations regarding the future of the College.

THE WORK PLAN

Ideally, the following programme of work would proceed as one exercise. This would ensure that external perspectives were taken into account alongside the internal appraisal of the college and its work. It would also expedite the review and optimise the use of the consultants' time.

Alternatively, the work could be done in two stages. In that case, the first stage would concentrate on matters relating directly to the college and lead to an interim report. The second stage would then take account of wider policy considerations and data sources, and invite comment outside the college. There is a risk that this could lead to a protracted consultative process and delay decisions, in which case it would not be possible to finish the entire review by the end of September as otherwise planned.

This plan is for the review as a whole, but identifies activities (marked #) which would constitute the first stage if two stages were to be preferred.

Orientation

The consultants would make an initial visit to the College to view the premises, to meet staff and students, and to learn about the work #.

Data Analysis

They would scrutinise documentation and analyse data regarding:

- i) training for the ministry, including length and style of courses and projected student numbers
- ii) in-service and post ordination training
- iii) lay training
- iv) training for overseas students

- v) the throughput of students at each of the main training centres over, say, the last three years, broken down by types of student and types of course
- vi) accounts for and relating to the College including:
 - per capita costs of various courses #
 - fixed and variable overheads #
 - routine maintenance of the fabric #
 - estimates of future major refurbishment, repairs or modernisation which may be required over the next ten years #
 - the cost of support services provided by the URC centrally #
- vii) true costs of managing, maintaining and operating the College#
- viii) its present and projected viability #
- ix) present and potential income generation #
- x) use made of College premises, including occupancy levels and charges #

Consultations

Invitations would be extended by letter and by general announcement to the following interested parties, welcoming comments in writing, giving notice of forums to discuss the future of the College, and offering one-to-one meetings in selected cases:

- a) staff and former staff, and students and former students of the College #
- b) if applicable, associations and unions representing staff and students #

- c) governing bodies and staff of the other training centres
- d) other interested parties within the URC
- e) other member bodies of the Cambridge Federation
- f) the University of Cambridge
- g) Others

Written comments would be studied, meetings held with key individuals and forums convened in Cambridge and London with interested groups.

Meetings would be written up and a digest prepared.

Meetings with representatives of the Mission Council would be requested at key points in the consultancy to discuss progress, clarify issues and fine tune this plan as it progressed.

Survey of the Premises

The consultants would advise the Mission Council on the brief for a survey and evaluation of the site and premises. This would be in two stages. The first (as soon as practicable) would assess the present state of the fabric and its maintenance. The second (if appropriate) would assess the feasibility and cost of adapting premises for alternative uses.

This survey would be commissioned separately. Its reports would be made available to the CAFcert consultants #.

Preparation of Report

Information would be collated from working papers, the report drafted, including options and recommendations, and checked for errors of fact and interpretation with members of the Mission Council, and then revised accordingly.

Estimates of the Workload	Days
Orientation	2
Data analyses	10
Consultations	10
Advice on Survey	1
Preparation of Report	7
TOTAL	30

If two stages were preferred, 20 days would be allocated to the first and 10 to the second.

TIME SCALE AND COST

CAFcert will deliver the report and recommendations by the end of September 1994 if the review proceeds as a single stage project. Should two stages be preferred, the delivery of the report may be delayed.

CAFcert's fee will be calculated on the basis of £350 per working day. The total cost of the project will therefore be $30 \times £350 = \text{£}10,500$ plus out-of-pocket expenses, plus VAT.

The fee is payable in two instalments: the first 50% (plus VAT) becomes due on exchange of contracts, and the final payment on completion of the work and delivery of the report. Expenses will be added to the final invoice.

CAFcert

CAFcert Consultancy Services was formed in July 1993 when the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) took over the work of the Charities Effectiveness Review Trust (CERT). CERT's work in the field of management consultancy for the voluntary sector started in 1986 and well over 70 projects have been completed. The unique feature of CAFcert is that it draws on the expertise of senior experienced managers from charities and non-profit organisations.

CONSULTANTS' PROFILES

The consultants who would undertake the assignment for CAFcert are:

Hugh Barr is a Special Professor at Nottingham University, an external examiner to the universities of Westminster and Dundee and an assessor for the Higher Education Funding Council for England. He was formerly an Assistant Director of the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) where he was responsible for policy, development, research and promoting new educational programmes.

His consultancies have included assignments for the Open University and (for CAFcert) for the Baring Foundation, British Red Cross and a large Merseyside charity regarding alternative uses for residential premises.

Nick Lowe is a Cambridge graduate and a Chartered Accountant. He has spent the last 26 years working in the voluntary sector, more than 20 of them as a National Director of Barnardo's. Apart from fundraising and the recruitment and motivation of volunteers, his main concerns have been strategic planning, development and the best use of resources. Whilst at Barnardo's and subsequently, he has advised a large number of voluntary organisations, both local and national. He is an elder of the URC.

QUALITY CONTROL

This project will be under the close supervision of **Roger Watkins**, Director of CAFcert who is widely experienced in the voluntary sector. The report in draft will be submitted to an external assessor for comment and amendment before being delivered to the client.



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

FINANCE

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS for consideration by MISSION COUNCIL in March 1994

1. Accounts

- 1.1 The audited accounts covering the United Reformed Church central funds for 1993 are shown in appendix **

Resolution 1 Assembly adopts the accounts for 1993.

2. Ministry and Mission Fund

- 2.1 The 1993 result was a small deficit of about £30,000. However this result masks an increase in Maintenance of the Ministry costs of about £120,000, which fortunately was off set by a reduction in other central Church costs.
- 2.2 It is encouraging that the contributions to the Ministry and Mission Fund from the churches increased by 14% over 1992, at a time of continued economic restraint and we express our gratitude for this response. Full details of the sums received from each Province are shown on page ** of the accounts.

Resolution 2 Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 1993 to the Ministry and Mission Fund.

3. Budget 1995

- 3.1 Estimate 1994.

- 3.2 Budget 1995.

[Reports will be drafted when the budget for 1995 has been completed.]

Resolution 3 Assembly approves the budget for 1995, noting that expenditure is expected to be £**,***,***, which will require contributions from the churches of £**,***,**, an increase of **% over the 1994 commitments.

4. Retirement of Ministers serving joint URC/Methodist pastorates

- 4.1 In implementing Resolutions 10 and 11 of the 1993 General Assembly, with regard to the retirement of ministers no later than the age of 65 years and 6 months, the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee came upon a particular difficulty with regard to ministers serving joint URC/Methodist pastorates, where the normal date for a change of ministers is the 31st August. We therefore suggest a modification to resolution 10, which will then read as follows:-

"Assembly resolves that ministers shall retire from full-time stipendiary service not later than six calendar months from the date on which they shall have attained the age of 65, save that where ministers are serving in joint URC/Methodist pastorates at the time of retirement, ministers shall retire from full-time stipendiary service not later than the 31st August following the date on which they attain the age of 65."

Resolution 4 Assembly modifies Resolution 10, passed by Assembly in 1993, by the addition of the words "save that where ministers are serving in joint URC/Methodist pastorates at the time of retirement, ministers shall retire from full-time stipendiary service not later than the 31st August following the date on which they attain the age of 65."

5. Pension Fund Rule regarding Childrens' Awards

5.1 For many years the orphans benefit paid from the United Reformed Church Ministers Pension Fund has been £50 per annum per child under the age of 18 years. The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee feels that this figure has now become absurdly low, and Assembly should decide whether there should be a realistic payment, or none at all. Our recommendation is that we should increase the benefit five-fold, and thereafter review it annually, and this is contained in the Resolution.

5.2 It is with some reticence that we propose any additional expenditure while the fund continues to face such a huge deficit, but the overall cost will be minimal.

5.3 The amendment to rule 22 needs to be read in conjunction with the preamble to the rule "In the event of the death of a contributing member in service before normal pension age, there shall become payable the following benefits:"

Resolution 5 Assembly amends the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers Pension Fund (both the rules applying before Assembly 1993, for those who elected to be dealt with under these rules, and the rules adopted by Assembly 1993), as follows:-

Rule 22.3 to read:- "Where a member leaves one or more children below the age of eighteen years, a pension of £250, or such greater sum as the Committee may decide in respect of each child, until the child attains the age of eighteen years.

6. Discontinuation of the payment of Stipend Supplements through the central payroll system

6.1 Following the adoption of Resolution 9 by General Assembly in 1993, the staff in the finance office discovered that National Insurance regulations dictate that where a minister's stipend is paid by the central office, it is also a requirement that the central office shall assume responsibility for National Insurance contributions on any additional stipend supplement

that may be paid from other sources. In the circumstances, the Committee decided that resolution 9 of the 1993 General Assembly could not be implemented, and that the Assembly should be asked to rescind it.

- 6.2 The Committee therefore decided that, in order to comply with the National Insurance regulations, the payment of supplementary stipends through the central payroll system should be made mandatory.

Resolution 6 Assembly rescinds Resolution 9 passed by Assembly in 1993 as follows:-

"Assembly agrees to discontinue the payment of supplements through the central payroll from the 1st October 1993, except in exceptional cases that may be agreed by the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee".

Resolution 7 Assembly amends the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration by adding the following paragraph:-

6.2.2 Stipend supplements: General Assembly 1993 passed the following Resolution - "Assembly believes the payment of special stipend supplements by churches is no longer justified and calls upon ministers and churches to bring an end to this payment as soon as possible". As the decision rests with the minister and the local church, and in order to comply with National Insurance regulations, any continuing supplement payments will be required to be paid through the central payroll system, the cost (including, for example, additional National Insurance contributions) being an expense of the local church.

8. Ordination Loans

- 8.1 The Committee believes that it is now appropriate for proportional ordination loans to be made available to ordinands due to serve in Part-time pastorates.

Resolution 8 Assembly adds the wording shown in heavy type to paragraph 8.2.1 of the Plan for Partnership which will now read:-

"An interest free loan (as shown in Appendix A) is available to ordinands for the stipendiary ministry; **where the pastorate to be served is part-time the loan shall be pro-rata according to the proportion of whole-time basic stipend: this loan shall be re-payable by deduction from stipend over a period of not more than five years or such other period as the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the central MoM Committee, shall from time to time determine.**"



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

To: The Mission Council

11 March 1994

From: The Financial Resources Committee

BUDGET 1995

1993 Result

This is now computed at a deficit of £31,000 as against a budgeted deficit of £37,000. However, the revised deficit masks an increase of £133,000 in the Maintenance of the Ministry (MoM) costs, of which £86,000 is attributable to a higher number of stipendiary ministers than budgeted.

1994 Budget/Estimate

Following upon the expenditure cuts agreed by the Mission Council and General Assembly in 1993, a deficit of £38,000 was budgeted. However, again owing to an increase in the number of ministers currently being paid, compared with the budget (budget for February 1994 - 694 ministers paid from the MoM account, actual number paid in February 1994, 710) MoM costs are forecast to exceed budget by £337,000 in 1994 which will limit the prospects of keeping the deficit to budget level without taking the following steps, which have now been agreed by the Financial Resources Committee:-

- a) The unused part of the Memorial Hall Trust Grant of £248,000 to be included within the general income of the Church, and spent within the terms of the Memorial Hall Trust. In the past this grant has been mainly used for Ministerial Training (which use will continue) and the housing of retired ministers.
- b) Ministries in Ecumenical situations (MES) grants (within the Ministries budget) to be limited to £88,000, a saving of £25,000. This revised level reflects a persistent underspend in recent years and is the actual spend in 1993 + 11%.
- c) The number of ministers and lay staff on the Church's payroll to be kept strictly to the number incorporated within the attached revised estimate. These steps will reduce the projected deficit in 1994 to £53,000.

1995 Budget

The attached budget figures reflect the following changes:-

- a) Income has been adjusted to include the final commitments by Provinces, which shows an average increase of 3.39% over 1994, as well as the unused portion of the Memorial Hall Trust Grant of £235,000.
- b) Costs now include the MoM recommended stipend from 1st January 1995 of £13,428, ie £13,200 + 1.7%. Lay staff salaries are for budget purposes, assumed to increase by 3% in July 1994 and again by 3% in July 1995.
- c) The following restrictions in expenditure have also been included:-
 - i) MES grants have been cut from £116,400 (3% over the 1994 budget) to £91,400 ie an increase of 3.8% on the revised 1994 total - **Saving £25,000.**

ii) Following consultation with CWM, and taking account of additional financial resources which are to become available to them, which will ensure that their work is unaffected, it is proposed to reduce the URC grant to the 1993 level of £576,000 for both 1994 and 1995. - Saving £48,000 over the two years

iii) Other savings of £35,000.

iv) In the light of the necessity to effect these savings no provision for a Children's Advocate has been made.

Taking into account the foregoing revisions a deficit of £90,000 is anticipated in 1995. The Financial Resources Committee feels able to recommend this budget to Mission Council **PROVIDING controls are put in place immediately to restrict the number of ministers and lay staff on the payroll to the number included in these budget figures.**

The attention of Mission Council is drawn to the excess cost of £450,000 which probably will be incurred in 1993 and 1994 by the MoM, solely due to a lack of control on the number of ministers paid by the URC. This demonstrates the serious danger of the Church becoming embroiled in a major financial crisis in the years ahead, with attendant risk of undoing much of the progress which has been achieved in recent years in advancing the mission of the Church, unless prompt remedial action is taken to correct this weakness in our present system.

The following table shows that, although the number of ministers paid from Central Funds has fallen through the past few years, the number of members has fallen faster.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MEMBERS</u>	<u>MINISTERS</u>	<u>MEMBERS/ MINISTER</u>
1989	120,000	815	147
1990	117,000	820	142
1991	115,000	815	141
1992	111,000	807	138
1993	108,600	792	137

As short-term measures it is proposed that Mission Council agrees to:-

1) In 1994, take immediate steps to ensure that the number of stipendiary ministers on the URC payroll in 1994 does not exceed current revised estimates (which already exceed budget) ie. an average of 786 full-time equivalents, including CRCWs, ministers in Central Appointments, and part time ministers, and (?) ministers not on the payroll where negotiations for a call are so far advanced that it would be inappropriate to terminate them.

Action also, to be continued to avoid any increase in lay staff.

2) In 1995, ensuring the number of stipendiary ministers on the URC payroll in 1995 does not exceed the number budgeted.

3) By the beginning of 1995 it is, also, recommended that a policy for sharing out the ministers between the Provinces (Deployment) should be fully implemented, by the Ministries Department, in consultation with Synods.

4) It is also recommended that Mission Council should take note of the small minority of churches that have taken up the TRIO programme and should take action to mount a campaign to encourage those churches that have not used the programme to do so. Moreover, the Financial Resources Committee believes that all members

of Mission Council and representatives at General Assembly should be urged to assume personal responsibility for advocacy of TRIO at the local level.

Resolutions to give effect to these recommendations will be tabled at Mission Council

- *NOTE**
1. The estimates for 1994 and 1995 assume
 - 1.1 That all ministers currently being paid will continue at the same percentage of basic stipend until their retirement date (ie, the agreed date, the age of 65 years and 6 months, or such later date as has been registered by the MoM Committee);
 - 1.2 All students currently in college training for the URC ministry will be ordained into the full-time URC ministry at the end of their current course of study;
 - 1.3 No other ministers will be paid from central funds, unless they are replacements of ministers leaving the stipendiary service of the Church due to exceptional circumstances.
 2. These assumptions mean that the following ministers will not be eligible to be called to pastorates;
 - 2.1 Ministers from another denomination, at home or overseas, whether or not a Certificate of Eligibility has been issued by the Vocations Committee.
 - 2.3 Ministers on the Roll not presently remunerated from central funds.
 - 2.4 Ministers called to a pastorate which involves in increase in scoping (ie, moving from part-time to whole-time).
 3. In the event of the number of ministers falling below the budgeted figure the above may be relaxed, within the constraints of the budget.

