

**The
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
1984**

**30th April — 4th May
THE CITY HALL
NORTHUMBERLAND ROAD
Newcastle-upon-Tyne**

**REPORTS
TO ASSEMBLY**

**The United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom
86 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT**

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The United Reformed Church

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

and other papers submitted to the

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Newcastle, 30th April to 4th May, 1984

BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT

Chairman: Mr R. A. Heritage

Secretary: Mrs Sheila Tull

The Business Committee has been grateful to members of Assembly for the comments and suggestions that were made following the 1983 Assembly regarding possible changes and improvements in presentation of business. These comments have been noted and appropriate changes will be considered; in fact some have been implemented.

During the course of its meetings, following the revision of Standing Orders, the question of the revision of the Manual was also considered and the Manual in its revised form was authorised by the Committee. Copies will be on sale at the Assembly.

In response to a request from the East Midlands Province, the Committee considered the procedure in Assembly for the Loyal Address and is instituting some variations this year. The Address will be in the printed programme for Monday evening and the assent to it will be taken by a show of hands, followed by prayer. Further consideration of this matter will be given by the Committee.

The Committee has considered the procedure to be adopted for the handling of an appeal received by the General Secretary from the Church at Ramsey, Isle of Man against the decision of the Provincial Synod recommending against secession. The appeal will be dealt with according to the Standing Orders for Appeals as accepted by the 1972 General Assembly.

Both Province and Church have, in accordance with those Standing Orders, been invited to allow the matter to be resolved through a Committee appointed by the General Assembly (see Standing Order number 8). If either party disagrees with the procedure, then the Appeal will be brought to the General Assembly and timed to take place on Friday 3rd May at the end of other business.

RESOLUTION

Assembly receives the Report of the Business Committee.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Chairman: Mr Raymond T. Clarke

Secretary: The Revd John P. Reardon

- 1. Priorities** The Church and Society Department must always make difficult choices about priorities. There are always more demands than can be adequately met especially in a Department with very limited staff resources. Ecumenical cooperation is desirable and essential but there is a long way to go yet before the churches in Britain are willing to trust one another so completely as to plan all their work together. Nevertheless the Department staff continue to devote much of their time to ecumenical cooperation through the British Council of Churches, the Free Church Federal Council and several other church-related agencies and committees and continue to press for as much joint work as possible. Such cooperation, therefore, has to take precedence over the demands on staff time made by local churches and determines the main priority issues.
- 2.** The major concerns of the Department in the past year have been justice and peace. In a rapidly changing world Christians must support only those changes that contribute to greater justice and peace. In particular, against the background of Christ's concern for the poor and disadvantaged, Christians look for policies within and among nations that will improve the living conditions of the neediest and most deprived people.
- 3.** In many fields the Department views with alarm the growing polarisation between the rich and the poor. Among the nations, as evidenced by the failure of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Budapest in June 1983, there is little urgency to find measures which will meet the needs of the frightening numbers of poor people. Their plight grows steadily worse and the huge numbers who die of hunger and as a result of poverty are a sad reflection of the distorted priorities pursued by the world's governments.
- 4.** Within the United Kingdom itself there are similar tendencies towards the creation of two nations, the rich and the poor. Much of the Department's work has been directed to the growing polarisation between these "two nations". In housing, social services, education, employment and health the present economic policies are creating hardship and are sowing the seeds of long term strife within the community. Often the churches show little awareness of this polarisation and have little contact with those who endure the hardship.
- 5. Housing** Housing has borne far more than its share of public expenditure cuts. Public spending on housing has sunk to about a third of what it was in 1976 but has aroused little public outcry. Cuts announced in the Autumn of 1983 and public expenditure forecasts announced in February 1984 confirm the view that prospects for future investment are bleak. New building by local authorities and the rehabilitation of the four million houses in serious disrepair in both public and private sectors are being given dangerously low priority.
- 6.** Owner occupation is supported by all political parties but it remains a dream beyond the means of millions of citizens. Many local authorities, including most of the largest conurbations, have sold off much of their most desirable properties and are still facing growing waiting lists and rising levels of homelessness. Basic living conditions and permanent housing are a right of every citizen but to the poor and homeless are becoming less and less available. Families are forced to live in unacceptable conditions and there is little hope, given present policies, of alleviating the suffering of rising numbers of homeless single people and married couples.
- 7.** Until recently there has been a consensus that public sector housing provision should attempt to meet general housing need. The Government has now virtually abandoned new provision except for special needs such as the elderly and disabled, thus ensuring that large numbers of people in greatest housing and social need have no alternative but to accept and remain in deteriorating, ill-resourced and often hostile environments. It pursues a policy of selling off the housing stock and resists pressure to allocate sufficient new money to create and sustain even the most basic housing programme.