Statistics

	Actual 1989	Actual 1990	Actual 1991	Actual 1992	Actual 1993	Budget 1994	Estimate 1994	Estimate 1995
Ministers paid ex MoM fund								
Full time average	732	736	736	727	712			
FT equivalent of PT average	51	49	47	47	46			
CRCWs average	6	8	5	6	6			
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----			
	789	793	788	780	764	750	762	762
Ministers paid ex General Fund								
Moderators	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
College staff	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Central Staff	7	7	6.67	6	6.33	5	7	7
CRCW development worker				0.33	1	1	1	1
Windermere	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Yardley Hastings			0.33	1	1	1	1	1
Advocacy	0.33	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
National chaplains	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	815.08	819.75	814.75	807.08	792.08	777.75	790.75	790.75
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Members per yearbook (+ guess) (Actual 1989-1992, guess after 1992)	119868	116670	114602	111326	108600	106000	106000	103400
Members per minister	147	142	141	138	137	136	134	131
Central costs (in thousands of £s)								
MoM	7190	8277	8966	10830	12388	12739	13071	13550
General	1778	1949	2351	2553	2920	3172	3106	3188
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	8968	10226	11317	13383	15308	15911	16177	16738
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Annual increase								
Ministers paid		0.57	-0.61	-0.94	-1.86		-0.17	0.00
Members		-2.67	-1.70	-2.93	-2.45		-2.39	-2.45
Central costs								
MoM		15.12	8.32	20.79	14.39		5.51	3.66
General		1.91	3.93	1.78	2.74		1.22	0.51
Total		14.03	10.67	18.26	14.38		5.68	3.47

United Reformed Church
 Departmental Accounts
 January-December 1993

	Actual Jan-Dec 1992	Budget Jan-Dec 1992	Variance Jan-Dec 1992	Actual Jan-Dec 1993	Revised Budget 1993	Variance Jan-Dec 1993	Budget 1994	Estimate 1994	Variance 1994	Draft Budget 1995
INCOME										
Ministry & Mission Fund	13145001	13176000	-30999	14961686	14957000	4686	15591000	15594000	3000	16122000
Dividends	95892	102000	-6108	91849	98000	-6151	96000	95000	-1000	98000
Interest	183117	105000	78117	186462	150000	36462	150000	150000	0	155000
URC Insurance Company Covenant	35230	30000	5230	35338	34000	1338	34000	35000	1000	36000
Memorial Hall Trust Grant								248000	248000	235000
Sundry Income	1811	2000	-189	1575	2000	-425	2000	2000	0	2000
TOTAL INCOME	13461051	13415000	46051	15276910	15241000	35910	15873000	16124000	251000	16648000
EXPENDITURE										
Departmental Costs										
Central Secretariat	95685	86000	-9685	91372	90991	-381	97000	96600	400	99235
General Church Costs	86559	92000	5441	99281	105500	6219	115000	118300	-3300	115700
Assembly	59403	56000	-3403	57300	62000	4700	65000	60800	4200	61300
Ecumenical Grants	80517	83000	2483	101596	98800	-2796	99000	101090	-2090	104818
Moderators	287423	270000	-17423	316755	329560	12805	354000	342200	11800	354250
Ministries	140413	132000	-8413	208833	252614	43781	264000	226100	37900	231900
Faith and Life	322135	295000	-27135	360668	368866	8198	382680	383900	-1220	383850
Advocacy	40205	37000	-3205	38169	41402	3233	44000	41700	2300	44550
World Church and Mission	376903	397000	20097	362025	372949	10924	393300	404200	-10900	417100
Church and Society	59546	69000	9454	60313	73510	13197	80000	77220	2780	79150
Finance	164273	168000	3727	175696	170743	-4953	176876	173100	3776	177150
Professional Fees	45500	37000	-8500	54680	41000	-13680	42000	50600	-8600	49000
Communication and Supply	98701	121000	22299	121409	137058	15649	127144	114150	12994	110150
Information Service	10304	5000	-5304	4067	5300	1233	7000	5600	1400	5600
Central Office Costs	142876	143000	124	144194	141218	-2976	148000	143300	4700	146983
Savings to be made										
	2010443	1991000	-19443	2196358	2291511	95153	2395000	2338860	56140	2380736
MoM Cont to Ministerial staff sal	-233300	-211000	22300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL COSTS	1777143	1780000	2857	2196358	2291511	95153	2395000	2338860	56140	2380736
Maintenance of the Ministry	10879000	10879000	0	12241428	12120000	-121428	12603000	12940000	-337000	13416000
General Allocations										
CWM	549705	530000	-19705	580125	576000	-4125	591000	576000	15000	576000
Ministerial Training	206000	206000	0	270000	270000	0	302000	302000	0	345000
Welfare	20000	20000	0	20000	20000	0	20000	20000	0	20000
TOTAL ALLOCATIONS	775705	756000	-19705	870125	866000	-4125	913000	898000	15000	941000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13431848	13415000	-16848	15307911	15277511	-30400	15911000	16176860	-265860	16737736
SURPLUS(+)/DEFICIT(-)	29203	0	29203	-31001	-36511	5510	-38000	-52860	-14860	-89736



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

Committees

of the

General Assembly

**A report to the General Assembly
with proposals for an integrated
committee structure to serve the
Assembly, Synods, District Councils
and Churches in an ecumenical age**

Resolution 1

General Assembly accepts the report of the Mission Council on Committees of the General Assembly and agrees to its implementation by 31 December 1994.

Resolution 2

This will deal with any consequential alterations to the Structure of the URC (Eg 2 (5) Manual p.26 "The GA shall also set up departments and appoint standing committees..."

Resolution 3

Calling on the Mission Council to consult with Synods on the future pattern of provincial and district committees.

Background

1.1 The present Assembly committee structure was agreed in 1972 and took account of the committees and staff serving the Congregational Church of England and Wales and the Presbyterian Church of England. The committees were grouped into four departments: World Church & Mission, Church & Society, Finance & Administration and Church Life. In 1984 the latter was divided into Ministries, and Faith & Life. There have always been a number of committees outside the departments eg Executive, Nominations, etc. In 1972 there were 27 committees with about 400 members excluding officers and ex-officio members.

1.2 At the General Assembly in 1992 it was agreed to replace the Executive Committee and five departmental central committees by the Mission Council. At the same time there were significant changes in Finance, Youth and some non-departmental committees. These changes reduced the number of committees by five and the number of people involved in committee work by about 30%. However the disadvantages were that the direct links between the departments and the synods were lost. As yet the Mission Council has neither replaced that link nor has it fulfilled the central committees' role of coordinating work within each department. This weakening of the lines of communication to Assembly committees has made it more difficult to inform churches of all that is available to help them in life and mission. The proposals in this report therefore continue the work begun by the Assembly in 1992.

1.3 It has also been argued for a number of years by some people that our structure is too cumbersome for a church of our size, that no significant reductions had been made to take account of our shrinking size and increased ecumenical co-operation. The departmental system was also criticised for

- creating competition for resources
- dealing with commitments separately
- reducing mission to a sectional interest
- being unable to decide on priorities
except at the Assembly

1.4 In responding to these problems the fundamental question is how does a conciliar national church manage its resources and affairs in an open and efficient manner within the framework of our theology? These matters were discussed early in the life of the Mission Council and, in March 1993, a group was appointed to do some preliminary work. The task was defined as being

to create an integrated, flexible and effective committee structure that serves the local church, district council, synod and General Assembly in their mission; within the contexts of our ecumenical life in the United Kingdom and in the world.

1.5 At its meeting in October 1993, the Mission Council resolved unanimously:

"... to appoint a group who in the light of the discussion in Mission Council and the work already done, to bring to the January 1994 Mission Council a plan of Assembly committees which is relevant to the life and mission of local churches, districts and synods; takes seriously the partnership of all councils of the United Reformed Church; and adequately recognises our ecumenical and world mission commitments."

1.6 The following were appointed as members of the group:

David Butler, Marlene Hunter, Malcolm Johnson, Mary Marsden, Mary Stacy and John Waller. Tony Burnham served as secretary and the group chose Mary Marsden to be the convener.

1.7 The group met four times and a preliminary report was prepared for the meeting of Mission Council in January 1994. Conveners and secretaries of present committees were invited to comment. There was also consultation with members of the staff. The group met again on two occasions. The revised report was presented to the Mission Council meeting in March 1994 and, with some amendments, it was agreed to forward it to the General Assembly

Some Principles

2.1 The Basis of Union, the Statement on the Nature, Faith and Order and the Structure of the United Reformed Church are the foundations on which any new committee structure must be built. We have found it helpful to have the following as a focus. The United Reformed Church

- ◆ exists in an ecumenical context and must have an ecumenical outlook. This is true of our commitment to other churches. It also applies to people of other faiths, the whole of society and the whole human family - including our care for the created order;
- ◆ has a distinct (but not fixed) identity within that ecumenical vision. These are two of its marks as a Reformed church:
 - it sees ministry as the work of the whole people of God,
 - it has a conciliar structure, in which debate and decision are shared under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Serving in council or committee is part of ministry;
- ◆ has an existence that is national, regional, in areas and local. Wherever we meet we are church.

Note: Here and elsewhere in this document the word 'national' is taken to mean 'to do with the life of the whole United Kingdom'. The United Reformed Church is sensitive to the fact that it exists in more than one nation and allows each part of the Church in consultation with the whole to respond appropriately to the life of the nation in which it lives.

2.2 The Church lives under the authority of the Word of God and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, and its members seek to serve in the spirit of Jesus. Its ordering should reflect the Gospel and be governed by it, so that christian people may be able to behave with freedom and responsibility. Its conciliar and committee structure will reflect mutual responsibility and accountability. As a human organisation it can learn about structures from other human organisations.

2.3 There must be a clearly understood and agreed relationship between the councils of the Church. They are not separate nor are they rivals. The relationship is one of partners, or 'members of the same body'. Committees are also members of that same body. The Basis of Union states clearly what the United Reformed Church believes about such relationships:

"The United Reformed Church gives thanks for the common life of the Church, wherein the people of God, being made members one of another, are called to love and serve one another and all people everywhere and to grow together in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Participating in the common life of the Church within the local church, they enter into the life of the Church throughout the world. With that whole Church they also share in the life of the Church in all ages and in the communion of saints have fellowship with the Church triumphant."

(Paragraph 16)

2.4 There is no reason why structures should be identical throughout the Church's life, but communication, co-operation, listening, and sharing are essential for any structure to succeed.

2.5 The misuse of power can be destructive of people and communities. The proper use of it will bring life and health. The reality of power needs to be recognised and allowed to be used within the checks and balances of the structures.

2.6 The Church should authorise and trust those it chooses to work on its behalf; expecting them to be accountable for what they say and do.

2.7 Wherever the church meets it is part of the world church which God has called into his service, and it lives and acts within the world-wide community on God's earth.

For the United Reformed Church this means continued commitment to participation in our Council for World Mission family and partnership, sharing people, ideas, prayer and money in mission; receiving and giving. It also means our participation in world and European church councils and action, and in the British and Irish ecumenical pilgrimage in the nations, regions and localities of these islands. Together in these groupings we will share in witness, prophecy and blessing in the wider community locally, nationally and internationally.

2.8 Most councils and committees will at times need to make decisions or recommendations about the life of the fellowship in their area of concern and its relationship and mission to others. At other times they need to act to train, support, encourage, or stimulate people in their discipleship. There will not always be a clear distinction between these functions. Assembly committees will have a variety of roles: administering some area of the church's common life; organising some programme activity; advising on some common concern, and the balance between roles will be different in each. Because the Church exists nationally, regionally, in areas and locally, consideration needs to be given as to where decision-taking or action is most appropriate. Normally it ought to be as near as possible to those whom it most affects.

First Steps

3.1 We looked again at Bernard Thorogood's original proposals on Central Reorganisation, the Clarke Report and one by the Forward Policy Group. We considered information gathered on overlaps in the present structure. We noted the current Methodist reorganisation, the experience of certain Council for World Mission partners and the structures of the ecumenical bodies of which we are members.

3.2 We noted the functions of the local church, district council, provincial synod and General Assembly, recognising that each has particular responsibilities to minister in that sphere of life with which it is most directly concerned. Assembly committees must not only serve the General Assembly but must also help the local churches and the other councils to carry out their functions, supporting them in their mission and their concern for unity.

3.3 As a result of the two steps above, it became clear that the committees of the Assembly must reflect the purpose of the church and the tasks that derive from it. For the United Reformed Church, the key statement of the purpose of the church is found in paragraph 11 of the Basis of Union. A more recent but very significant statement is that endorsed by the 1991 World Council of Churches Assembly in Canberra, the opening paragraphs of which are also quoted on page 7.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH AND THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

11. Within the one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church the United Reformed Church acknowledges its responsibility under God:

- to make its life a continual offering of itself and the world to God in adoration and worship through Jesus Christ;
 - to receive and express the renewing life of the Holy Spirit in each place and in its total fellowship, and there to declare the reconciling and saving power of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;
 - to live out, in joyful and sacrificial service to all in their various physical and spiritual needs, that ministry of caring, forgiving and healing love which Jesus Christ brought to all whom he met;
 - and to bear witness to Christ's rule over the nations in all the variety of their organised life.
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THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AS KOINONIA; GIFT AND CALLING

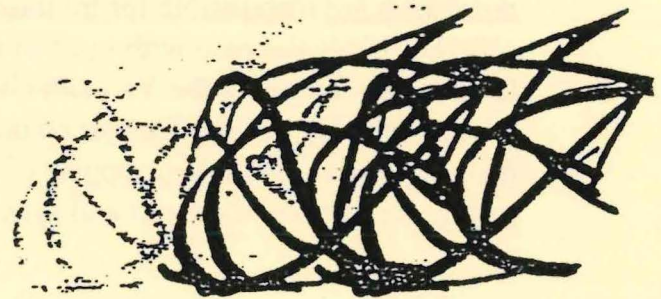
This text was agreed and adopted by the 1991 WCC Assembly at Canberra.

The purpose of God according to Holy Scripture is to gather the whole of creation under the Lordship of Christ Jesus in whom, by the power of the Holy Spirit, all are brought into communion with God (Ephesians 1).

The church is the foretaste of this communion with God and with one another. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit enable the one church to live as sign of the reign of God and servant of the reconciliation with God, promised and provided for the whole creation.

The purpose of the church is to unite people with Christ in the power of the Spirit, to manifest communion in prayer and action and thus to point to the fullness of communion with God, humanity and the whole creation in the glory of the kingdom.

The calling of the church is to proclaim reconciliation and to provide healing, to overcome divisions based on race, gender, age, culture, colour and to bring all people into communion with God.



3.4 Discussions at the Mission Council suggested that the tasks of the local church may be expressed as:

Worship
Prayer
Pastoral Care
Nurturing and Equipping Disciples
Communicating and Sharing the Gospel
Involvement in Communities
Justice, Peace, Healing and Reconciliation.

All these elements to some degree, will be present in the life of all our churches through church and elders' meetings, acts of worship, corporate activity and through members as they live and work in the community.

3.5 The tasks of district councils and provincial synods, whether as part of their own mission or in support of other councils, also fall under these headings. In addition they have other tasks including having an overview of mission opportunities and the readiness to initiate new work. Districts also have responsibility for the care of local churches, developing, preparing, deploying and supporting people for ministry, for sharing financial resources and for stimulating specialist areas of church life. Synods have responsibility for the care of district councils, for vocations, candidates and ministerial training, for the care and development of financial and property resources and for the coordination and advocacy of specialist areas of church life.

3.6 However work should not be done by the Assembly and its committees which could be overseen more appropriately by one of the other councils of the church. Some examples of this are (i) the management of Church Related Community Workers which ought to be closer to the community where they serve, i.e. by the district council; (ii) those who are responsible for training within a province ought to be accountable to the synod. This is the case with most of those involved with post-ordination, in service and lay training including the YLTO/YCWTs. Our aim has been to move the emphasis from the national, by having slimmer committees and looking for a more active involvement of the synods and districts in support of the local church and its mission. This ought to free people for service in district and synod.

The Structure

4.1 The proposal ends the division into five departments containing 20 committees, replacing them with nine standing committees and some sub-committees. In addition, four Assembly committees, presently outside the departments, remain; thirteen committees in all. Other work will be done in task groups and in the committees which advise Mission Council.

4.2 *Committees.* Committees are appointed by and are accountable to the General Assembly for particular areas of the common life of the United Reformed Church. They will support local churches, districts and synods in their ministry and mission, and they will help them act together to fulfil their witness in the world; enabling the United Reformed Church to act as a united body within an ecumenical context.

4.3 *Task Groups.* There are some pieces of work which would be better undertaken by a task group with a clear remit and a limited life. Such groups could be formed from people meeting regionally from a cluster of provinces. This might save some travelling time and allow meetings to take place in evenings. Busy people might be ready to serve on such a task group more willingly than on a committee. In order to keep a check on the number of such groups and to decide on priorities for the church, such groups would be established by Mission Council which would have a budget for such purposes.

4.4 *Consultations.* The church needs to develop the use of consultation in order to encourage involvement in decision making. Some possibilities:

- i) in the work of the Resources Planning Committee, it is essential that there should be the fullest consultation with those who are responsible in synods for financial and human resources;
- ii) other committees will need to establish links with the appropriate synod and district committees and key people in local churches. Rather than twelve people visiting London, these could be more effective if held on a regional (i.e. a number of synods collaborating) and perhaps multi-committee basis. The recent consultations held by Church and Society are an example of this on a national, single committee scale.

4.5 *Size.* The proposals indicate a reduction in size of most committees. The norm will be eight members, including a convener and secretary, with staff member(s) in attendance. It is proposed that members serve for four rather than six years. This shorter span will be a less daunting prospect for some people. Over a period it will also enable the gifts of similar numbers of people to the previous pattern to be used. This smaller size will require more careful induction of new members and greater encouragement to participate. The Nominations Committee ought to make provision for replacement of members in the event of non-attendance.

4.6 It is also assumed that committees will normally meet twice in one year and that, where appropriate, there may be one consultation.

4.7 *Sub-Committees.* The authority of Mission Council will be required for sub-committees additional to those listed.

A Guide to Committees

The number in brackets is the number of members, including convener and secretary.

5.1 Prayer & Worship (8, one of whom is also a member of Youth & Children's Work)

This committee listens to the concerns of local churches, district councils and synods about public worship and personal devotion and responds to requests for national materials and consultations. It shares ideas from national, world church and ecumenical contacts. It is responsible for the production of the Prayer Handbook and such publications as A Book of Services and Rejoice and Sing. It also oversees the link with the network on Silence and Retreats.

5.2 Discipleship & Witness (8, one of whom is also a member of Youth & Children's Work)

This committee encourages growth in faith amongst people of all ages. It will support the work of exercising pastoral care, particularly by elders, lay preachers and members of local churches. It will support the work of district councils in their pastoral oversight of the local church. It will also support the work of the local church in sharing the Gospel and stimulate districts and synods in the development of their own strategies for outreach. It will encourage churches in their participation in the Decade of Evangelism. The committee will listen to concerns raised, share information and provide appropriate support. It is responsible for the oversight of Windermere.

5.3 Church & Society (8, one of whom is also a member of Youth & Children's Work)

This committee shares information from local churches, districts, provinces and from ecumenical partners and community bodies, raising the awareness of the churches to the opportunities for such service. It also brings to the church's attention matters of justice, peace, healing and reconciliation. It will point to sources of educational material and suggest possible action to be taken by churches in the nations, regions and localities of these islands. It is responsible for Commitment for Life.

5.4 Youth & Children's Work (12)

This committee supports, encourages and promotes work among children and young people, giving oversight to Pilots, Yardley Hastings, the YLTO and YWCT programme and relating to FURY Council. It also ensures that its concerns are fully taken into account in committees 1, 2 and 3 facilitating the involvement of young people in all the councils of the church.

- 5.5 **Ecumenical** (8 plus one person sent from each of committees 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9. In order to share the experience and the responsibility, it is proposed that these representatives will attend for one year, normally the third on their main committee)

This committee encapsulates the United Reformed Church's commitment to the world church, to the British and Irish ecumenical pilgrimage, to our European setting and the world in which we live. On behalf of Mission Council, it will examine the need for a body to oversee, coordinate and develop the church's involvement with Europe, in accordance with the Assembly resolution in 1993. It also seeks to ensure that wherever the URC meets in worship, council or committee, it is aware of its partnership within the world church and the whole human family. So its membership will include members from other Assembly Committees and part of its task will be to listen to those with experience of the world church and of current affairs. It will maintain official URC links with overseas churches and international church councils, and guide URC's participation in the Council for World Mission. Through its official contact will be made with British and Irish ecumenical bodies, and it will respond to national and international events making the URC voice heard in co-operation with other churches. It is responsible for the URC's involvement in St Andrew's Hall. Because its agenda is so wide its way of working may include breaking into groups to prepare work for decision by the whole committee; and more than one member of staff will be required to take forward these decisions. The work of selecting, training, and caring for missionaries and overseeing exchange of personnel will be undertaken by the Overseas Exchange Sub-Committee. (6)

5.6 **Ministries** (8)

This committee is responsible for the ministry of word and sacrament, CRCWs and Lay Preachers. It is concerned with numbers, recruitment, training, central care and conditions of service, chaplaincies in industry, higher and further education and in the armed forces, and special ministries. It will oversee the work of the National Assessment Board, whose convener will be a member of the committee. It will also be assisted by three sub-committees:

- i) Accreditation. (6) Maintaining the Roll of Ministers, this sub-committee will accredit all those applying for inclusion after training or coming from other denominations.
- ii) Maintenance of the Ministry (6 including the Treasurer of the Church) will advise on the level of stipend and on ministers' conditions of service through the Plan for Partnership. It will also be concerned for pensions through its associated Pensions sub-committee.
- iii) Retired Ministers' Housing (6) will continue the work of the existing committee in association with the URC Retired Ministers' Housing Society Ltd.

5.7 Training (8)

This was one of the most difficult issues. There are good arguments for giving the responsibility for all training, both lay and ministerial, to one committee. All God's people, ordained and lay, need to be equipped for their particular ministry. This points to the need for common oversight of training resources and a shared interest in methods. The possibilities of integrating training are already being explored. This points to a single committee. On the other hand, there are different responsibilities in training ministers, lay preachers, elders, CRCWs, members, young people, etc. There are a variety of resources : Westminster, St Andrews and other colleges, Windermere, Yardley Hastings, courses (for ministers, lay preachers, youth leaders, etc.). This seemed a large and varied agenda for one committee.

Mission Council decided the issue by agreeing that 'there should be a place in the new structure for one committee to oversee all training'. It is suggested therefore that the task is to provide training in accordance with the needs of the other committees. For example, it would work in partnership with the Ministries Committee. The latter would identify the training needs, the Training Committee would propose how these ought to be met in the light of (i) integration with other training, (ii) ecumenical possibilities, (iii) appropriate methods, and (iv) available resources. It is proposed that, noting the Review of Training, responsibility for oversight of the resources remains with the appropriate committee.

This Committee will encourage and enable the integration of the training of the whole people of God seeking to influence: the philosophy and methodology of learning; the core content of courses; the deployment of resources. It gives direct support and acts in partnership with the Prayer & Worship, Discipleship & Witness, Church & Society and Youth & Children's Work Committees as they respond to the needs of local churches in training matters. In the same way it collaborates with all other committees and task groups, in particular Ecumenical, Ministries, Doctrine, Advocacy & Stewardship.

5.8 Doctrine (8)

This committee deals with all questions about the doctrine of the URC, the doctrinal aspect of inter-church and inter-faith relations and ecumenical discussions on Faith and Order. The committee will also advise the Assembly, its officers and committees on these matters.

5.9 Finance (8)

This committee is responsible for the proper keeping of accounts and records, the oversight of all funds and properties, and will give advice to the Treasurer on all financial matters.

5.10 Communications and Editorial (8)

This committee is responsible for the setting and maintenance of standards of all publications. It acts as the Editorial and Management Board of REFORM, and is responsible for media relations.

5.11 Nominations (14)

This committee nominates to Assembly the names of people to serve as conveners and secretaries of all Committees, and as members of those committees. It also suggests names of URC representatives on other bodies. It recommends the people to make up appointments groups for provincial moderators and Assembly appointed staff. No changes in this committee are proposed. (The Nominations to Teaching Staff at Westminster College will be set up by the Nominations Committee, as and when necessary. Its convener and secretary will be the officers of the committee responsible for ministerial training and will also include the Principal and appropriate members relating to the subject(s) to be taught.)

5.12 Pastoral Committee (8)

This committee will consider the cases of ministers which are referred to it by District Councils or Provincial Synods their officers or committees. (See GA 1983 Reports, pp 5 and 6). By a Welfare sub-committee (2), it will also deal with all welfare and emergency matters including the use of welfare funds. Because of the nature of many of the cases, it is a confidential committee which will report, in general terms only, directly to the General Assembly.

5.13 Assembly Arrangements (8)

This committee plans and budgets for future assemblies. No changes in its role are proposed. However its place as a committee of the Assembly is confirmed.

A Guide to Task Groups

6.1 (These are given a clear remit and set up to meet a particular objective within a short period normally not longer than two years. Normally the membership will be between 4 and 6. Those presently in existence will not be reduced in size. However retiring members will not be replaced until the agreed size has been reached.)

6.2 A. Advocacy & Stewardship

It is recommended that this is not a standing committee but continues with its present role until either 1 April 1999 or when the present Secretary of Advocacy leaves his post. As stewardship is a continuing task, the group will suggest an appropriate committee focus for the work at the end of its life as a task group.

6.3 B. Mission & Other Faiths

Over the years the Mission and Other Faiths Committee has played an important role both within the URC and ecumenically. Yet this agenda needs less of a denominational response than many others. Therefore it is proposed that a serious attempt be made to develop further the existing cooperation with other churches, in particular through the CCBIs Commission for Relations with People of Other Faiths and to explore how these concerns may be fed into the councils of the URC. In order to give this a high profile, it is proposed that this concern be carried forward, not by a standing committee, but by a task group. The group would, for the time being, continue the work of the committee but would report on the future, not later than General Assembly 1996.

6.4 C. Health & Healing

This group will complete outstanding work undertaken by the previous committee. In addition it will explore how the URC may continue to express its concerns in those matters ecumenically. This group will report not later than General Assembly 1996.

6.5 D. Patterns of Ministry

This group is due to make a preliminary report to the General Assembly in 1994 and a final report in 1995.

6.6 E. Resource Sharing

This group has been set up by Mission Council to make a preliminary report in 1995 suggesting a practical, radical and staged approach to resource sharing within the URC at national, provincial, district and local level, which has prospects of acceptance in all councils of the church.

6.7 F. Youth & Children's Work

There is an issue as to whether Youth & Children's Work should have a committee in its own right or be integrated with the appropriate committees. It is proposed that there should be a separate committee but that a task group explores how work can become a natural part of the work of committees 1, 2 and 3 and to explore all possible areas of co-operation with other denominations. This will report to General Assembly in 1996.

A Guide to Mission Council Advisory Committees

8.1 Resource Planning (6)

This group will prepare a rolling five year plan which takes account of possible changes

in society and in the life of the church on which the allocation of resources may be based. It will be responsible for preparing budgets. It will hold one or two consultations with the financial representatives of the Synods each year. It will also consult with those responsible for human resources. Mission Council will make all recommendations to the Assembly about the use of resources.

8.2 Staffing (5)

The committee considers any Assembly post due to become vacant, or proposals for new posts and recommends to Mission Council whether this post should continue or be created. No changes are proposed in the role. However in the light of the creation of a Resource Planning Committee, the need for this committee ought to be reviewed by Mission Council after one year.

8.3 Grants & Loans (5)

The group advises certain Assembly Committees on grants and loans from central funds in support of local ministry or projects designed to develop the outreach of the church. In so far as this is a co-ordinating group, the new structure might offer other ways of doing this. Therefore the Mission Council will review the need for this group after one year.

8.4 Mission Council Advisory Group (8)

The group plans the meetings of Mission Council and the follow-up necessary and provides personal support and advice for the Assembly Moderator and the General Secretary. No changes are proposed in the role. However the five departmental conveners will be replaced by the treasurer and two committee conveners elected by Mission Council.

Committee Officers

9.1 *Committee Conveners.* In the past, departmental conveners were responsible to the General Assembly and the Mission Council for the work of committees in their department. Together they have been a significant leadership group, comparable to provincial moderators. They have also had a close working relationship with senior members of staff. Under these proposals, conveners of Assembly standing committees would be members of the General Assembly and would be directly responsible there for the work of the committee. In addition, the conveners of all (except the Pastoral Committee) would be members of the Mission Council. This would not involve any significant change in the size of the Mission Council.

9.2 Conveners will:

- ◆ take the chair at committee meetings and, with the secretary and appropriate staff members, oversee the agenda and ensure that arrangements are made to follow up decisions;

- ◆ represent and speak for the committee at General Assembly and, where appropriate, at Mission Council;
- ◆ ensure that, whenever possible, there is full ecumenical involvement and consultation;
- ◆ encourage consultation and communication within the area of their remit with local churches, district councils and synods;
- ◆ seek to achieve full co-operation between the committee and other committees and between the staff;
- ◆ give regular support to staff members working in their area of responsibility.

9.3 *Committee Secretaries.* These need not necessarily be members of the staff. The use of others in this role will enable more people to take responsibility for the Assembly's work. It will also give the possibility of deepening the experience of those with particular concerns and it would ease the office work load of staff.

Under these proposals secretaries will:

- ◆ be responsible for the records, mailings and correspondence of committee meetings;
- ◆ liaise with the General Secretary over agenda items and time at General Assembly and Mission Council.

9.4 *Staff.* Following the Mission Council In January 1994 there has been general consultation with all the executive staff and more detailed discussions with those directly affected by the changes.

It has been noted that staff secretaries

- i) are accountable to the General Assembly, as represented by the General Secretary and, in relation to work for their key committee(s), to the appropriate convener(s);
- ii) are to work collaboratively a) with the conveners of the committees which they serve and b) with other staff;
- iii) will have a title to describe their role;
- iv) will be the lead staff person in relation to at least one committee. They will often play a subsidiary staff role on other committees;

- v) are expected to maintain relations with their ecumenical colleagues and to seek new ways for the denominations to work together.

Assembly Committees and Local Churches, Districts and Synods

10.1 The Assembly's committee structure ought to be related to those of the other councils of the church. Assembly committees undertake work for the whole church. Therefore there need to be opportunities for listening, consultation, stimulating and involvement. The proposals for task groups and consultations are, in part, aimed at achieving these ends. There are also other responsibilities:

10.2 Synods may collaborate together to share experiences and undertake joint work. Already there are often joint committees in the area of youth leadership training; there is also the meeting of PLATO (Provincial Legal, and Administrative Trust Officers) which deals with matters normally not directly the concern of the Assembly.

10.3. Staff should be encouraged to develop consultations and assist with regional task groups. On a rotating basis, they ought to visit synods for the purposes of listening, meeting people and offering assistance when this is requested. If these activities, which are already undertaken in some ways, are increased, then it may require a reduction in their present work load. It does not make the most effective use of staff time simply to fill pulpits on a Sunday.

10.4 There are four representatives from each synod on the Mission Council. In the two residential meetings, time will be set aside for groups to meet with conveners and staff to consider the work of particular committees.

10.5 In the proposals, the Prayer & Worship, Discipleship & Witness and Church & Society Committees focus on the main tasks of the local church. Through them is to be expressed a concern for Youth & Children's Work. All is within an ecumenical context in the widest sense. These three committees will also have a concern for the tasks of district, synod and Assembly but, from the perspective of the local congregation, these three are the ones to help them in their life and work.

10.6 The appropriate committee structure for synods and districts is a matter for those councils and outside our remit. There are also differences between provinces which make it better for some to focus on synod committees while others focus at district level. However it is important that synod and district committees can relate well to Assembly committees. The Mission Council will therefore consult with synods to achieve agreement on a common but flexible pattern, which must reflect our ecumenical context.

10.7 In any discussions, the group expects that the following would be among the possibilities considered:

- Synod Committees
- i) An Executive (General Purposes or Mission Council) which would support the work of the synod, co-ordinate the work of district councils, be responsible for ecumenical work and advise the synod.
 - ii) A Local Church Committee : a focus for Prayer & Worship, Discipleship & Witness, Church & Society and for our concern for our Council for World Mission partners.
 - iii) Ministries
 - iv) Finance

District Committees

- i) An Executive
- ii) A local Church committee
- iii) A Pastoral Committee (in some districts this work would be undertaken by the Executive).



ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEES

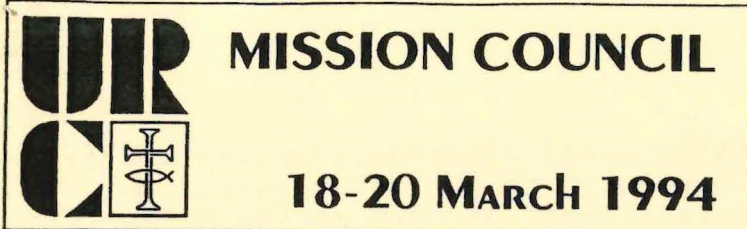
1. Prayer & Worship
2. Discipleship & Witness
- Windermere Policy & Planning
3. Church & Society
4. Youth & Children's Work
- FURY Council
5. Ecumenical
- Overseas Exchange
6. Ministries
- Accreditation
- MOM/Pensions
- Retired Ministers' Housing
7. Training
8. Doctrine
9. Finance
10. Communications & Editorial
11. Nominations
12. Pastoral
- Welfare
13. Assembly Arrangements

TASK GROUPS

- A. Advocacy & Stewardship
(1999)
- B. Mission & Other Faiths
(1996)
- C. Health & Healing
(1996)
- D. Patterns of Ministry
(1995)
- E. Resource Sharing
(1995)
- F. Youth & Children's Work
(1996)

MISSION COUNCIL
ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- (i) Resource Planning
- (ii) Staffing
- (iii) Grants & Loans
- (iv) Mission Council Advisory
Group



THIS PAPER SHOWS THE AMENDMENTS TO THE PRESENT TEXT AS PRINTED IN
THE MANUAL INCLUDING THOSE APPROVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(1991)

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF
THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. (1) The Assembly shall meet at least once in every year. The scheduled meeting in each year, the place and dates of which shall be determined by a preceding Assembly, shall be the Annual Meeting of the Assembly. Any meeting of the Assembly other than the Annual Meeting shall be a special meeting.
- (2) A special meeting of the Assembly may be convened by the **Mission Council** or by the Moderator of the General Assembly.
- (3) All meetings of the Assembly may be convened and held as provided by Part II of these rules.
- (4) The Roll of Assembly shall be made up by the **General Secretary**. District councils shall send to the **General Secretary**, either directly or through the synod office, the names and addresses of their representatives to the forthcoming Assembly so as to reach the **General Secretary** not later than 10 weeks before the meeting of the Assembly. Any necessary amendments to the list shall be notified to the **General Secretary** not later than 4 weeks before the meeting of the Assembly, at which time the roll shall be held to be complete.

When a district council cannot fill all its allotted places at Assembly, its vacant seats may be filled from other district councils within the province in consultation with the synod clerk and bearing in mind the need to balance lay and ministerial representation.

BUSINESS OF THE ASSEMBLY

2. (1) Notice of any meeting of the Assembly shall be sent by post to each member as defined by article 2 (5) (a) to (h) of the Basis of Union not less than 14 clear days before the date of meeting and shall contain a statement of the business to be transacted and the reports to be received. No business other than that specified in the notice calling the meeting shall be transacted except business accepted by the Assembly on the advice of the **Assembly Arrangements Committee**.

(2) The General Secretary shall dispatch to every member with the notice of the meeting a registration card. No member of the Assembly shall speak or vote at the Assembly unless possessing such a card and unless, when required to do so by the Moderator or the Moderator's deputy, displaying it.

(3) The Assembly shall at its Annual Meeting appoint the members of the Assembly Committees all of which shall be constituted in accordance with the decision of the Assembly. Each committee shall discharge the functions assigned to it by the Assembly and report annually to the Assembly.

MODERATOR

3. (1) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected by ballot in accordance with these Rules. The Moderator shall serve for one year commencing at the Annual Assembly in the year following the Annual Meeting at which the report of the election is received in accordance with Rule 3 (10). The year of office shall be deemed to begin with the induction of the Moderator and shall continue until the Moderator's successor is inducted into office.

(2) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall normally be a minister but any person who has been admitted to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church and whose name is included on the membership roll of a local church is eligible for nomination.

(3) Nomination for election as Moderator of the General Assembly shall be made by a synod, the consent of the nominee not being required. The nomination shall be in writing under the hand of the clerk of the synod and received by the General Secretary not later than **the 31st March immediately preceding the Annual Meeting of the Assembly.**

(4) The General Secretary shall forthwith send to each person nominated a list of the nominations. Any nominee may, within ten days of the receipt of this list, withdraw from nomination by notice in writing to the General Secretary.