8. The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 was seen as a first step towards access to housing as a right for all homeless people. Although its provisions were limited to certain priority groups and still excluded from local authority responsibility most single people and couples without families, some areas are introducing phased extension of housing under the Act. In other areas, in spite of sensitive housing management, the Act is virtually inoperable if the normal route to housing via the waiting list is to be honoured. Where there is high demand for housing popular criticism tends to blame homeless people for their circumstances. There is little informed analysis of why housing supply fails to match housing need, let alone any appreciation of what future provisions would be necessary to break out of the insecure and degrading options currently available.

9. In spite of severe political and financial constraints, Housing Associations continue their commitment to provide homes for those in need and offer some hope with their wide range responses in independent units, group homes, cluster flats and small-scale hostels. Enlightened views of community care could release many people currently living in large institutions to live independently in the community given appropriate housing provision and support in the form of specialised care and welcoming communities.

10. The Department has produced a Housing Pack to help local churches investigate housing needs and provision and to consider the implications of present housing policy and levels of investment. The Department believes that churches have a distinctive role to play in giving voice to those in greatest housing need, in shaping attitudes to ensure that homeless people are accorded dignity and offered choices which lead to integration within the community, and in influencing public opinion so that housing becomes an issue of increasing electoral importance.

11. The Department is indebted to Mrs Ann Sutcliffe, the Assistant Secretary, and the members of the Working Party, Mr Philip Baker, Miss Helen Freshwater, Martin Jelfs, Revd. Donald Macarthur, Peter Webster, Mr James Burns, Mrs Gwen Tyrer, Revd. David Morris, Revd. Brian Coward for preparing the pack and for the expert advice they have provided. The pack is intended for local churches in the hope that it will assist them in resisting the rise of homelessness within our society. It should provide a useful preparation for 1987 which the United Nations has designated as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. The Department in welcoming this designation urges churches to begin to press for the phased extension of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977. The Department also urges local churches to play their part, in cooperation with voluntary and statutory organisations, in identifying special housing needs, in seeking provision of small-scale community based housing in partnership with Housing Associations, and in offering from within their membership the necessary management and pastoral support.

12. **Crisis in the Countryside** Two years ago the Department referred to the problems of rural deprivation and this continues to feature in its priorities. In spite of growing public awareness of the issue, for instance through the recent Channel 4 TV series "Country Crisis", the decline in rural services continues on a scale which is creating serious difficulties for many rural dwellers and real hardship for particular groups, such as the elderly, the young and those in socially disadvantaged minority groups—the unemployed, the disabled and chronically sick, and single parent families.

13. Three key areas may serve to highlight the problems:

- i) Housing. Rural areas are facing a deepening housing crisis with waiting lists effectively as long as in the cities and with homelessness on the increase. Higher than average house prices, the almost total disappearance of private houses to rent, the sharp decline in local authority provision and the inadequate safeguards controlling the resale of council houses all contribute to the problem. An additional factor is the unequal competition in a limited market, between less well-off local people who live in the countryside and those more affluent people from the urban areas seeking rural seclusion.
- ii) Employment. There is continuing decline in rural employment opportunities with levels of unemployment often well above the national average. The number and va-

riety of rural jobs are declining as services are withdrawn, and low wages and poor conditions continue to characterise the rural scene. Employment offices and Job-centres are being closed making it more difficult for job seekers, especially those without access to transport, to obtain advice about vacancies.

- iii) **Mobility and Accessibility.** These have become crucial issues in rural areas as public and private services, especially transport, are steadily withdrawn. The closure of village schools, the withdrawal and centralisation of social, health and welfare services and the increasing threat to rural postal and telephone services all serve to deprive the neediest rural people still further and to entrench the process of social polarisation which has been a marked feature of the countryside over recent decades.

14. There are some signs of hope. Among rural communities there is an encouraging growth of determination in raising public awareness of the issues and in pressing for improvement. The churches have a role to play in this especially in encouraging the most deprived people to speak about their plight and their needs. The recent establishment of a partnership between the churches and Rural Voice, an alliance of national organisations representing rural communities, is a welcome development. Through this partnership it is possible to draw attention to the consequences of national policies on rural areas and to share in stimulating local action to provide alternative services with the common goal of the social and economic well-being of the whole rural community.

15. Later in 1984 the Department intends to produce some study and action material to help the churches to engage more urgently in an appraisal of rural problems and needs and to press for improvement in the conditions of rural people.