(5) If after the period for withdrawal there is only one nomination, this nomination shall be placed before the Assembly **and voted upon by secret ballot.**

(6) If the number of those who have been nominated and have not withdrawn is or exceeds two, the election shall be by a secret ballot according to the principle of the single transferable vote. All members of the Assembly shall be entitled to vote. They shall vote by indicating their

preference by figures 1,2,3 and so forth, but no voting paper shall be invalidated by the absence of alternative choices. If the tellers find that no name has an absolute majority of first choices, the second choices of those who gave as their first choice the name securing the smallest number of such choices shall be added to the first choices for other names. If necessary this process shall continue until one of the names has an absolute majority of votes cast.

(7) Members of the Assembly shall vote by means of a voting paper containing the name, the usual designation and the church of membership of each of those accepting nomination which shall be sent by the General Secretary by ordinary post to each such member before the commencement of the Annual Meeting of the Assembly. Brief indication of the reasons for the nomination, as supplied by the synod, may be circulated with the ballot paper. **The General Assembly may in any case authorise further means of informing its members about those accepting nomination.**

(8) The General Assembly shall vote to elect the Moderator of the Assembly by secret ballot as an item of business following prayer on either the second or third day of the meeting of the Assembly. The ballot boxes shall be delivered to the tellers by whom alone they shall be opened. They shall report the result of the ballot to the Assembly at a **later** session.

(9) As soon as the voting papers have been examined and the result of the poll ascertained, the voting papers shall be closed up under the seal of the tellers or any two of them, and shall be retained by the **General Secretary** for one month after the election and shall then be destroyed.

(10) At each Annual Meeting the Assembly shall appoint, upon the nomination of the Nominations Committee, three tellers to be responsible for the ballot for the ensuing year. The counting of the votes cast shall take place in secret under their supervision and control and they shall:

(i) inform the General Secretary of the name of the person elected and the General Secretary shall thereupon individually inform those nominated whether or not they have been elected.

(ii) report to the Assembly the name of the person elected, the number of papers received and the number of papers which were invalid.

(11) If any of the tellers appointed by the Assembly shall become incapable of acting the Moderator shall fill any such vacancy or vacancies and report that action to the Assembly.

(12) Upon receipt of the report of the tellers by the Assembly the person elected shall thereupon become duly elected Moderator for the year commencing at the next Annual Meeting of the Assembly.

GENERAL SECRETARY

4. (1) The General Secretary who shall be a minister of the United Reformed Church shall be appointed after nomination in accordance with Part 7 of these Rules for a period of seven years renewable for the same term or such shorter period as the Assembly may determine.

PROVINCES

5. (1) The area of the church in the United Kingdom shall be divided into such number of provinces as the Assembly on the recommendation of the **Mission Council** may from time to time determine.
- (2) In each province there shall be a provincial synod. A provincial synod may constitute such committees and subcommittees as are required for the conduct of its business and may delegate to those committees or subcommittees such of its powers as it considers appropriate.
- (3) Each province shall be divided into districts whose number and boundaries the provincial synod shall have power to determine for time to time, in consultation with the district councils and local churches concerned, all such changes to be reported to the General Assembly.

PROVINCIAL MODERATORS

6. (1) A moderator for each province who shall be a minister of the United Reformed Church shall be appointed by the General Assembly and be responsible to it. Moderators shall be nominated for appointment in accordance with Part 7 of these rules.
- (2) (i) Each moderator shall be appointed for such term not exceeding seven years as the General Assembly shall in each case think fit, beginning (unless the General Assembly in special circumstances determines otherwise) on the first day of September following the Assembly at which the appointment is made, subject always to the provisions of Rule 6 (2) (iii).
- (2) (ii) The General Assembly shall have power to determine any such appointment during its term or to renew any such appointment for successive terms of not more than five years each, subject always to the provisions of Rule 6 (2) (iii).

(2) (iii) Moderators shall not be eligible to hold office after the 31st day of August following the elapse of six months from their sixty-fifth birthday unless the General Assembly in special circumstances determines otherwise.

(3) The Moderators shall submit an annual report to the Assembly.

Note

The amendment to rule 6. (2) (iii) shall take effect immediately, pending the determination of the constitutional amendment removing the sentence in the URC structure which refers to the age of sixty-seven years, except that a review group may until such determination propose to the General Assembly, in respect of special circumstances, that the previous wording of this Rule of Procedure and of the relevant paragraph of the Structure be followed to permit longer service.

NOMINATIONS

7. (1) General Secretary

The General Assembly shall constitute a special committee consisting of two representatives appointed by each provincial synod, the Moderator of the General Assembly, the conveners of each of the five departments*, the convener of the Nominations Committee and four persons selected by the Mission Council with authority to make a nomination for appointment as General Secretary to the Assembly. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall take the chair; the Committee shall appoint a secretary either from its own membership or in (non-voting) addition to its membership. In any emergency the Mission Council shall be empowered to set up this committee.

*Note: If a new committee structure removes the five department conveners, the persons "selected by Mission Council" shall be increased to "nine" with the addition after "Mission Council" of "five of whom shall be Conveners of Assembly Standing Committees"

(2) Provincial Moderators

All appointments by the General Assembly to the office of provincial moderator shall be made on the nomination of a committee consisting of ten members appointed by the provincial synod concerned and ten members appointed by the Mission Council. The Mission Council shall also name the convener.

In selecting this representation the provincial synod shall have regard to the need to make their selection as widely representative of the districts as possible.

Note: For the procedure to be followed in the appointment and reappointment of provincial moderators, see Reports to Assembly 1986 p.58-59.

GENERAL

8. (1) The Standing Orders set out in Section 4 of the Manual shall apply to all meetings of the Assembly and, in so far as they are applicable, to meetings of provincial synods, district councils and their committees.

(2) The General Assembly may appoint a Clerk of Assembly as distinct from the General Secretary. In that case the Nominations Committee shall submit a name to the General Assembly for appointment as Clerk, for five years in the first instance, renewable for a maximum additional period of five years, but ensuring an overlap with a period of service of the General Secretary.

(3) If any church member wishes to appeal against a decision of any council in accordance with paragraph 5 of the structure the rules of procedure set out below shall apply.

RULES OF PROCEDURE ON APPEALS

1. Any church or church member wishing to appeal against a decision of any council shall within ten days of the making of the decision request in writing the secretary of that council to supply a written copy of the minute of the decision. This copy shall be supplied within ten days and within ten days of the receipt of such minute the appellant shall notify in writing the secretary of the body concerned of such desire to appeal.

2. Where an appeal is against the decision of any council, its effect shall be to stay the action of the council concerned pending consideration of the matter by the wider council to which it is referred and the decision of that council upon it.

3. An appellant shall have the right and may be required to appear at a meeting of the wider council when the matter is under review.

4. The council against whose decision there is appeal shall also be represented in support of its decision.

5. All appeals shall be accompanied by all relevant records and papers.

6. Appellants shall be entitled to see such papers as they deem necessary in order to bring the subject of their appeal before the wider council.

7. Councils hearing appeals proceed in the matter in the following order:

(i) call for and read minutes and papers relevant to the case

(ii) hear the parties to the difference or dispute, viz.

(a) every appellant,

(b) the appointed representatives of the council whose actions are under question.

(iii) give members of the council hearing the appeal an opportunity of putting questions to the parties through the presiding officer.

(iv) consider and decide upon the matter in the absence of the parties.

(v) the parties being recalled, intimate the decision to them by the presiding officer who asks them whether they acquiesce.

(vi) through the clerk/secretary supply copies of the decision in writing to the parties.

8. Any such difference or dispute may with the consent of all parties concerned be referred to a committee or the moderator of the province for decision but if any of the parties refuses to accept such a reference the case must be heard by the full council.

9. There can be no appeal arising from decisions of the General Assembly whose decisions are final and binding upon the members and councils of the United Reformed Church.

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR ACCESS TO ASSEMBLY BY NAMED PARTIES

When a resolution, which directly concerns the life, status or witness of a named member or minister of the United Reformed Church, a named local church or a church institution is brought to the Assembly by an assembly committee or provincial synod, and the individual or group feels aggrieved thereby,

1. the individual or group may request the Clerk, not less than seven days before the opening of Assembly, for a hearing,

2. the individual or two representatives of the group will be received, will be permitted to speak and will have their travel costs within the United Kingdom paid,

3. and the time allowance for speaking will be equal in aggregate to that of the persons proposing the motion. Those speaking will follow the proposers at the start of the debate and precede the proposer at the end of the debate.

4. An individual appellant may be accompanied by one other person whose name and status shall be made known to the Assembly and who may be permitted by the Moderator to speak if the appellant requests this.



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS ARE IN BOLD TYPE

Standing Orders of the Assembly

Notes a) These standing orders are amended in accordance with suggestions made by the Clerk of the Assembly under rule 12b after discussion by the Mission Council. They are subject to decision by the Assembly at its opening session in 1994.

b) It seems best to use "motions" throughout these rules, rather than "resolutions"

c) References to Departments have been removed; any motions from Departments as consortia of committees are covered by the reference to "committees". In this respect the Mission Council is a committee of the General Assembly.

d) Amendments are in bold type, except the changes explained in b and c.

1. The Agenda of the Assembly

At its meetings the Assembly shall consider reports and draft motions prepared by its Committees or by Provincial Synods, and motions and amendments of which due notice has been given submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

The Mission Council, through its Assembly Arrangements Committee, shall prepare before each meeting of the Assembly a Draft Order of Business, and submit it to the Assembly as early as convenient in the programme.

The motions arising from any report or section thereof shall be taken in the following order:

- (i) motions by the relevant Committee or Synod of which due notice has been given under rule 2a or 2b.
- (ii) motions of which due notice has been given under rule 2c, related to the report.
- (iii) duly seconded motions submitted by individual members of the Assembly under rule 2d or 3b, related to the report.

If notice has been given of two or more motions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same motion, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the Clerk.

Motions under rules 2b, 2c and 2d which are not related to any report shall be taken at a point determined by the Assembly in considering the draft Order of Business, or on a motion from the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to amend their place in the Order of Business.

2. Presentation of Business

- 2a. All reports of Committees, together with the draft motions arising therefrom, shall be delivered to the General Secretary by a date to be annually determined, so that they may be printed and circulated to members in time for consideration before the date of the Assembly meeting.
- 2b. A Provincial Synod may deliver to the General Secretary not less than six weeks before the commencement of the annual meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion for consideration at the Assembly. This notice shall include the names of those appointed to propose and second the motion at the Assembly. If the motion introduces new business to the Assembly, the synod may, subject to the agreement of the General Secretary and the Convener of the **Assembly Arrangements Committee** and at its own expense, circulate a statement in support.
- 2c. A local church or District Council wishing to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly shall submit the motion to its Provincial Synod for consideration and, if **the Synod so decides**, transmission to the Assembly, at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with Standing Order 2b above. In the case of a local church the motion must be submitted to the Synod through the District Council.
- 2d. A member of the Assembly may deliver to the General Secretary not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting of the Assembly a notice in writing of a motion (which notice must include the name of a seconder) to be included in the Assembly agenda. If the subject matter of such a notice of motion appears to the General Secretary to be an infringement of the rights of a Synod or a District Council through which the matter could properly have been raised, the General Secretary shall inform the member accordingly and bring the matter before the **Assembly Arrangements Committee** which shall advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.
- 2e. Proposals for amendments to the Basis and Structure of the URC, which may be made by the Mission Council or a Committee of the General Assembly or a Provincial Synod, shall be in the hands of the General Secretary not later than 12 weeks before the opening of the Assembly.

The General Secretary, in addition to the normal advice to members of the Assembly, shall, as quickly as possible, inform all Synod clerks of the proposed amendment.

3. Motions and Amendments

- 3a. A report presented to the Assembly by a Committee or Synod, under rule 1, shall be received for debate, unless notice has been duly given under rule 2d of a motion to refer back to that Committee or Synod the whole or part of the report and its attached motion(s). Such a motion for reference back shall be debated and voted upon before the relevant report is itself debated. To carry such a motion two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. When a report has been received for debate, and before any motions consequent upon it are proposed, any member may speak to a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion.
- 3b. During the meeting of the Assembly and on the report of a Committee, notice (including the names of proposer and seconder) shall be given to the Clerk of any new motions which arise from the material of the report, and of any amendments which affect the substance of motions already presented. The Moderator shall decide whether such motion or amendment requires to be circulated in writing to members before it is discussed by the Assembly. During the course of the debate a new motion or amendment may be stated orally without supporting speech in order to ascertain whether a member is willing to second it.
- 3c. No motion or amendment shall be spoken to by its proposer, debated, or put to the Assembly unless it is known that there is a seconder, except that motions presented on behalf of a Committee, of which printed notice has been given, do not need to be seconded.
- 3d. A seconder may second without speaking and, by declaring the intention of doing so, reserve the right of speaking until a later period in the debate.
- 3e. It shall not be in order to move a **motion** or amendment which:
- (i) contravenes any part of the Basis of Union, or
 - (ii) involves the church in expenditure without prior consideration by the appropriate committee, or
 - (iii) pre-empts discussion of a matter to be considered later in the agenda, or
 - (iv) amends ~~and~~ **reverses** a decision reached by the Assembly at ~~the~~ preceding two **annual meetings** unless the Moderator, Clerk and General Secretary together decide that changed circumstances or new evidence justify earlier reconsideration of the matter.

- 4c. Secretaries of Committees and full-time **Executive Secretaries** who are not members of Assembly may speak on the report of a Committee for which they have responsibility at the request of the Convener concerned. They may speak on other reports with the consent of the Moderator.
- 4d. In each debate, whether on a motion or on an amendment, no one shall address the Assembly more than once, except that at the close of each debate the proposer of the motion or the amendment, as the case may be, shall have the right to reply, but must strictly confine the reply to answering previous speakers and must not introduce new matter. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or the amendment.
- 4e. The foregoing standing order (4d.) shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.
- 4f. When the Order of Business includes the presentation of reports or sections of reports concerning past work of Committees or Synods which are to be open to question, comment or discussion but without introductory speeches, the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall propose at the beginning of such a presentation a maximum time for the consideration of the group of reports and of any particular report (e.g. 60 minutes for the group and not more than 15 minutes for any particular report). Such a motion from the Convener shall be open to amendment or to an extension of the timings by the Moderator.

5. Closure of Debate

- 5a. In the course of the business any member may move that the question under consideration be not put. Sometimes described as "the previous question" or "next business", this motion takes precedence over every motion before the Assembly. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded and the proposer of the motion or amendment under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately end and the Assembly shall proceed to the next business.
- 5b. In the course of any discussion, any member may move that the question be now put. This is sometimes described as "the closure motion". If the Moderator senses that there is a wish or need to close a debate, the Moderator may ask whether any member wishes so to move; the Moderator may not simply declare a debate closed. Provided that it appears to the Moderator that the motion is a fair use of this rule, the vote shall be taken upon it immediately it has been seconded. When an amendment is under discussion, this motion shall apply only to that amendment. To carry this motion, two

thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. The mover of the original motion or amendment, as the case may be, retains the right of reply before the vote is taken on the motion or amendment.

5c. During the course of a debate on a motion any member may move that decision on this motion be deferred to the next Assembly. This rule does not apply to debates on amendments since the Assembly needs to decide the final form of a motion before it can responsibly vote on deferral. The motion then takes precedence over other business. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded and the proposer of the motion under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule or that deferral would have the effect of annulling the motion. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. At the discretion of the Moderator, the General Secretary may be instructed by a further motion, duly seconded, to refer the matter for consideration by other councils and/or by one or more committees of the Assembly. The General Secretary shall provide for the deferred motion to be re-presented at the next Annual Meeting of the General Assembly.

5d. The motions described in Standing Orders 5a, 5b and 5c above are exceptions to Standing Order 3c, in that they may be moved and spoken to without the proposer having first obtained and announced the consent of a seconder. They must, however, be seconded before being put to the vote. Precedence as between motions under 5a, 5b and 5c is determined by the fact that after one of them is before the Assembly no other of them can be moved until that one has been dealt with.

6. Voting

6a. Voting on any motion whose effect is to alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, the Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church, is governed by paragraph 3(1) and (2) of the Structure.

6b. Other motions before the Assembly shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Assembly present and voting as indicated by a show of voting cards, except

(a) If the Assembly decides before the vote that a paper ballot be the method of voting or

(b) if, the show or cards indicating a very close vote, the Moderator decides, or a member of Assembly proposes and the Assembly agrees that a paper ballot be the method of voting.

6c. To provide for voting in the case of a paper ballot, and to assist in taking a count of votes when the Moderator decides is necessary, the Nominations Committee shall appoint tellers for each Assembly.

7. Questions

7a. A member may, if two days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Convener of any Committee any question on any matter relating to the business of the Assembly to which no reference is made in any report before the Assembly.

7b. A member may, when given opportunity by the Moderator, ask the presenter of any report before the Assembly a question seeking additional information or explanation relating to matters contained within the report.

7c. Questions asked under standing orders 7a. and 7b. shall be put and answered without discussion.

8. Points of Order, Personal Explanations, Dissent

8a. A member shall have the right to rise and call attention to a point of order, and immediately on this being done any other member addressing the Assembly shall cease speaking until the Moderator has determined the question of order. The decision on any point of order rests entirely with the Moderator. Any member calling to order unnecessarily is liable to censure of the Assembly.

8b. A member feeling that some material part of a former speech by such member at the same meeting has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may rise and request the Moderator's permission to make a personal explanation. If the Moderator so permits, a member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.

8c. The right to record in the minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only be granted to a member by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally at the time or later in writing, appears to the Moderator to fall within the provisions of paragraph 10 of the Basis of Union.

8d. The decision of the Moderator on a point of order, or on the admissibility of a personal explanation, or on the right to have a dissent recorded, shall not be open to discussion.

9. Admission of Public and Press

Members of the public and representatives of the press shall be admitted to the Assembly unless the Assembly otherwise decides, and they shall occupy such places as are assigned to them.

10. Circulation of Documents

Only documents authorised by the General Secretary in consultation with the Convener of the **Assembly Arrangements Committee** may be distributed within the meeting place of the Assembly.

11. Records of the Assembly

11a. A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such a manner as the **Assembly Arrangements Committee** may determine.

11b. The minutes of each day's proceedings, in duplicated form, shall be circulated on the following day and normally, after any necessary correction, approved at the opening of the afternoon session. **Concerning the minutes of the closing day of the Assembly the Clerk shall submit a motion approving their insertion in the full minutes of the Assembly after review and any necessary correction by the officers of the Assembly.** Before such a motion is voted upon, any member may ask to have read out the written minute on any particular item.

11c. A signed copy of the minutes shall be preserved in the custody of the General Secretary as the official record of the Assembly's proceedings.

11d. As soon as possible after the Assembly meeting ends, the substance of the minutes together with any other relevant papers shall be published as a "Record of Assembly" and a copy sent to every member of the Assembly, each synod, district council and local church.

12. Suspension and Amendment of Standing Orders

12a. In any case of urgency or upon motion made on a notice duly given, any one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any particular business at such a meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.

12b. Motions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Clerk of the Assembly for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or, in case of urgency, by the Mission Council). The Clerk of the Assembly may from time to time suggest amendments to the Standing Orders, which shall be subject to decision by the Assembly.



PATTERNS OF MINISTRY

Assembly Report 1994

1. Introduction

1.1 The Patterns of Ministry Working Party was set up in response to resolutions of General Assembly in 1992. Its members are Sister Lavinia Byrne (of CCBI), Revd Dr David Cornick (Secretary), Mr John Ellis, Revd Malcolm Hanson (Convener), Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee, Revd Terry Oakley, Revd Graham Robson and Dr David Thompson. It began its work in March 1993.

1.2 The Working Party's task was to take forward the inconclusive discussions following the 1991 "Patterns of Ministry" Report. Apart from the request to "continue to explore" these issues, Assembly specifically

- (a) referred to the ministry of the whole people of God;
- (b) requested the Doctrine and Worship Committee to relate 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry' (the Lima text 1982) to paras 19-25 of the Basis of Union;
- (c) asked for further study on the Presiding Elder suggestion;
- (d) requested consultation with ecumenical partners;
- (e) asked for a review of the number of new entrants to the stipendiary ministry;
- (f) recorded its appreciation of the work of non-stipendiary ministers and accredited lay preachers;
- (g) requested a report back to a future Assembly.

1.3 The 1991 report generated a great deal of discussion and response. The Working Party is attempting to review all that material as well as the contributions which continue to come in from a variety of sources.

2. Method of working

2.1 It will be clear that a great many interrelated issues have to be reconsidered. In the first instance these had to be identified and then a process found for looking at them afresh in some depth. It was decided to refer clusters of issues for further detailed consideration either by appropriate Assembly committees or by specially convened groups. These groups, which have included a range of representative and specialist people, have worked through the autumn 1993 and will have completed their tasks by April 1994.

2.2 It is intended that as soon as this material has been collated, it should be made available to the councils of the church so that the key issues can be more widely debated in preparation for a final report and recommendations to the General Assembly in 1995 (see section 5 below).

3. Principles and objectives

It is the Working Party's intention to seek to bring proposals that are theologically sound, relevant to the life of the church today, appropriate to its mission and, as far as possible, acceptable ecumenically. Whatever patterns of ministry the church has should also have some degree of adaptability and simplicity.

4. Specific issues

At this interim stage progress can be reported on some particular issues.

4.1 Theology. From the outset it was felt essential to do some major work on the theology of ministry as the foundation to any changes that might be recommended. That work, which is now nearing completion, has been undertaken in consultation with the Doctrine and Worship Committee, and much of the early material has been submitted for comment to "theological reflectors" drawn from our own tradition and from other churches. This work has sought to integrate the understanding of the Basis of Union with the 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry' text and also with the Anglican-Reformed report 'God's Reign and Our Unity' (1984). It includes sections on ministry in the universal Church, ministry in the United Reformed Church, the ministry of the whole people of God, the nature of ordination and diaconal ministry. In this process we are seeking to grasp and express a URC understanding of ministry. Clearly, any decisions the Assembly may make about the practice of ministry will have wide and interrelated implications. For instance, any decisions about presidency at the sacraments will have implications in relation to ordination, ecumenism and our understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God. At the same time our discussion of current needs and changing insights, as well as our response to the Holy Spirit, may lead us to reinterpret our theological statements. Hence the need for thorough theological reflection and dialogue. This full theological paper should be available in the autumn.

4.2 Statistics. For many years we have had only an incomplete picture of the statistics and numerical trends as these relate to congregations and ministers. This has made it difficult to analyse, for instance, the changing age profile of our ministers, the relative significance of non-stipendiary ministry, and to project with any degree of confidence our recruitment needs. This has sometimes led to short term decisions being made on the basis of unsubstantiated impressions. In order, therefore, to aid the process of decisions about recruitment, financial planning and other policy issues, encouragement has been given to the process of gathering as much detailed information as may be relevant. Informed projections can then be looked at as decisions are made. A statistical group has worked on this material and it is hoped to publish some of the results together with interpretative comment later in the year.

4.3 Deployment. It seems clear that the church needs to continue with a long term deployment policy in relation to its use of stipendiary ministers. The Vocations Committee is now reconsidering the appropriate formulae and the detailed implementation of such a policy. The

question of the total number of stipendiary ministers the church needs and can support is under continuing discussion. The implications are wide ranging and lie at the heart of this debate.

4.4 Other issues. Assembly will want to be assured of the wide range of other issues which are currently under consideration. Among these are -

- Presidency at the sacraments
- The nature and relationship of stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry
- Lay preaching
- Lay pastors
- Eldership
- Authority issues
- Oversight ministries, eg Provincial Moderators, District Presidents
- Diaconal and other ministries
- Ordination

5. Plans for wider discussions

The Working Party hopes to be able to bring a final report to the General Assembly in 1995. Prior to that, however, it is desired to have a full discussion of the key issues throughout the church. It is proposed, therefore, that a discussion document (analogous to a Green Paper in parliamentary terms) - which would include the theological material referred to above as well as the results of current discussions - should be sent to the churches by early September 1994. This would be the basis for discussions and comment in District Councils and elsewhere. Comments would need to be returned to the Working Party by the end of November 1994, so that work could begin immediately on preparing the final document (the White Paper) in time for Mission Council in March and Assembly in July 1995. Churches and councils may wish to plan their autumn meetings in expectation of discussing this material. (Some District Councils might wish to invite members of the Working Party to share in these discussions.) The proposed timetable is as follows -

July 1994	This report presented to General Assembly;
Sept 1994	First full report of Working Party sent to churches;
Oct/Nov 1994	Councils and churches have opportunity to consider the report;
30 Nov 1994	Responses to report from councils, churches and others to be received by the Working Party;
6/7 Jan 1995	A broadly representative consultation to review responses and shape report;
17 March 1995	Mission Council receives final report of Working Party;
May/June 1995	Councils and churches have further opportunity to consider the report in its final form;
July 1995	Final report of Working Party to General Assembly;
July 1996	General Assembly ratifies any decisions which affect the Basis of Union.

RESOLUTION

The Assembly receives this Report for debate.



REPORT FROM MINISTRIES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING GROUP

Introduction

1.1 This report responds to the request from Mission Council in January for a revised paper on a comprehensive equal opportunity policy. We attach a draft paper for General Assembly in the form adopted last year of a Resolution with accompanying commentary. The subsequent paragraphs of this paper comment on issues raised.

1.2 Our proposal for a new policy is sponsored by the Ministries Support Committee. The committee has not met since the last Mission Council (but the Convener is aware of this report).

Scope of Policy

2.1 We do not consider the policy should be extended to cover either sexual orientation or age.

2.2 General Assembly in 1992 in welcoming the publication by the Church and Society Department of 'Homosexuality: A Christian View' and of further contributions to the debate regarded this as an issue where Christians are not agreed and where there are a range of attitudes, genuine and sincere, held by thoughtful people across the church. We believe that there must be a continuing debate but until the church has reached a common mind, it would not be right to include wording in the equal opportunities policy which implied that it had done so.

2.3 Age discrimination differs from other forms of discrimination in that all of us are affected by it at different stages of our lives; it is not concerned with the situation of a disadvantaged group in which a large number of people will never be included. The church would also need to be sure how adoption of a policy against age discrimination would affect decisions made or under consideration on such matters as retirement from or entry to the stipendiary ministry.

The Resolutions

3.1 The policy follows the existing policy fairly closely but with adaptations the wider application.

3.2 The preamble is intended to meet two objections. First, it deals with any suggestion that instant expenditure of vast sums on adapting buildings is necessary while leaving access questions as a priority issue when new buildings or adaptations are under consideration. Secondly, it rebuts any suggestion of positive discrimination at the point of selection (which is in any event unlawful in employment).

3.3 We fully understand a reluctance to create any further committees. We consider however that without a small body charged with a duty to see that the policy is implemented,

it will fail. We therefore recommend that an Equal Opportunities Group be appointed consisting of two representatives of each of the categories covered in the policy, and /or experience of Equal Opportunities.

3.4 The comment is adapted from the report submitted to the last meeting of Mission Council.

Implementation and Training

4.1 We think that the primary strategy for implementation should be educational - to heighten awareness and secure the informed consent of those who have to make decisions. We suggest the initial focus should be directed to churches entering a vacancy and Interim Moderators. This would tackle a process that has led to complaints and mean that over a period of years all churches would have to address the issues. If churches know they have to work within an equal opportunity policy before a vacancy is declared, subsequent problems should be minimised.

4.2 Training should also be given to those exercising a personnel function within the church and to members of appointment panels.

4.3 It is good practice to make equal opportunity training an element in training that is taking place for other reasons. This also minimises the additional cost.

4.4 Such training might include:-

- (i) Awareness of the issues
- (ii) Understanding of past discrimination
- (iii) A framework for righting past discriminations
- (iv) Ways of acting to help to prevent discrimination from occurring.

4.5 Where possible, it would be useful to set up self-help groups, eg:-

- (i) A black group (already suggested by Thames North and Southern Provinces, with some funding from Church and Society).
- (ii) A women's group (already meeting on an ad-hoc basis).

Monitoring

5.1 The Equal Opportunities Policy should be maintained in a way which will be as much a part of our normal structures and methods as possible, so that it will not mean a great deal of extra work. Monitoring will need to be done in relation to proportions of people in each group in the church - monitored by an occasional question about gender, ethics, origin and disability in church returns. The following groups could then be monitored:-

- (i) Stipendiary and Non-Stipendiary Ministers, Church Related Community Workers and Youth Leadership Team

From 1995, when initial application is made, an Equal Opportunities Form is sent to be filed on a database including:-

- * Gender
- * Ethnic Origin (including a list used in the UK Census form)
- * Disabled
- * Registered Disabled.

(ii) Committees

Nominations Committee already has the rule that at least ¼ of each committee is male/female. Nominations Committee would consider ethnic origin and disability when nominating people for committees (monitored by Equal Opportunities Group).

(iii) Other Employees and Voluntary Workers

- (a) Central Office Staff
Responsibility of the Personnel Officer
Monitored by the Equal Opportunities Group.
- (b) Provincial Offices and Province employees, eg, Training Officers
Responsibility of Synod Clerk
Monitored by MC Equal Opportunities Group.
- (c) District Councils
Responsibility of District Secretary
Monitored by Synod Clerk
- (d) Local Churches
Responsibility of Church Secretary
Monitored by existing five yearly District Council pastoral visit to the church.

Budget

6.1 We set out below a proposed budget for a Monitoring Group.

	£
Travel (5 members x 3 meetings)	1,000.00
Self-help consultations (eg, black/womens groups)	2,000.00
Education/Literature	1,000.00
Travel for Speakers	500.00
Administration/database	200.00
	<u>4,700.00</u>

6.2 We have not attempted any general costing of alterations to buildings to provide wheelchair access. We recognise that there would be a cost, but this would need to be phased in as churches are making improvements to their buildings.

Synod Resolutions

7.1 Inevitably, at the time of drafting this report, we do not know the precise terms of the resolutions which the Synods of Thames North and Southern Provinces may decide on March 12 to submit to General Assembly. We have, however, seen the 'Charter for the Church' produced by the (London) Urban Churches Support Group and a first draft of possible resolutions, we would regard the setting up of self-help group (as in 4.5) as a positive step.

7.2 In considering these documents, Mission Council will need to bear in mind that ordering our own life through an equal opportunity policy is only part of the Church's response to the issues of racism in society. With that proviso, we regard the Charter as an example of the way the very general policy set out in our draft resolution needs to be worked out and applied in detail in specific situations and see those resolutions as raising matters to be pursued in parallel with the extension of the equal opportunity policy.

DRAFT GENERAL ASSEMBLY PAPER

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly adopts a comprehensive Equal Opportunity Policy as follows:-

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

(a) The Church affirms in its Basis of Union that 'all ministries shall be open to both men and women'. At Assembly in 1987 it adopted a Declaration on Racism and in 1990 adopted a Declaration of Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to ministers.

(b) This policy is not a statement of what the Church has already achieved; it is a declaration of the way it intends to move forward at all levels and in all aspects of its life within the limitations of its resources. In particular, it is an aid to appointing the most suitable people to all positions of responsibility within the church disregarding irrelevant considerations; it does not oblige the church as employer or otherwise to make appointments of people other than those most capable of fulfilling the responsibilities.

Assembly declares:-

1. The Church will behave as an 'equal opportunity organisation' and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender or disability.
2. The Church works to combat racism, sexism and prejudice against people with disabilities and is committed to positive action rather than containing the issues.
3. The Church is aware of possible barriers, for example to women, black people and people with disabilities, within the structures of the Church in ministry and other posts; this has to do with expectations, position, role and status.
4. The Church will therefore establish appropriate methods of monitoring the appointment, call and position of women, black people and people with disabilities in positions in the Church and take appropriate action where necessary.

Assembly resolves to appoint a committee with the following terms of reference:-

- (a) To develop detailed equal opportunities policies.
- (b) To have oversight of training programmes in equal opportunities.
- (c) To monitor the implementation of the equal opportunity policy.
- (d) To report annually to General Assembly on the implementation of the policy.

COMMENT

Introduction

1. General Assembly 1990 adopted a Declaration of Equal Opportunities Policy recommended by the Ministries Committee in relation to Ministers. The monitoring of that policy has shown its limitations and it is now recommended that General Assembly 1994 adopts a broader policy covering staff employed by the church and other activities as well as Ministers.

Coverage of Policy

2.1 The present policy relates only to ministers, not to the whole of the URC. This is a source of weakness and gives rise to many problems.

2.2 For example, the Monitoring Group noted the complete absence of black people from all the committees concerned with the assessment of candidates for the ministry at both national and provincial levels. This could not be viewed in isolation. It is closely related to more general problems, such as the underrepresentation of black people in Elders' Meetings, District Councils and Provincial Synods and their committees.

2.3 There have been other parallel initiatives. In 1987 the Church adopted a Declaration on Racism (sponsored by the Church and Society Department) which also makes provision for monitoring. We are aware of the work of the Urban Churches Support Group in the London area. These various initiatives need to be related to each other and co-ordinated.

2.4 Credibility is important. A policy which covers only one group of people, not the whole of the workforce, does not appear to demonstrate a genuine commitment to equal opportunities.

2.5 There is also the question of risk. As long as many employees (eg, staff at Tavistock Place) are not covered by a policy, the Church is more vulnerable to a legal challenge to an employment decision.

Scope of Policy - Disability

3.1 The existing policy covers only race and gender. Most secular Equal Opportunity policies also include disability and it is also appropriate for the church to consider equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

3.2 While the popular image of a disabled person is someone in a wheelchair, there are many types of disability, including for example blindness and deafness. Many disabilities are no impediment to a person doing a job, although some forms of disability might make it difficult for a person to do a particular job. An equal opportunity policy does not require an employer to select someone for a job they cannot do. It does require them to disregard as irrelevant a disability which does not prevent a person doing a particular job.

3.3 The treatment of disabled people is often a touchstone of the attitudes of an organisation or individual to disadvantage generally. It is therefore proposed that the policy be widened to cover disability.

Implementation of Policy

4.1 The adoption of a policy is not enough by itself. It requires effective implementation. The general statement set out in the resolution needs translating into detailed policies to deal with the different issue posed by prejudice against women, black people and people with disabilities. A first stage could simply be a review by each committee in the church of the steps needed to ensure that its work conformed to the policy.

4.2 The policy is, as the preamble states, a commitment 'to move forward at all levels and in all aspects of its life within the limitations of its resources'. This means, for example that when new buildings or alterations are under consideration, disabled access must be a priority issue but it does not commit churches to making all buildings instantly accessible for wheelchairs.

4.3 Monitoring - reviewing information in order to see how far a policy has been effectively implemented - is equally important and the resolutions therefore include provision for regular monitoring and report on progress.