16. **Unemployment** Previous reports by the Department have highlighted the problem of unemployment and it remains one of the most serious features of our society. Many local churches have continued to offer training and job creation programmes particularly for young unemployed people while others have developed counselling, drop-in and leisure facilities. Nevertheless the frequent changes in the Manpower Services Commission over the past few years lead many to the conclusion that it has provided little more than a series of short term responses to a deep-seated structural problem in Western society.

17. In April 1983 the new Youth Training Scheme was launched and came into operation in September. From several quarters within the British churches reservations about the Scheme have been voiced. Public discussion has tended to focus on the poor quality of some of the training and the financing of the programme. From within the churches and church-related organisations there have come more fundamental criticisms of the principles underlying the Scheme. It offers no guarantee of employment and has no job creation element within it. It can be seen as a disincentive to employers to create jobs when they can take on trainees at the Scheme's expense. Some see it as damaging to long-term recovery in the labour market while others are concerned about the rather narrow concept of education which the Scheme embodies. The British Council of Churches, through its Education Consultation on which the Department is represented, has produced an excellent discussion paper setting forth the arguments for and against the Scheme. Several industrial mission teams have also produced studies about the effect of the Manpower Services Commission on unemployment.

18. **Streamlining the Cities** At the February Executive Committee the Department voiced its concern that churches, especially those in areas likely to be affected, should study and comment on the proposals for the abolition of the Greater London Council and the six Metropolitan Counties in England (Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire). Among the main issues raised by these proposals are the lack of independent studies and enquiries to determine whether changes are necessary or desirable, grave doubts about the costs involved, the replacement of democratically elected representatives by boards appointed from among those elected to more local councils and with more limited responsibilities, the lack of comprehensive provision for the arts and cultural activities and the serious disadvantages that the inner cities will experience.

19. The Department hopes that churches will make their voices heard in the public discussion and will, in particular, make their views known to their MPs. Legislation is expected in the 1984/85 session of Parliament. The Department has prepared a paper setting out the main proposals and raising questions about them for discussion.

20. **The Family** The Department welcomes the development of the Family Life Education Ecumenical Project during the past year and the appointment of a part-time field-worker. Family Forum has also continued to focus attention on the trends in family life and has provided a means for many different organisations at both national and local level to confer together and exchange opinions about society's provision for families. In her keynote address to the Family Forum AGM in the Autumn Baroness Carnegy of Lour summed up some of the aspects of family life which now need to be considered when she said "...right across the country there is a growing feeling that we have got to find better ways than the present ones of living our family lives. We need ways that properly fit the 1980s, that allow for many of us spending far more time at home, because of unemployment, of shorter working hours; that allow for a proper balance of sharing the burden between man and woman; allow for the situation in which young people now find themselves; allow for the way we see marriage, or non-marriage, today; allow for modern understanding of children's needs; allow for there being a lot less money around in the family budget and in the funds that make public services available.

21. Family Forum is hoping for nationwide coverage in its plans for the observance of Family Fortnight from 1st to 14th July 1984. Such a fortnight's focus on family life could offer the churches the opportunity to cooperate with other organisations in exhibitions, meetings, discussions and many other joint ventures and to re-examine and explain their own understanding of and provision for family life.

22. **World Development** While the main focus for the Department over the past year has been the developments in our national life the need to keep a global perspective has also been maintained. The Department welcomes, in particular, the growing observance in October each year of One World Week and urges all churches to plan imaginatively programmes of world development education to deepen awareness of global issues particularly as they affect the widening gap between the rich and poor countries. Many warnings have been voiced about the prospect for world hunger during the 1980s and within the past year many of the poorer countries have sunk into disastrous problems over debt repayments. While the development lobby in Britain, with strong support from the churches, has been gratified to see official British overseas aid spending maintained without cuts, it has been alarmed at the United States decisions to cut its financial replenishment to the International Development Association, thus threatening to undermine the aid-giving potential of the World Bank. Meanwhile UNICEF, in its 1983 annual report, "The State of the World's Children", has painted a grim picture of the suffering and premature death that many children in the world have to experience because of the failure of the nations to put the issues of development at the top of their priorities.

23. The Department's work in promoting the 1% World Development Appeal has remained an important priority and the 1983/1984 Appeal has gained the support of several churches and individuals for the first time. A large number of churches also raised considerably increased sums for the Appeal and it is expected that the printed report to be circulated to the churches in June will show an income of over £200,000. A slide/tape set is available in every District for free loan to all churches considering the Appeal or wishing to renew their understanding of it. New Appeal literature will be available in July.

24. **Disarmament and Peace** The debate and resolution on disarmament and peace at last year's Assembly have caused widespread discussion throughout the URC and the Department has been called on to advise churches about the conduct of their discussions. The Departmental Secretary and other members of the Department Committee have shared in many meetings in Provinces, District Councils and local churches helping to explain and interpret the implications of the Assembly resolutions. Opinions have been divided throughout the Church about those resolutions. Some local churches have forcefully ex-

pressed their disagreement with the Assembly resolutions, most have found their members divided but a few have taken the debate as the starting point for a more sustained and creative approach to Christian peace-making.

25. Developments within Europe during the year gave an added urgency to the discussions within the churches. In response to the deployment by the USSR of medium range SS20 missiles in Eastern Europe, NATO deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles began in the latter part of 1983. The Geneva negotiations between the superpowers immediately broke down and the prospects for agreement on disarmament measures seem further away than ever. The shooting down of a South Korean airliner by Russian fighters in early September underlined the fragility of world peace and security.

26. Against this background of worsening international relations, in search of ecumenical consensus on issues of peace and disarmament, the British Council of Churches Assembly in November passed a series of resolutions each of which gain the support of unusually large majorities. These resolutions printed in "Reform" in January and now available, together with a theological introduction, in a pamphlet "On Making Peace in a Nuclear World", were as follows:

"Believing the manufacture as well as the possession of nuclear weapons to be an offence against God and his creation, the British Council of Churches puts forward the following proposals as steps towards their eventual elimination:

Policy Proposals

1. The Council considers that the United Kingdom, like France, is in a position to make a particular contribution to nuclear disarmament. Renunciation of independent nuclear weapons by Britain (and/or France) would add weight and credibility to arguments against horizontal proliferation. The Council therefore reaffirms its decisions of 1979 and 1980 and urges that the United Kingdom, while remaining within NATO, should progressively phase out British nuclear weapons, and in particular should not replace Polaris with Trident missiles.
2. The Council recalls its 1963 decision that the nuclear arms race constitutes "an offence to God and denial of His purpose for man." The Council therefore urges that the United Kingdom should work within NATO for a deterrence and defence policy that becomes progressively less dependent on nuclear weapons.
3. The Council further recalls its 1963 decision that it is intolerable that there should be any question of the West using nuclear weapons first and notes that there is a growing world-wide consensus that the conditional intention to use nuclear weapons first is offensive to Christian conscience. The Council urges that the United Kingdom should work within NATO for a no-first-use posture and policy, even if this should necessitate higher levels of conventional arms and forces.
4. The Council recognises that governments seek to avoid moves that might destabilize the balance. The Council recalls its 1967 decision that Britain and France should be prepared to forgo the possession of nuclear weapons if this would promote non-proliferation, and does not consider that the progressive phasing out of British and French nuclear weapons would have a destabilizing effect. As long as Britain and France retain independent nuclear weapons, this Council considers that they should be counted in relevant East/West disarmament negotiations if this would make super-power agreement easier to achieve.
5. Acknowledging that a nuclear component in deterrence is likely to continue to govern relations between the alliances and that negotiations on nuclear disarmament are likely to be complex and lengthy, the Council considers that the deployment of the new weapons on either side would not provide a sufficient reason for the breaking off of negotiations; the Council therefore urges that negotiations be pursued with vigour, even in the face of serious obstacles.

6. Considering that the addition of further nuclear weapons on one side (even if to correct a perceived imbalance) will almost invariably provoke a similar build-up on the other (also to correct a perceived imbalance) this Council deplors the deployment of large numbers of Soviet SS-20 missiles and does not consider that the deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles in response will advance the cause of security and peace. In order to prevent further escalation and to halt the competitive spiral in nuclear arms, the Council calls for an agreed and verified nuclear freeze by the United States and the Soviet Union, thus precluding further development, testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons by the two super-powers."

The Department welcomes them and hopes that they will provide a basis for joint action by all the Churches.

27. At last year's Assembly the Department was instructed to establish a Peace Group. The Group began its work in the Autumn and has produced a leaflet about Christian Peacemaking and plans to produce more material for study and action. The members of the Group are: Revd. Bryan Alderson, Mr John Bartlett, Revd Tom Colvin, Revd. Kate Compston, Mr Malcolm Compston, Revd. Harold Dixon, Revd Dorothy Havergal-Shaw, Revd. Donald Hilton, Mrs Maureen Kendall, Revd. Dr. Lesslie Newbigin, Mrs Pamela Pavitt, Mr David Reynolds, Revd. Kevin Watson, Mr Philip Woods, Revd. John Reardon. It works closely with the newly established Peace Forum in the BCC and will provide a support and reference group within the URC for the Peace Associates from the Presbyterian Church in the USA, the Revds. Pete and Maggie Peery, when they arrive in August.