UNITED REFORMED CHURCH - REVIEW OF TRAINING TERMS OF REFERENCE
[DISCUSSION DOCUMENT FOR MISSION COUNCIL - MARCH 1994]

- 1 MISSION COUNCIL in January 1993 decided that 'a review of the URC's policy , staffing and funding in the field of training be undertaken; that this review, taking account of Synod and District as well as Assembly provision, should take place during the next 18 months'

Mission Council in October 1993 further decided:

'A. An interim group, of which the members should have been present at the Mission Council discussion, should be set up to establish clear Terms of Reference for a Reviewing Group and a timetable for its work, in the light of the Mission Council's discussion of this paper. These Terms of Reference and timetable to be agreed at Mission Council in March 1994.

B. A provisional timetable should be agreed for the Reviewing Group's work, and there should also be agreement as to the body/bodies to which the Reviewing Group should report. If the Reviewing Group is set up following Mission Council in March 1994 it should aim for an interim report by the time of Mission Council in 1995 and, subject to the reception given to such an interim report, should submit to Mission Council in January 1996 a report for presentation to General Assembly in 1996.'

2 DEFINITIONS

- By 'training is meant: acquiring knowledge, developing skills and forming attitudes in preparation for a particular task or role, or in continuing such a task or role.
- By 'within the URC' is meant: within any part of the URC, in particular at denominational, provincial, district and congregational levels.
- By 'resources for training' is meant: all resources of personnel, finance, buildings, administrative structures and training materials.

3 MEMBERSHIP OF THE REVIEW GROUP

In October 1994 a suggestion was made to Mission Council 'that the Reviewing Group should consist of five people nominated by the Nominations Committee and including at least one person with experience of training other than in a URC setting. This 'definitive' Reviewing Group should be asked to make specific proposals for action.' >>>

Mission Council 'decided not to proceed with this suggestion' but set up a group of three people, elected by the Mission Council, to draw up terms of reference. Mission Council in March 1994 will have to decide on the composition of the Reviewing Group and how it should be elected/appointed.

4 AREAS OF CONCERN

- 4.1 What training is currently undertaken within the URC?
What resources are used to this end?
What does it cost the URC at national, provincial and local levels?

[This is a deliberately inclusive enquiry, involving resources available

- at national level, e.g. Windermere and Yardley Hastings centres, the theological colleges, use of diocesan training courses, YLTO/YCWT team etc.;
- at provincial and district levels, e.g. training officers, courses for ministers, elders, leaders etc
- at local and congregational levels, e.g. elders', members' training etc.]

- 4.2 How is this training monitored and assessed?
If it is monitored and assessed, what standards are used?
How does it measure up to these standards?

- 4.3 Are the methods of training appropriate to the tasks?
Is it desirable to have a variety of training programmes for the same task, or should a single programme be used for that task?

- 4.4 To what extent are ecumenical and secular resources available to the URC, how far are they considered before new training material is prepared, and to what extent are they used? What does the URC contribute to help other churches in provision of training?

- 4.5 How effective is this training in preparing the members of the URC and its corporate manifestations to be the people of God as defined in para 11 of the Basis of Union?

- 4.6 Are there a) areas of neglect
b) areas of overlap and duplication
c) an imbalance in the provisions of resources, including making any unrequired provision?

5 METHODS CHOSEN FOR THE REVIEW

Employ whatever methods are consistent with the proposed time-scale (see 7)

Use work already done e.g. by:

- Julian Macro, Peter Poulter and Eric McDonald in their report to Mission Council on how a review of training, staffing and finance might be undertaken.
- Integrated Training Working Party
- Committees concerned with training
- YLTO/YCWT Team
- Provincial In-service Trainers' Consultation
- Training Network
- Fellowship of United Reformed Youth
- Patterns of Ministry
- College visitation reports

Recognise decisions made by General Assembly re Committee Structure and the implementation of them during the time of the Review Group's work.

Recognise that a review of the use of Westminster College in relation to other colleges will be taking place during the time of the review Group's work.

Recognise other planning for change during this period of the Review Group's work eg Patterns of Ministry Working Party and the development of provincial plans eg a Development Team in the Northern Province and other provincial restructuring.

Gather information (by visiting, sampling, questionnaires etc) from:

Provinces

Windermere

Yardley Hastings

FURY

YLTO/YCWT Team

Districts re local church training

Finance, national and provincial.

Individuals responsible for and engaged in training in the URC and elsewhere

Groups and individuals who want to submit information (by open request e.g. in Reform)

Compare, as far as possible, these results with those of a comparable body, e.g. The Methodist Church?

Possibly make limited use of independent consultant/s, reader/s from outside the group e.g. from another church or independent agency.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

What recommendations would the Review Group make to improve the quality and consistency of training provided by the URC at all levels and for all tasks, in the provision and use of personnel, in money made available, in the methods used, in the materials provided etc.?

7 TIME SCALE OF REVIEW

Because of all the uncertainty and the difficulties this causes for existing staff, it is desirable that the Review be completed within as short a time as possible. To that end it is suggested that an interim report be brought to Mission Council in March 1995 for the Council to decide whether it should be brought to General Assembly 1995.

RUTH CLARKE
JULIAN MACRO
PHILIP MORGAN



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

1994:

UN. Year of the Family

Following discussion at the October 1993 Mission Council, Peter Brain and Terry Oakley have consulted with each other and colleagues on what an emphasis on 'The family' at 1994 Assembly might best comprise.

There are so many issues that might be addressed under this heading, some of which are already causing concern to church members while others go unremarked. We could easily identify well over a dozen areas of church life and society generally that might be legitimately included under such a heading.

Our view is that Assembly in 1994 should listen and learn. It would be an agenda-setting rather than a policy-making style. The aim would be to share experiences and approaches, i.e. not only 'problems', not only the 'nuclear family', etc.

We therefore suggest that within the business programme there might be three scheduled slots of around 45 minutes each on successive days, i.e. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, to allow work to be done in between.

On the first day there would be appropriate presentation in plenary, including a keynote speaker or two. It should be possible to invite to contrasting public figures to speak as Christians about their perceptions of the family. This plenary could include some less formal input, e.g. a short drama or audio-visual presentation

In the second slot there would be group discussion of issues raised by the presentation (with a leaflet available) and by Assembly members. The Bible-study group structure proposed for Assembly would lend itself to this approach. Points made would be collated and a paper produced for the third period.

On the third occasion there would be opportunity for Assembly in plenary, to discern and determine what tasks were to be given, or issues referred, to the various constituent parts of the church; this would mean some work for central committees, some for local churches, some for regional working groups, some for non-URC bodies, etc.

Our feeling at this stage is that no policy resolutions should be brought; these might come back in 1995.

We should recognise that there are real differences of approach and not try to hide this.

We are glad that in principle the Moderator-elect and the Assembly Arrangements committee have accepted these ideas. We invite Mission Council to endorse the approach so that invitations may be extended and detailed plans made.

PJB



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

WORK

Church and Society wishes to report a significant initiative which originated within the Urban Bishops' Group of the Church of England and which is now being developed ecumenically.

The plan is for a "Commission on Unemployment and the Future of Work" with wide-reaching terms of reference which we can make available. It would have a senior civil servant as secondee; this happened with "Faith in the City" and without it the project could not be handled by the churches. It would work over two years from this summer, concentrating on country-wide visits and hearings, examining some new projects of job creation, and leading to a statement of some kind - or other form of communication - on the best approaches to tackling long-term unemployment and the fundamental changes now being experienced in the pattern of employment, unemployment and underemployment.

The Commission itself would have around 20 people with a fairly high profile chairperson. In order to get going, it is proposed that denominational support and endorsement of the project be sought in ways appropriate to different denominations, with a view to bringing a resolution to the CCBI Church Representatives Meeting in May, to establish a Sponsoring Group which would then set up the Commission and oversee its work. It is proposed that the Sponsoring Group should include one URC person. The appropriate way of securing URC endorsement of the project would seem to be to invite Mission Council to pass the resolution set out below, with the assumption that our representatives on the CCBI CRM would then support the proposal.

The implications of this are that we contribute a nominal amount to the running costs of the Commission's work (max. £1000 for each of 3 years) and that we find a leading URC person to serve on the Sponsoring Group. This would not be particularly arduous as it is not an executive body; it would meet four times over the two years. We are asked to nominate someone, and an alternate, by Easter.

Few would dispute that this is the core economic issue of our time - and the most intractable. While not overlapping with secular wisdom more than is necessary, the churches would have a significant and distinctive contribution to make. We therefore very much hope that Mission Council would welcome the initiative of the Urban Bishops, rejoice that they are willing to be so ecumenical about the process, and offer the United Reformed Church's endorsement and support of it.

RESOLUTION: *Mission Council welcomes the proposal to establish a Churches' Commission on Unemployment and the Future of Work and authorises the Convener and Secretary for Church and Society, in consultation with the General Secretary, to seek suitable nominations for a United Reformed Church representative to serve on the Sponsoring Group.*

PTO



Cathy, get lost!

No-one can have missed the recent flurry of advertisements from SHELTER, the organisation that was founded in the aftermath of one television programme, 'Cathy, come home'. That programme stirred the whole nation and demonstrated that simply leaving homeless families on the streets led to personal tragedy and not to some otherwise unforeseen solution based on self-reliance. SHELTER is leading the outcry against the current Government Green Paper proposals. The Churches National Housing Coalition (CNHC) is inviting denominational responses in addition to their ecumenical one.

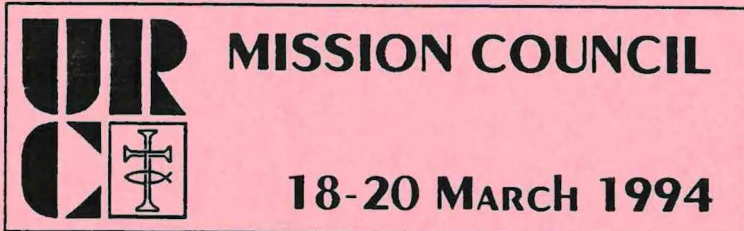
First in the 1977 Act and again in the 1985 Housing Act, local authorities were given the responsibility to house those who are accepted as homeless, those in priority need, those who are threatened with homelessness and those who are homeless unintentionally. 'Priority need' covers those who are pregnant, have dependent children or are vulnerable because of age or disability. Such prioritising has fed the myth of homeless families or pregnant teenagers jumping the queue ahead of those on the Council waiting lists. In fact over 70% of people on such waiting lists came there via homelessness; there is no 'fast track' - they are the same people accused of queue-jumping. For example, less than 1% of homeless people being accommodated in the London Borough of Camden (a relatively hospitable authority) are teenage single mothers.

The Government Green Paper takes us back to before the 1977 Act; it is both flawed and wrong. In the view of most independent housing specialists and organisations, these proposals will result in local authorities 'exporting' their problems (as some already tend to do), since they will only be obliged to help after a case has been assessed and then only to offer temporary accommodation. Homeless people, often with children, will go back to the shuttle between the offices of various Housing Departments, Social Services, DSS and non-statutory bodies, with all the damage (and waste of money) that implies. Being asked to leave by friends or relatives will need to be proved, perhaps with a court order, before there is acknowledgement of homelessness. No-one will be accepted as eligible for help if any temporary alternative accommodation of any kind is available. Everything is down to local authority discretion. And asylum seekers are specifically excluded from any entitlement to provision.

The deprived will be pitted against the desperate, the poor against the very poor in the scramble for the supply of decent low-cost housing which is declining again after a modest rise last year, down to 25,000pa. It would actually cost no more and in every other way be better to put the equivalent public expenditure into increasing the supply.

Recent research commissioned by Church and Society revealed that around a quarter of local United Reformed Churches have some involvement with a local housing association. This implies a widespread concern for bad housing and homelessness across the church and suggests that we might legitimately offer a response to the Government on this matter. The Green Paper invites responses before March 18 but if Mission Council agrees we shall submit a response from the United Reformed Church a few days late.

RESOLUTION: *Mission Council authorises the Secretary and Convener for Church and Society, in consultation the General Secretary, to submit a response to the Government Green Paper on "Access to Local Authority and Housing Association Tenancies".*



Church and Society Assembly resolutions

Church and Society committee would like to bring two resolutions before Assembly.

The first would be to support the call made by the Church Representatives Meeting of CCBI at the request of the Churches Commission for Racial Justice for a selective amnesty for certain illegal overstayers who fulfil the following conditions:

- a) a person who has lived in the UK for at least five years; and either
- b1) who is the parent of at least one child born here who has lived in the UK for a minimum of two years; or
- b2) is self-sufficient in terms of income and housing.

The supporting information for the Book of Reports would be based on that provided for the CRM at its meeting last November. The aim is: to reduce tension as between the police and the black communities; to signal that black people are welcome here; to save the time and expense of pursuing unregistered people; to reassure long-time residents here; and to comply with the European Convention of Human Rights.

The second would be making two points about arms control and arms trading:

- 1 to join other denominations in calling for the renewal of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which is due to expire in 1995, again in response to the invitation from the CRM at its November meeting;
- 2 to challenge the general secrecy over arms sales, highlighted by but not limited to the issues being addressed by Mr Justice Scott.

It is some time since our Assembly had the opportunity to debate peace issues.

The supporting information for the Book of Reports would be

- 1 *derived from a booklet produced for the Churches Peace Forum by Roger Williamson and the report given to the November CRM which was agreed, 'that churches consider and debate the issues of effective international control of nuclear weapons during 1994'.*
- 2 *derived from briefing papers produced, among others, by Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) and World Development Movement (WDM), both bodies which we support. Reference would be made to the apparent 'entanglement' between arms deals and overseas aid provision which is possible under the Aid-Trade Provision arrangements.*

We seek the permission of Mission Council in principle to prepare and bring these resolutions. The actual wording would then be confirmed after consultation (including ecumenical).



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

A Paper for Mission Council and the Training Review

Produced on behalf of the Training Network

The Training Network is an informal meeting of those employed by the United Reformed Church as providers of training in and on behalf of the denomination. At the residential meeting in December 1993, the group worked at theological issues relating to training and offer this paper as a result of its work together and as a contribution to the training review.

MISSION STATEMENT

To share with people in the continuous discovery of what it means to be the People of God in the world and the church - by liberating each other to use our different gifts in response to the love of God in Christ and the call of the Spirit.

COMMENTARY ON THIS MISSION STATEMENT

TO SHARE

1. The statement puts forward a collaborative view of training: not of knowledge being loaded by a trainer into trainees; but rather of people learning together, so that the insights of each contribute to the training experience that others gain.

WITH PEOPLE

2. The mode of training proposed sits comfortably within the conciliar polity of the URC. We believe - and we find - that truth, guidance and wisdom are often best discerned when Christians meet and speak together, seeking the mind of the Holy Spirit.

CONTINUOUS

3. Christians should always be ready to learn and to grow. Our training is never complete. It must be continuous. Yesterday's discovery may not be adequate to meet tomorrow's need and opportunity.

DISCOVERY

4. To a large extent training is open-ended. God may have new things to teach us, again and again. We discover our potential, and God's path, a step at a time.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

5. Training in the Church is corporate in its vision. We belong together as one body in Christ. We serve, even when we serve separately, as part of the Church's whole life and witness. Good training fosters that awareness, and rejoices in the strength it provides. So we shall want to learn and grow as a people; training is never an individual hobby or trip.

This corporate aspect implies - among other things - an ecumenical breadth to our vision and, where possible, to our training.

IN THE WORLD

6. Our outlook is missionary. We are a people sent: to serve and show Christ. Effective training takes seriously that Christians live for Christ in the world, in a host of varied activities and situations, revealing and encountering Christ in many different places and ways.

LIBERATING EACH OTHER

7. Training is intended to liberate: to release gifts; to expand horizons; to free people to live as God intends; to open people to a wider vision of God and a deeper joy in service.

OUR DIFFERENT GIFTS

8. Training is not cloning. We are diverse, in creation, in Christ, and in the wide spectrum of the Spirit's gifting grace. We start from different places in our pilgrimage, and discover different gifts as we grow in Christ, appropriate to the varied opportunities that open to us in God's world.

IN RESPONSE TO THE LOVE OF GOD

9. All true Christian faith and service is responsive. We are a people loved, by God in Jesus Christ. We love because he first loved us. We want to give because we have received much. We live in a holy relationship - with God and with each other. Training values that understanding and works to strengthen it, so that as faith grows, a deepening Christian commitment may be natural and unforced.

THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST AND THE CALL OF THE SPIRIT

10. Our statement is Trinitarian. We stand within the mystery, confidence and expectancy of the Church's ancient faith, serving a God who made and loves us, who lived, died and rose as one of us, and who continues to stir, prompt and lead us.

THE CONTEXT FOR TRAINING

We identified seven aspects, which intertwine, and have different emphases in various times and places:

1. The Church, as people of God, is set within God's world and called to play a full part in its life. Our horizons, and our awareness of the world - in all its variety, and with all its needs - must broaden continually.
2. Love is the driving power in all we, as the people, will do and be, in our relationships with God and with one another, and as we seek to discern what it means to be the Church.
3. We are a worshipping people. Christian life is a life of worship. directed towards the glory of God, responding to the grandeur and grace of God. We are called to celebrate God, to explore the mystery of God, to deepen our experience of God, to be humble and joyful before God. As we worship, we participate in the community of faith and are bound together in Christ.
4. As disciples, Christians live as a community of learners, and need to develop a learning culture. We must aim to motivate our people, to make resources available, to encourage curiosity, to remove stumbling blocks, and to offer samples and tasters in our programme to sharpen people's appetite to learn.
5. We are one people who share different skills and gifts. Therefore, undertaking training should not set people apart or above, but deepen their involvement and commitment within the common life and witness of the whole Church.
6. There are several different kinds of learning. Good training enables people to acquire knowledge, to develop and practise skills and to examine, challenge and reshape attitudes.
7. Who sets the agenda? Learning does involve change and that may necessitate the breakdown of old assumptions and their replacement with new understanding, but this is something which must come from within the person who is learning. People in the local church and context know their own situations best, and can see local needs. But specialist trainers can have a prophetic role: alerting people to important issues that they may have overlooked; disseminating experience, visions and dreams within the Church; and taking people forward to discern and realise fresh aims.