28. **Argentina** During the South Atlantic crisis in 1982 the BCC, acting on behalf of all the Churches, maintained contact with church leaders in Argentina. During the early Summer of 1983 two visits were made to South America to meet church leaders and a further meeting of British, Irish, Argentine and other South American participants in the WCC Assembly was held at Vancouver. These meetings established the need for continued discussion of the questions raised by the conflict and for visits to both countries. To facilitate continued discussion the BCC is setting up a Falklands Forum and a delegation of Argentine church leaders will visit Britain and Ireland in March and April of this year.

29. **Other Issues** Many other issues have occupied the Department. Staff and other members of the Committee have represented the URC in many organisations and pieces of work. Among them are the Churches Consortium on Industrial Mission, the Churches Council on Alcohol and Drugs, Church Action on Poverty, the World Development Movement, the BCC's Human Rights Forum, Christian Aid's Development Education Committee, and several other Groups and Committees under the auspices of the BCC and the FCFC. The Department Secretary has chaired the BCC/FCFC Working Party on Trading Hours which submitted evidence to the Government's Committee of Inquiry. In all these activities the Department has sought to interpret the insights and imperatives derived from the Gospel to assist Christians to play their part in influencing and shaping today's world.

30. **Consultation and Conferences** During the past year the Department sponsored a consultation for Community Centre Churches of which a short report is available. It arranged the annual consultation for those engaged in Industrial Mission and has begun to develop a network within the URC on urban and industrial issues. As in previous years the Department organised British participation in the annual Teachers Conference for members of the URC and the German Palatinate Church. The Conference was in Yorkshire in August 1983 and was the largest of its kind for many years with over fifty adults and children from both nations. Department staff were also responsible for organising the visit of the Brussels-based Joint Task Force on Development Issues to Britain during One World Week to observe British methods of development education.

31. **Long Range Policy Group Report** The Department has given considerable thought to the suggestions made in the Long Range Policy Group's Report. Many of its proposals were endorsements of the style and content of present work but the Department welcomed the Report and resolved to review its priorities and objectives each year, to continue to

press for more ecumenical cooperation through the BCC and to take the initiative in establishing an interdepartmental group on Racism Awareness in the URC.

RESOLUTIONS

- 2 1. The Assembly views with deep concern the growing gap between the privileged and the disadvantaged in the United Kingdom and urges the churches to give priority in their evangelistic outreach to work with the poor and disadvantaged, identifying the causes of poverty and disadvantage and seeking to eliminate them.
 - 3 2. The Assembly draws the attention of the churches to the housing crisis and urges them to study needs in their areas and to take appropriate action with a view to securing a greater level of political priority for housing.
 - 4 3. The Assembly requests churches in rural areas to enter into discussion with MPs and civic leaders about the needs of their communities especially in respect of housing, employment, mobility and accessibility to public services; and to bring these needs to the notice of the wider Councils of the Church.
 - 5 4. The Assembly considers that the proposals published for the abolition of the Greater London Council and the six Metropolitan Counties in England raise important issues about the scope and exercise of power in a democracy, the proper sharing of responsibility for the most disadvantaged inner city areas, the public provision for cultural institutions and activities, and the partnership in services between voluntary and statutory organisations. The Assembly invites churches, District Councils and Synods, particularly those in the areas most immediately affected, to study the proposals and to make their views known to their elected representatives in local and national government.
 - 6 5. The Assembly, recognising that the churches have a contribution to make in the changing circumstances of family life, encourages them to share with other bodies in organising and promoting Family Fortnight in July 1984.
 - 7 6. The Assembly, conscious of the alarming signs of increasing poverty and injustice in the world, welcomes the evidence of greater support for the 1% World Development Appeal and urges the churches to continue their witness on behalf of the world's poor through their support for the Appeal and in their public education and political action.
 - 8 7. The Assembly welcomes the Revds Pete and Maggie Peery as Peace Associates appointed by the Presbyterian Church in the USA to work with the United Reformed Church and with the Peace Forum of the British Council of Churches.
 - 9 8. The Assembly urges churches to continue to study and search for appropriate ways of making peace in a nuclear age and commends in this process the resolutions of the November 1983 Assembly of the British Council of Churches.
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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Rt Revd Alasdair J. G. Walker

Secretary: The Revd Bernard Thorogood

1. Meetings of the Committee. The Committee met on 7/8 July 1983 residentially at Damascus House, Mill Hill, and on 3 November 1983 and 2 February 1984 at Church House, with the Moderator presiding.

2. Constitution Review Group. In accordance with the resolution of the 1983 General Assembly the Executive, having received the report of this Group and having made some amendments to it, issued it for information to Synods and District Councils in July 1983. It therefore comes to the Assembly, and those proposals which are to amend the URC Structure will require a two-thirds majority at this Assembly and ratification in 1985. The report stands as Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Review of Assembly Departments and Committees. Last year the Executive Committee reported on work undertaken to reconsider the pattern of the Departments. At four meetings, over two years, this subject has been thoroughly discussed. The views of the Synod Executive Committees have been gratefully received. A working party, chaired by Miss Dorothy Biggs, has worked out the detailed changes that are now proposed to Assembly. The Executive recognised that alongside this proposal there are also suggestions for the co-ordination between Departments and for an overall critical watch on URC planning, and these are brought forward in other sections of the Committee's work. The Report on Departments and Committees stands as Appendix 2 to this report.

4. Presbyterian Church, Rangoon, Burma. On the recommendation of World Church and Mission Department, the Executive authorised the transfer of this property from trustees of the former Presbyterian Church of England to trustees appointed by the Presbyterian Church of Burma.

5. Capital Punishment. On the recommendation of the Church and Society Department, the Executive passed the following resolution:

Christians reverence and respect all human life as God's gift. The judicial taking of life as a penalty for murder does not enhance the sacredness of life but further devalues it. We oppose the use of capital punishment as a retributive measure.

There is substantial doubt that capital punishment has any significant deterrent effect. On the other hand, we know that conviction and execution of the innocent have taken place in the past.

Since some people seek martyrdom and some find the thought of execution morbidly fascinating, capital punishment may positively excite a potential killer and also be unwholesome in its emotional impact on others.

6. Secretary for Communication and Supplies. On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, the Executive appointed Miss Alma Wade as Secretary for Communication and Supplies from 1 September 1983. The Committee offered good wishes from the whole church on his retirement to Mr Percy Bush.

7. Provincial Moderator Review Groups. The Executive, in receiving the reports of four Review Groups, expressed concern about the workload of Provincial Moderators. A preliminary survey was done on the individual timetables of Moderators and on the back-up available in Provincial offices. It was seen that there is much variation, that resources are unequally available, that all Provinces are taking a very serious concern to support their Moderator, that ecumenical engagements are an increasing element in the diary, and that the overall picture, though not one of impossible burdens, needs watching.

The Executive also considered the timing of Review Groups and agreed that normally their first working meeting be in September and that they report to the Executive in February.

The Review Groups for Northern, Mersey, South West and Wales Provinces all recommended the continued service of the present Moderators, but with periods of service limited to three years on account of age in two cases. These are detailed in the resolutions.

8. Deputy General Secretary. The Executive received advice from the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee, and agreed that the Revd John Reardon be appointed Deputy General Secretary in place of the Revd Boris Anderson.

9. Executive Committee's Terms of Reference. The Committee, as part of its concern to review the working of Assembly Committees, discussed the present very limited terms of reference and the need to widen them, first to provide a point of regular co-ordination for the work of Departments and second to offer a place for the introduction of ideas before they have reached the stage of becoming resolutions to Assembly. The Committee proposes that the Regulations be amended by adding clauses c. and d. to the existing terms a. and b.

- a. The Executive Committee shall act between Assemblies on all matters remitted to it by the Assembly.
- b. The Executive Committee shall act for the Assembly when events in the church or the contemporary world call for quick decision and action, but always in the light of the policy of the Assembly where this has been declared.
- c. The Executive Committee shall regularly consider co-ordination between Assembly Departments and new areas of departmental work, so that resources may be effectively used and the Assembly informed.
- d. The Executive Committee shall provide a forum for ideas arising from central or Provincial departments or officers and presented by such bodies, and shall give advice regarding the process of discussion.

10. Mansfield College Constitution. On the recommendation of the Church Life Department, the Executive gave approval to a new constitution prepared for the college which will give effect to the present nature of the college community while safeguarding the continuance of ordination training. The document will require Charity Commission approval.

11. Church Buildings Committee. The Executive received a resolution from the Wessex Synod seeking a revision of the composition of the Church Buildings Committee in view of the changes in policy that had been causing uncertainty. The Executive responded as follows:

The Executive Committee receives the request of the Wessex Synod regarding policies adopted by the Church Buildings Committee. It asks the Church Buildings Committee to bring to the Assembly, as soon as possible, for approval, a proposed policy which can be pursued over the next few years, and resolves to consider whether such proposed new policy requires a revision of the composition of the Church Buildings Committee.

12. Forward Policy Group. One recommendation of the Long Range Policy group 'Preparing the Way' was that the URC should have a small standing committee which would be charged to stimulate, support and comment on our planning for future life and work at all levels of the church. The 1983 Assembly agreed to examine detailed proposals for such a group. The Executive has therefore prepared a constitution for a Forward Policy Group, attached to this Report as Appendix 3 and commends these proposals in a resolution.