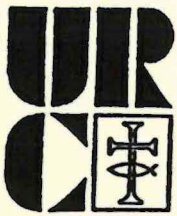
THE ROLE OF THE TRAINER

The work of training is, of course, the general responsibility of the whole Church, and the particular responsibility of many people within it. However, we believe that trainers have a distinctive role to play in the Church's life and work in relation to these responsibilities.

We seek to bring:

- a) Expertise and experience in training methods which are appropriate to the exploration of the reality of God and the nature of our discipleship within and outside the Church;
- b) Specialised knowledge;
- c) A consultancy role;
- d) The ability and skill to run good training courses, that work.

*Prepared on behalf of the Training Network by
John Proctor, Janet Turner and Margaret Taylor
February 1994*



18-20 MARCH 1994

RESOLUTION

Following the review of **THE RURAL CONSULTANT**, the Revd Michael Cruchley, which recommended that he be re-appointed for a further 5 years from January 1, 1995, clauses [III] and [IV] of 94/11, the Staffing Advisory Group's report, were considered by a group representing the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee, the Support Committee, the West Midlands province and the Arthur Rank Centre.

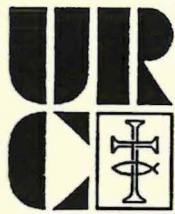
IT RECOMMENDS, IN PRINCIPLE, THAT:

- a] The post be made full-time from January 1, 1995, to allow the better use of the Consultant throughout the country at weekends.
- b] This post ought NOT to take one of the 30 places allocated for Special Category Ministers.

IT RECOMMENDS, IN MORE DETAIL:

- 1 That the post be funded for a further 5 years only, or until Michael Cruchley leaves, if that is earlier.
- 2 That the payment of local expenses be worked out by the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee with all interested parties. However, due to grants from the Arthur Rank Centre, the Methodist Church and the URC Ecumenical Projects Fund, at least £8,000 per annum is already ensured.
- 3 That the present house [owned 75% by Thames North Province and 25% by West Midlands Province] be sold, and that 25% of the net proceeds be returned to the West Midlands Province.
- 4 That Thames North Province be invited to invest its share of the proceeds in a manse in the Stoneleigh area and that the balance of the net cost be contributed by the URC Finance Department. [Note: property in the Stoneleigh area is more expensive and the Thames North share in a property there would probably be less than 75% and the Finance Department share correspondingly more].
- 5 That at the termination of the ministry the house be sold and that Thames North Province and the URC Finance Department receive back the appropriate new proportion of the net proceeds of the sale.
- 6 That, in consideration of the pastoral needs of the two churches at present in Michael's care, there should be some months of 'flexibility' in his relinquishing of that care to allow West Midlands Province to negotiate new arrangements.
- 7 That the 5 year limit on the appointment be brought to the notice of the Arthur Rank Centre and the other denominations involved in the team there.

Proposer: Mary Marsden



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the London Missionary Society, the oldest of the mission agencies now combined in the Council for World Mission [CWM] falls in 1995. All the CWM member churches will be marking the anniversary and there will be major celebrations in the United Kingdom in July 1995.

There will be a celebration event Wednesday 12 - Friday 14 July 1995 culminating in a service of thanksgiving and dedication in London on 14 July. All CWM member churches will be participating in this event and it is hoped that there will be a large URC presence at the service on 14 July. At the close of that service the overseas visitors will be travelling to all CWM member churches in the UK for the weekend. All our provinces will be asked to receive between four and six visitors for the weekend and some provinces are already making preparations. On the afternoon of Sunday 16 July the visitors will return to the London area as the CWM Council gathers at the High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, Herts, for the 1995 Council Meeting. The Council is meeting at the joint invitation of the Congregational Federation and the URC.

The Missionary and Ecumenical Work Abroad Committee is concerned that the URC should prepare itself for these celebrations by considering its place in God's mission and its level of commitment to the Council for World Mission. Materials will be produced and introduced at Assembly. The Committee also proposes this resolution so that Assembly may communicate to the churches its concern that the 200th anniversary of the London Missionary Society be an occasion not only of celebration of the past but of commitment to God's mission today.

The General Assembly looks forward with joyful anticipation to the 200th anniversary of the founding of the London Missionary Society in 1995.

The General Assembly encourages the United Reformed Church as a whole to prepare for the anniversary by learning about the vision of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God" which gave rise to the founding of the London Missionary Society; and challenges the Church to discover how God is calling us today to share in God's mission and to strengthen our commitment to the Council for World Mission.



Church and Society Assembly resolutions

Church and Society committee would like to bring two resolutions before Assembly.

The first would be to support the call made by the Church Representatives Meeting of CCBI at the request of the Churches Commission for Racial Justice for a selective amnesty for certain illegal overstayers who fulfil the following conditions:

- a) a person who has lived in the UK for at least five years; and either
- b1) who is the parent of at least one child born here who has lived in the UK for a minimum of two years; or
- b2) is self-sufficient in terms of income and housing.

The supporting information for the Book of Reports would be based on that provided for the CRM at its meeting last November. The aim is: to reduce tension as between the police and the black communities; to signal that black people are welcome here; to save the time and expense of pursuing unregistered people; to reassure long-time residents here; and to comply with the European Convention of Human Rights.

The second would be making two points about arms control and arms trading:

- 1 to join other denominations in calling for the renewal of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which is due to expire in 1995, again in response to the invitation from the CRM at its November meeting;
- 2 to challenge the general secrecy over arms sales, highlighted by but not limited to the issues being addressed by Mr Justice Scott.

It is some time since our Assembly had the opportunity to debate peace issues.

The supporting information for the Book of Reports would be

- 1 *derived from a booklet produced for the Churches Peace Forum by Roger Williamson and the report given to the November CRM which was agreed, 'that churches consider and debate the issues of effective international control of nuclear weapons during 1994'.*
- 2 *derived from briefing papers produced, among others, by Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) and World Development Movement (WDM), both bodies which we support. Reference would be made to the apparent 'entanglement' between arms deals and overseas aid provision which is possible under the Aid-Trade Provision arrangements.*

We seek the permission of Mission Council in principle to prepare and bring these resolutions. The actual wording would then be confirmed after consultation (including ecumenical).

1. This matter was first raised at the March 1993 MC in connection with the budget and referred to the Mission Council Advisory Group (MCAG).
2. Assembly has looked at itself on two previous occasions. A Working Party on Structures 1977 and an Executive report on Assembly Representation in 1987.

A Working Party on Structures 1977

The report, in referring to the GA, noted that it was too large to be an effective decision making body and too small to be truly representative; that representation from District Councils changed annually giving too much influence to regular ex-officio members; the departments had more say than the Synods and there was insufficient consultation locally.

It was proposed that representatives be appointed by Synods, that reports should go to Synods first, and that the membership ought to be reduced from 750 to 375.

In the light of responses from synods, district councils and churches it was agreed in 1978 to leave things alone, reducing the size slightly.

Assembly Representatives 1987

This was a response to the resolution which was agreed in 1986 to look at the possibility and implications of every church being represented at GA.

This died in 1988 when a moratorium on constitutional change was agreed because of conversations with the Congregational Union of Scotland.

3. Arguments for change now
 - i) There is too little business of real importance to justify an annual assembly on the present scale and length,
 - ii) Too much precious committee (including MC) and staff time is taken up in preparation for Assembly.
 - iii) This is aggravated because the Assembly year is now effectively concentrated on September-March.
 - iv) The Cost: £60,000 p.a.

4. Arguments against change now

- i) The GA is where we symbolise and express our claim to be a church and neither a sect nor a federation of "dioceses". A reduction to a biennial meeting would significantly weaken us as a church. Assembly is about recognising and showing the gifts of all. It is about taking decisions together and planning our work for a common purpose.
- ii) Presence at the Assembly of ministers and representatives from local churches is infrequent as it is. To change to a biennial Assembly would weaken these links still further.
- iii) It would delay essential business. Also constitutional changes would take four years.
- iv) The Assembly Moderator serves for one year. An increase to two years would be too great a burden on the individual and on his/her sphere of work.
- v) We are undergoing a period of considerable change which began with the creation of the MC and continues with the proposals for a new committee structure. This is not the time for a debate about another radical change. In addition, we need to be sensitive to people's perceptions about the relationship between MC and the GA. It would not benefit the developing of harmonious working relationship between the councils of the church for the MC to initiate what could be interpreted as a diminution of the powers of the GA.



UNITED REFORMED CHURCH - REVIEW OF TRAINING TERMS OF REFERENCE
[DISCUSSION DOCUMENT FOR MISSION COUNCIL - MARCH 1994]

- 1 MISSION COUNCIL in January 1993 decided that 'a review of the URC's policy , staffing and funding in the field of training be undertaken; that this review, taking account of Synod and District as well as Assembly provision, should take place during the next 18 months'

Mission Council in October 1993 further decided:

'A. An interim group, of which the members should have been present at the Mission Council discussion, should be set up to establish clear Terms of Reference for a Reviewing Group and a timetable for its work, in the light of the Mission Council's discussion of this paper. These Terms of Reference and timetable to be agreed at Mission Council in March 1994.

B. A provisional timetable should be agreed for the Reviewing Group's work, and there should also be agreement as to the body/bodies to which the Reviewing Group should report. If the Reviewing Group is set up following Mission Council in March 1994 it should aim for an interim report by the time of Mission Council in 1995 and, subject to the reception given to such an interim report, should submit to Mission Council in January 1996 a report for presentation to General Assembly in 1996.'

2 DEFINITIONS

By 'training is meant: acquiring knowledge, developing skills and forming attitudes in preparation for a particular task or role, or in continuing such a task or role.

By 'within the URC' is meant: within any part of the URC, in particular at denominational, provincial, district and congregational levels.

By 'resources for training' is meant: all resources of personnel, finance, buildings, administrative structures and training materials.

3 MEMBERSHIP OF THE REVIEW GROUP

In October 1994 a suggestion was made to Mission Council 'that the Reviewing Group should consist of five people nominated by the Nominations Committee and including at least one person with experience of training other than in a URC setting. This 'definitive' Reviewing Group should be asked to make specific proposals for action.' >>>

Mission Council 'decided not to proceed with this suggestion' but set up a group of three people, elected by the Mission Council, to draw up terms of reference. Mission Council in March 1994 will have to decide on the composition of the Reviewing Group and how it should be elected/appointed.

4 AREAS OF CONCERN

- 4.1 What training is currently undertaken within the URC?
What resources are used to this end?
What does it cost the URC at national, provincial and local levels?

[This is a deliberately inclusive enquiry, involving resources available

- at national level, e.g. Windermere and Yardley Hastings centres, the theological colleges, use of diocesan training courses, YLTO/YCWT team etc.;
- at provincial and district levels, e.g. training officers, courses for ministers, elders, leaders etc
- at local and congregational levels, e.g. elders', members' training etc.]

- 4.2 How is this training monitored and assessed?
If it is monitored and assessed, what standards are used?
How does it measure up to these standards?

- 4.3 Are the methods of training appropriate to the tasks?
Is it desirable to have a variety of training programmes for the same task, or should a single programme be used for that task?

- 4.4 To what extent are ecumenical and secular resources available to the URC, how far are they considered before new training material is prepared, and to what extent are they used? What does the URC contribute to help other churches in provision of training?

- 4.5 How effective is this training in preparing the members of the URC and its corporate manifestations to be the people of God as defined in para 11 of the Basis of Union?

- 4.6 Are there a) areas of neglect
b) areas of overlap and duplication
c) an imbalance in the provisions of resources, including making any unrequired provision?

5 METHODS CHOSEN FOR THE REVIEW

Employ whatever methods are consistent with the proposed time-scale (see 7)

Use work already done e.g. by:

- Julian Macro, Peter Poulter and Eric McDonald in their report to Mission Council on how a review of training, staffing and finance might be undertaken.
- Integrated Training Working Party
- Committees concerned with training
- YLTO/YCWT Team
- Provincial In-service Trainers' Consultation
- Training Network
- Fellowship of United Reformed Youth
- Patterns of Ministry
- College visitation reports
- etc. etc.

Recognise decisions made by General Assembly re Committee Structure and the implementation of them during the time of the Review Group's work.

Recognise that a review of the use of Westminster College in relation to other colleges will be taking place during the time of the review Group's work.

Recognise other planning for change during this period of the Review Group's work eg Patterns of Ministry Working Party and the development of provincial plans eg a Development Team in the Northern Province and other provincial restructuring.

Gather information (by visiting, sampling, questionnaires etc) from:

Provinces

Windermere

Yardley Hastings

FURY

YLTO/YCWT Team

Districts re local church training

Finance, national and provincial.

Individuals responsible for and engaged in training in the URC and elsewhere

Groups and individuals who want to submit information (by open request e.g. in Reform)

Compare, as far as possible, these results with those of a comparable body, e.g. The Methodist Church?

Possibly make limited use of independent consultant/s, reader/s from outside the group e.g. from another church or independent agency.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

What recommendations would the Review Group make to improve the quality and consistency of training provided by the URC at all levels and for all tasks, in the provision and use of personnel, in money made available, in the methods used, in the materials provided etc.?

7 TIME SCALE OF REVIEW

Because of all the uncertainty and the difficulties this causes for existing staff, it is desirable that the Review be completed within as short a time as possible. To that end it is suggested that an interim report be brought to Mission Council in March 1995 for the Council to decide whether it should be brought to General Assembly 1995.

RUTH CLARKE
JULIAN MACRO
PHILIP MORGAN



REPORT FROM MINISTRIES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING GROUP

Introduction

1.1 This report responds to the request from Mission Council in January for a revised paper on a comprehensive equal opportunity policy. We attach a draft paper for General Assembly in the form adopted last year of a Resolution with accompanying commentary. The subsequent paragraphs of this paper comment on issues raised.

1.2 Our proposal for a new policy is sponsored by the Ministries Support Committee. The committee has not met since the last Mission Council (but the Convener is aware of this report).

Scope of Policy

2.1 We do not consider the policy should be extended to cover either sexual orientation or age.

2.2 General Assembly in 1992 in welcoming the publication by the Church and Society Department of 'Homosexuality: A Christian View' and of further contributions to the debate regarded this as an issue where Christians are not agreed and where there are a range of attitudes, genuine and sincere, held by thoughtful people across the church. We believe that there must be a continuing debate but until the church has reached a common mind, it would not be right to include wording in the equal opportunities policy which implied that it had done so.

2.3 Age discrimination differs from other forms of discrimination in that all of us are affected by it at different stages of our lives; it is not concerned with the situation of a disadvantaged group in which a large number of people will never be included. The church would also need to be sure how adoption of a policy against age discrimination would affect decisions made or under consideration on such matters as retirement from or entry to the stipendiary ministry.

The Resolutions

3.1 The policy follows the existing policy fairly closely but with adaptations the wider application.

3.2 The preamble is intended to meet two objections. First, it deals with any suggestion that instant expenditure of vast sums on adapting buildings is necessary while leaving access questions as a priority issue when new buildings or adaptations are under consideration. Secondly, it rebuts any suggestion of positive discrimination at the point of selection (which is in any event unlawful in employment).

3.3 We fully understand a reluctance to create any further committees. We consider however that without a small body charged with a duty to see that the policy is implemented,

it will fail. We therefore recommend that an Equal Opportunities Group be appointed consisting of two representatives of each of the categories covered in the policy, and /or experience of Equal Opportunities.

3.4 The comment is adapted from the report submitted to the last meeting of Mission Council.

Implementation and Training

4.1 We think that the primary strategy for implementation should be educational - to heighten awareness and secure the informed consent of those who have to make decisions. We suggest the initial focus should be directed to churches entering a vacancy and Interim Moderators. This would tackle a process that has led to complaints and mean that over a period of years all churches would have to address the issues. If churches know they have to work within an equal opportunity policy before a vacancy is declared, subsequent problems should be minimised.

4.2 Training should also be given to those exercising a personnel function within the church and to members of appointment panels.

4.3 It is good practice to make equal opportunity training an element in training that is taking place for other reasons. This also minimises the additional cost.

4.4 Such training might include:-

- (i) Awareness of the issues
- (ii) Understanding of past discrimination
- (iii) A framework for righting past discriminations
- (iv) Ways of acting to help to prevent discrimination from occurring.

4.5 Where possible, it would be useful to set up self-help groups, eg:-

- (i) A black group (already suggested by Thames North and Southern Provinces, with some funding from Church and Society).
- (ii) A women's group (already meeting on an ad-hoc basis).

Monitoring

5.1 The Equal Opportunities Policy should be maintained in a way which will be as much a part of our normal structures and methods as possible, so that it will not mean a great deal of extra work. Monitoring will need to be done in relation to proportions of people in each group in the church - monitored by an occasional question about gender, ethics, origin and disability in church returns. The following groups could then be monitored:-

- (i) Stipendiary and Non-Stipendiary Ministers, Church Related Community Workers and Youth Leadership Team

From 1995, when initial application is made, an Equal Opportunities Form is sent to be filed on a database including:-

- * Gender
- * Ethnic Origin (including a list used in the UK Census form)
- * Disabled
- * Registered Disabled.