13. Future Assemblies. The Executive carefully considered a proposal from the Business Committee that we hold a fully residential Assembly over a long weekend. The benefits of such an experiment were seen to be that a wider range of lay people may be enabled to attend, that more time could be spent in more informal discussion and study, and that members would be able to know each other as friends in an atmosphere of Christian fellowship. In a very preliminary sketch of a programme the following elements were suggested: Arrival Friday 5.0 p.m., departure Tuesday after breakfast. Before the formal consideration

of Departmental business there would be informal 'hearings' in which members could ask questions and raise issues on those departments which particularly interest them. In addition to a service of Holy Communion on Sunday morning, there would be bible study in groups. Since the dating of our Assembly precludes the use of a university, the Committee has investigated other sites and recommends the Caister Holiday Camp, Norfolk from 25 to 29 April 1986. Response from Synods has generally been favourable but not enthusiastic, and has particularly concentrated on the additional cost. The Executive, on the advice of the Finance and Administration Department, recommends that the additional cost (estimated at about £40,000) be met from Unified Appeal, spread over three years, and that individual donations from members be invited.

The Executive has accepted an invitation from the North Western Province to hold the Assembly at Blackpool in 1987 and has welcomed the suggestion from the Wales Province that in 1988 the Assembly might meet in Cardiff.

14. Nationally supported projects. The Assembly agreed to a process by which the Assembly could receive co-ordinated advice from the various Committees involved concerning Synod applications for national participation in major projects. The report of this Group is Appendix 4.

15. Prayer Handbook. The Committee received a report from an inter-departmental group dealing with the Assembly resolution to prepare URC prayer aids, and encouraged the production of a URC insert to the 1985 CWM Prayer Handbook.

Resolutions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 to be taken with this Report.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE — APPENDIX 1

CONSTITUTION REVIEW GROUP — Report and Recommendations to the General Assembly

1. The first resolution remitted to the Group read as follows:-

The Assembly, recognising the service asked of and given by Ministers Emeriti in District Councils, believes that Ministers Emeriti status as Associate Members of District Councils needs revision so that they may be given full membership in consultation with the Provincial Synod. Therefore the Assembly agrees to undertake a comprehensive review of paragraph 9.3.g. of the Scheme of Union in order to effect the necessary changes.

2. The Group has considered the matter under two headings—the general case of all Ministers Emeriti in a District and the case of those Ministers Emeriti who are asked to undertake special service for the Council.

3. With regard to the first question, the Group recommends no change in the existing constitutional provision. The associate member status seems to us wholly appropriate. The Church does not wish to place on retired ministers the onus of regular attendance at District Councils and Synods, and it must have a concern for the very great disparity in numbers of Ministers Emeriti resident in each District. In some cases the addition of such voting members would be considerable, and would alter the character of the voting body. The Group does not sense any widespread desire for change.

4. But with regard to the second matter, we believe change is desirable to make it quite clear that a Minister Emeritus may be called to be an officer of a District Council or an Interim Moderator. When this happens, the status of full voting member of the Council should be affirmed for the duration of the post held. This would enable such Ministers Emeriti who are actually fulfilling a major responsibility for the Church to exercise that responsibility in the appropriate council of the Church.

5. It would be logical to apply this policy also to Synods, so that Ministers Emeriti might also be called to an office there and become full members during that period.

6. RECOMMENDATION The Assembly amends the Structure of the URC as follows:-

New 9.3.g. When a District Council appoints a Minister Emeritus as an officer of the District Council or as an Interim Moderator, that minister shall be a full member of the District Council for the period of the appointment.

Re-number 9.3.g. to 9.3.h. All Ministers Emeriti not covered by clause 9.3.g. residing in...

Re-number 9.3.h. to 9.3.i.

New 9.4.g. When a Synod appoints a Minister Emeritus as an officer of the Synod, that Minister shall be a full member of the Synod for the period of the appointment.

Re-number 9.4.g. to 9.4.h. All Ministers Emeriti not covered by clause 9.4.g. residing in...

Re-number 9.4.h. to 9.4.i.

7. The second Resolution remitted to the Group read as follows:-

The Assembly, recognising that the URC has been well served by its Moderators, and that the procedure for election of Assembly Moderators was largely set up before the uniting Assembly in 1972, and that involvement in the process of election has been somewhat limited and that the range of Moderators has not been fully representative of the life of the Church, agrees that the Executive Committee be asked to consider the method of election of Assembly Moderator with a view to achieving deeper consideration of the needs of the Church.