(ii) Committees

Nominations Committee already has the rule that at least ¼ of each committee is male/female. Nominations Committee would consider ethnic origin and disability when nominating people for committees (monitored by Equal Opportunities Group).

(iii) Other Employees and Voluntary Workers

- (a) Central Office Staff
Responsibility of the Personnel Officer
Monitored by the Equal Opportunities Group.
- (b) Provincial Offices and Province employees, eg, Training Officers
Responsibility of Synod Clerk
Monitored by MC Equal Opportunities Group.
- (c) District Councils
Responsibility of District Secretary
Monitored by Synod Clerk
- (d) Local Churches
Responsibility of Church Secretary
Monitored by existing five yearly District Council pastoral visit to the church.

Budget

6.1 We set out below a proposed budget for a Monitoring Group.

	£
Travel (5 members x 3 meetings)	1,000.00
Self-help consultations (eg, black/womens groups)	2,000.00
Education/Literature	1,000.00
Travel for Speakers	500.00
Administration/database	200.00
	<u>4,700.00</u>

6.2 We have not attempted any general costing of alterations to buildings to provide wheelchair access. We recognise that there would be a cost, but this would need to be phased in as churches are making improvements to their buildings.

Synod Resolutions

7.1 Inevitably, at the time of drafting this report, we do not know the precise terms of the resolutions which the Synods of Thames North and Southern Provinces may decide on March 12 to submit to General Assembly. We have, however, seen the 'Charter for the Church' produced by the (London) Urban Churches Support Group and a first draft of possible resolutions, we would regard the setting up of self-help group (as in 4.5) as a positive step.

7.2 In considering these documents, Mission Council will need to bear in mind that ordering our own life through an equal opportunity policy is only part of the Church's response to the issues of racism in society. With that proviso, we regard the Charter as an example of the way the very general policy set out in our draft resolution needs to be worked out and applied in detail in specific situations and see those resolutions as raising matters to be pursued in parallel with the extension of the equal opportunity policy.

DRAFT GENERAL ASSEMBLY PAPER

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly adopts a comprehensive Equal Opportunity Policy as follows:-

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

(a) The Church affirms in its Basis of Union that 'all ministries shall be open to both men and women'. At Assembly in 1987 it adopted a Declaration on Racism and in 1990 adopted a Declaration of Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to ministers.

(b) This policy is not a statement of what the Church has already achieved; it is a declaration of the way it intends to move forward at all levels and in all aspects of its life within the limitations of its resources. In particular, it is an aid to appointing the most suitable people to all positions of responsibility within the church disregarding irrelevant considerations; it does not oblige the church as employer or otherwise to make appointments of people other than those most capable of fulfilling the responsibilities.

Assembly declares:-

1. The Church will behave as an 'equal opportunity organisation' and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender or disability.
2. The Church works to combat racism, sexism and prejudice against people with disabilities and is committed to positive action rather than containing the issues.
3. The Church is aware of possible barriers, for example to women, black people and people with disabilities, within the structures of the Church in ministry and other posts; this has to do with expectations, position, role and status.
4. The Church will therefore establish appropriate methods of monitoring the appointment, call and position of women, black people and people with disabilities in positions in the Church and take appropriate action where necessary.

Assembly resolves to appoint a committee with the following terms of reference:-

- (a) To develop detailed equal opportunities policies.
- (b) To have oversight of training programmes in equal opportunities.
- (c) To monitor the implementation of the equal opportunity policy.
- (d) To report annually to General Assembly on the implementation of the policy.

COMMENT

Introduction

1. General Assembly 1990 adopted a Declaration of Equal Opportunities Policy recommended by the Ministries Committee in relation to Ministers. The monitoring of that policy has shown its limitations and it is now recommended that General Assembly 1994 adopts a broader policy covering staff employed by the church and other activities as well as Ministers.

Coverage of Policy

2.1 The present policy relates only to ministers, not to the whole of the URC. This is a source of weakness and gives rise to many problems.

2.2 For example, the Monitoring Group noted the complete absence of black people from all the committees concerned with the assessment of candidates for the ministry at both national and provincial levels. This could not be viewed in isolation. It is closely related to more general problems, such as the underrepresentation of black people in Elders' Meetings, District Councils and Provincial Synods and their committees.

2.3 There have been other parallel initiatives. In 1987 the Church adopted a Declaration on Racism (sponsored by the Church and Society Department) which also makes provision for monitoring. We are aware of the work of the Urban Churches Support Group in the London area. These various initiatives need to be related to each other and co-ordinated.

2.4 Credibility is important. A policy which covers only one group of people, not the whole of the workforce, does not appear to demonstrate a genuine commitment to equal opportunities.

2.5 There is also the question of risk. As long as many employees (eg, staff at Tavistock Place) are not covered by a policy, the Church is more vulnerable to a legal challenge to an employment decision.

Scope of Policy - Disability

3.1 The existing policy covers only race and gender. Most secular Equal Opportunity policies also include disability and it is also appropriate for the church to consider equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

3.2 While the popular image of a disabled person is someone in a wheelchair, there are many types of disability, including for example blindness and deafness. Many disabilities are no impediment to a person doing a job, although some forms of disability might make it difficult for a person to do a particular job. An equal opportunity policy does not require an employer to select someone for a job they cannot do. It does require them to disregard as irrelevant a disability which does not prevent a person doing a particular job.

3.3 The treatment of disabled people is often a touchstone of the attitudes of an organisation or individual to disadvantage generally. It is therefore proposed that the policy be widened to cover disability.

Implementation of Policy

4.1 The adoption of a policy is not enough by itself. It requires effective implementation. The general statement set out in the resolution needs translating into detailed policies to deal with the different issue posed by prejudice against women, black people and people with disabilities. A first stage could simply be a review by each committee in the church of the steps needed to ensure that its work conformed to the policy.

4.2 The policy is, as the preamble states, a commitment 'to move forward at all levels and in all aspects of its life within the limitations of its resources'. This means, for example that when new buildings or alterations are under consideration, disabled access must be a priority issue but it does not commit churches to making all buildings instantly accessible for wheelchairs.

4.3 Monitoring - reviewing information in order to see how far a policy has been effectively implemented - is equally important and the resolutions therefore include provision for regular monitoring and report on progress.



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

WORK

Church and Society wishes to report a significant initiative which originated within the Urban Bishops' Group of the Church of England and which is now being developed ecumenically.

The plan is for a "Commission on Unemployment and the Future of Work" with wide-reaching terms of reference which we can make available. It would have a senior civil servant as secondee; this happened with "Faith in the City" and without it the project could not be handled by the churches. It would work over two years from this summer, concentrating on country-wide visits and hearings, examining some new projects of job creation, and leading to a statement of some kind - or other form of communication - on the best approaches to tackling long-term unemployment and the fundamental changes now being experienced in the pattern of employment, unemployment and underemployment.

The Commission itself would have around 20 people with a fairly high profile chairperson. In order to get going, it is proposed that denominational support and endorsement of the project be sought in ways appropriate to different denominations, with a view to bringing a resolution to the CCBI Church Representatives Meeting in May, to establish a Sponsoring Group which would then set up the Commission and oversee its work. It is proposed that the Sponsoring Group should include one URC person. The appropriate way of securing URC endorsement of the project would seem to be to invite Mission Council to pass the resolution set out below, with the assumption that our representatives on the CCBI CRM would then support the proposal.

The implications of this are that we contribute a nominal amount to the running costs of the Commission's work (max. £1000 for each of 3 years) and that we find a leading URC person to serve on the Sponsoring Group. This would not be particularly arduous as it is not an executive body; it would meet four times over the two years. We are asked to nominate someone, and an alternate, by Easter.

Few would dispute that this is the core economic issue of our time - and the most intractable. While not overlapping with secular wisdom more than is necessary, the churches would have a significant and distinctive contribution to make. We therefore very much hope that Mission Council would welcome the initiative of the Urban Bishops, rejoice that they are willing to be so ecumenical about the process, and offer the United Reformed Church's endorsement and support of it.

RESOLUTION: Mission Council welcomes the proposal to establish a Churches' Commission on Unemployment and the Future of Work and authorises the Convener and Secretary for Church and Society, in consultation with the General Secretary, to seek suitable nominations for a United Reformed Church representative to serve on the Sponsoring Group.

PTO



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

Cathy, get lost!

No-one can have missed the recent flurry of advertisements from SHELTER, the organisation that was founded in the aftermath of one television programme, 'Cathy, come home'. That programme stirred the whole nation and demonstrated that simply leaving homeless families on the streets led to personal tragedy and not to some otherwise unforeseen solution based on self-reliance. SHELTER is leading the outcry against the current Government Green Paper proposals. The Churches National Housing Coalition (CNHC) is inviting denominational responses in addition to their ecumenical one.

First in the 1977 Act and again in the 1985 Housing Act, local authorities were given the responsibility to house those who are accepted as homeless, those in priority need, those who are threatened with homelessness and those who are homeless unintentionally. 'Priority need' covers those who are pregnant, have dependent children or are vulnerable because of age or disability. Such prioritising has fed the myth of homeless families or pregnant teenagers jumping the queue ahead of those on the Council waiting lists. In fact over 70% of people on such waiting lists came there via homelessness; there is no 'fast track' - they are the same people accused of queue-jumping. For example, less than 1% of homeless people being accommodated in the London Borough of Camden (a relatively hospitable authority) are teenage single mothers.

The Government Green Paper takes us back to before the 1977 Act; it is both flawed and wrong. In the view of most independent housing specialists and organisations, these proposals will result in local authorities 'exporting' their problems (as some already tend to do), since they will only be obliged to help after a case has been assessed and then only to offer temporary accommodation. Homeless people, often with children, will go back to the shuttle between the offices of various Housing Departments, Social Services, DSS and non-statutory bodies, with all the damage (and waste of money) that implies. Being asked to leave by friends or relatives will need to be proved, perhaps with a court order, before there is acknowledgement of homelessness. No-one will be accepted as eligible for help if any temporary alternative accommodation of any kind is available. Everything is down to local authority discretion. And asylum seekers are specifically excluded from any entitlement to provision.

The deprived will be pitted against the desperate, the poor against the very poor in the scramble for the supply of decent low-cost housing which is declining again after a modest rise last year, down to 25,000pa. It would actually cost no more and in every other way be better to put the equivalent public expenditure into increasing the supply.

Recent research commissioned by Church and Society revealed that around a quarter of local United Reformed Churches have some involvement with a local housing association. This implies a widespread concern for bad housing and homelessness across the church and suggests that we might legitimately offer a response to the Government on this matter. The Green Paper invites responses before March 18 but if Mission Council agrees we shall submit a response from the United Reformed Church a few days late.

RESOLUTION: *Mission Council authorises the Secretary and Convener for Church and Society, in consultation the General Secretary, to submit a response to the Government Green Paper on "Access to Local Authority and Housing Association Tenancies".*



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

1994:

UN. Year of the Family

Following discussion at the October 1993 Mission Council, Peter Brain and Terry Oakley have consulted with each other and colleagues on what an emphasis on 'The family' at 1994 Assembly might best comprise.

There are so many issues that might be addressed under this heading, some of which are already causing concern to church members while others go unremarked. We could easily identify well over a dozen areas of church life and society generally that might be legitimately included under such a heading.

Our view is that Assembly in 1994 should listen and learn. It would be an agenda-setting rather than a policy-making style. The aim would be to share experiences and approaches, i.e. not only 'problems', not only the 'nuclear family', etc.

We therefore suggest that within the business programme there might be three scheduled slots of around 45 minutes each on successive days, i.e. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, to allow work to be done in between.

On the first day there would be appropriate presentation in plenary, including a keynote speaker or two. It should be possible to invite to contrasting public figures to speak as Christians about their perceptions of the family. This plenary could include some less formal input, e.g. a short drama or audio-visual presentation

In the second slot there would be group discussion of issues raised by the presentation (with a leaflet available) and by Assembly members. The Bible-study group structure proposed for Assembly would lend itself to this approach. Points made would be collated and a paper produced for the third period.

On the third occasion there would be opportunity for Assembly in plenary, to discern and determine what tasks were to be given, or issues referred, to the various constituent parts of the church; this would mean some work for central committees, some for local churches, some for regional working groups, some for non-URC bodies, etc.

Our feeling at this stage is that no policy resolutions should be brought; these might come back in 1995.

We should recognise that there are real differences of approach and not try to hide this.

We are glad that in principle the Moderator-elect and the Assembly Arrangements committee have accepted these ideas. We invite Mission Council to endorse the approach so that invitations may be extended and detailed plans made.

PJB



MISSION COUNCIL

18-20 MARCH 1994

FINANCE

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS for consideration by MISSION COUNCIL in March 1994

1. Accounts

- 1.1 The audited accounts covering the United Reformed Church central funds for 1993 are shown in appendix **

Resolution 1 Assembly adopts the accounts for 1993.

2. Ministry and Mission Fund

- 2.1 The 1993 result was a small deficit of about £30,000. However this result masks an increase in Maintenance of the Ministry costs of about £120,000, which fortunately was off set by a reduction in other central Church costs.
- 2.2 It is encouraging that the contributions to the Ministry and Mission Fund from the churches increased by 14% over 1992, at a time of continued economic restraint and we express our gratitude for this response. Full details of the sums received from each Province are shown on page ** of the accounts.

Resolution 2 Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 1993 to the Ministry and Mission Fund.

3. Budget 1995

- 3.1 Estimate 1994.
- 3.2 Budget 1995.

[Reports will be drafted when the budget for 1995 has been completed.]

Resolution 3 Assembly approves the budget for 1995, noting that expenditure is expected to be £**,***,***, which will require contributions from the churches of £**,***,**, an increase of **% over the 1994 commitments.

4. Retirement of Ministers serving joint URC/Methodist pastorates

- 4.1 In implementing Resolutions 10 and 11 of the 1993 General Assembly, with regard to the retirement of ministers no later than the age of 65 years and 6 months, the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee came upon a particular difficulty with regard to ministers serving joint URC/Methodist pastorates, where the normal date for a change of ministers is the 31st August. We therefore suggest a modification to resolution 10, which will then read as follows:-

"Assembly resolves that ministers shall retire from full-time stipendiary service not later than six calendar months from the date on which they shall have attained the age of 65, save that where ministers are serving in joint URC/Methodist pastorates at the time of retirement, ministers shall retire from full-time stipendiary service not later than the 31st August following the date on which they attain the age of 65."

Resolution 4 Assembly modifies Resolution 10, passed by Assembly in 1993, by the addition of the words "save that where ministers are serving in joint URC/Methodist pastorates at the time of retirement, ministers shall retire from full-time stipendiary service not later than the 31st August following the date on which they attain the age of 65."

5. Pension Fund Rule regarding Childrens' Awards

5.1 For many years the orphans benefit paid from the United Reformed Church Ministers Pension Fund has been £50 per annum per child under the age of 18 years. The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee feels that this figure has now become absurdly low, and Assembly should decide whether there should be a realistic payment, or none at all. Our recommendation is that we should increase the benefit five-fold, and thereafter review it annually, and this is contained in the Resolution.

5.2 It is with some reticence that we propose any additional expenditure while the fund continues to face such a huge deficit, but the overall cost will be minimal.

5.3 The amendment to rule 22 needs to be read in conjunction with the preamble to the rule "In the event of the death of a contributing member in service before normal pension age, there shall become payable the following benefits:"

Resolution 5 Assembly amends the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers Pension Fund (both the rules applying before Assembly 1993, for those who elected to be dealt with under these rules, and the rules adopted by Assembly 1993), as follows:-

Rule 22.3 to read:- "Where a member leaves one or more children below the age of eighteen years, a pension of £250, or such greater sum as the Committee may decide in respect of each child, until the child attains the age of eighteen years.

6. Discontinuation of the payment of Stipend Supplements through the central payroll system

6.1 Following the adoption of Resolution 9 by General Assembly in 1993, the staff in the finance office discovered that National Insurance regulations dictate that where a minister's stipend is paid by the central office, it is also a requirement that the central office shall assume responsibility for National Insurance contributions on any additional stipend supplement

that may be paid from other sources. In the circumstances, the Committee decided that resolution 9 of the 1993 General Assembly could not be implemented, and that the Assembly should be asked to rescind it.

- 6.2 The Committee therefore decided that, in order to comply with the National Insurance regulations, the payment of supplementary stipends through the central payroll system should be made mandatory.

Resolution 6 Assembly rescinds Resolution 9 passed by Assembly in 1993 as follows:-

"Assembly agrees to discontinue the payment of supplements through the central payroll from the 1st October 1993, except in exceptional cases that may be agreed by the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee".

Resolution 7 Assembly amends the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration by adding the following paragraph:-

6.2.2 Stipend supplements: General Assembly 1993 passed the following Resolution - "Assembly believes the payment of special stipend supplements by churches is no longer justified and calls upon ministers and churches to bring an end to this payment as soon as possible". As the decision rests with the minister and the local church, and in order to comply with National Insurance regulations, any continuing supplement payments will be required to be paid through the central payroll system, the cost (including, for example, additional National Insurance contributions) being an expense of the local church.

8. Ordination Loans

- 8.1 The Committee believes that it is now appropriate for proportional ordination loans to be made available to ordinands due to serve in Part-time pastorates.

Resolution 8 Assembly adds the wording shown in heavy type to paragraph 8.2.1 of the Plan for Partnership which will now read:-

"An interest free loan (as shown in Appendix A) is available to ordinands for the stipendiary ministry; **where the pastorate to be served is part-time the loan shall be pro-rata according to the proportion of whole-time basic stipend: this loan shall be re-payable by deduction from stipend over a period of not more than five years or such other period as the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the central MoM Committee, shall from time to time determine.**"