8. The Group has considered the way in which the election of Moderator has been carried through and the record of persons appointed. It has considered the methods of election used in eight sister churches in the UK and abroad. The Group has identified three stages of the process: a) the bringing forward of names, b) the narrowing down of the list, c) the actual election.

9. The Group recommends that participation in the first process should be deliberately made as wide as possible, so that every local church may share in it. We therefore wish to introduce a Resolution to Assembly instructing Synods to consider nominations only after inviting suggestions from every local church and District Council. It is thought that a practical way of carrying this through could be to add a question to the Annual Returns Form 'Does the church suggest a person to the Synod for nomination as Assembly Moderator?' This should ensure that Synods have a wide variety of names before them.

10. The Group recommends that the Synods remain responsible for screening the suggestions, each being entitled to make one nomination to Assembly.

11. The Group recommends that the Assembly retain the present election of its presiding officer, but recommends the amendment of Regulation 8 (page 69, Manual) to provide for voting to take place within the Assembly and in the context of prayer.

12. In rejecting the possibility of a nominating committee or caucus, the Group has in mind that it would be impossible for two levels of screening to be treated with equal thoroughness. If the nominating committee were to undertake severe screening and bring forward only one name or two, then Synods would not take a responsible part in the process but would simply forward every name that arose. If each Synod undertakes a careful consideration of the names itself and can produce a single nominee, it is inappropriate for a central committee then to narrow further the choice of the Assembly. The Group considered that whenever possible we should use the existing structure of the URC rather than create new institutions.

13. The Group is aware of the need to have a wide variety of people elected to this senior office. If, however, the Assembly is to retain the vote as a reality and not a formality, it is always likely that well-known people will be chosen more often than little-known people.

We do not believe that this is a serious weakness of the present system, since the Moderator needs familiarity with the wider church scene and we have enjoyed a considerable variety of talents in those elected since 1972.

14. In order to regularise the material supplied by Synods to the General Secretary about nominees, the Group stresses that the paragraph should be solely curriculum vitae material and not commendation of skills and service rendered. The intention of this material is to help members of the Assembly to make further enquiry about those nominated.

15. **RECOMMENDATION 1.** The Assembly instructs Provincial Synods to proceed to the nomination of persons for Moderator of General Assembly according to Part III, 3, (3) of Rules of Procedure (Manual, p.68) only after inviting suggestions from local churches and District Councils.

RECOMMENDATION 2. The Assembly amends Regulation 8 (Manual, p.69) to read as follows:

'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 its final session.'

16. The third resolution remitted to the Group was as follows:

The Assembly, noting that the ministerial strength of Districts is expected to increase through the ordination and appointment of Auxiliary Ministers, and noting that the eligibility of ministers without pastoral charge to serve as Councils' representatives to Assembly is uncertain, agrees to review the rule on District Representation, para.5(a) on page 27 of the Manual.

17. The Group does not agree that the present wording of this rule is in any way uncertain. It refers to 'ministerial and lay in equal numbers'. 'Ministerial' means those who have been ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and 'lay' means those who have not been so ordained. It is therefore entirely possible to apply this present rule.

18. Yet the Group recognised that there are difficulties in applying this rule. In some places there is a sense of injustice. The first problem is the number of Auxiliary Ministers who were formerly elders of the Churches of Christ and who are not spread evenly across the country but concentrated in a few Districts. This makes it harder in those places to find the lay representatives and means a longer list of ministers waiting an opportunity to attend the Assembly. The second area of difficulty is the number of ministers on the Ministerial roll of the URC who are not in an appointment under the authority of the Church. In some places District Councils have asked to appoint them as part of the lay representation.

19. The Group moved towards a proposition that the balance might be between ministers in stipendiary service of the Church and all other members. But it is recognised that the issues here are wide-ranging and are far more than constitutional. Any departure from the present rule is likely to result in enlarging the ministerial element in Assembly. There would probably be reflections of this in the other councils of the Church. So we need to look at the basic questions which lie behind the present 'ministerial-lay balance.' What do we mean by ordination and is it the distinction which is vital in our councils? If so, why is ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments distinctive and not ordination to the eldership? If the pattern of ministry is changing, should the balance also change? How do we encourage greater lay participation?

20. It is therefore suggested that the existing rule be applied but that the Executive Committee be asked to ensure that, either through a working party or in some other way, the implications and practice of 'balance' in our councils be re-examined.

21. The fourth resolution remitted to the Group read as follows:-

The Assembly instructs the Executive Committee to appoint a small group to review the URC Structure, clause 9.5.xi in the light of experience and to bring

forward to the Assembly, through the Executive, any revisions which are considered necessary.

22. The Group came quickly to the conclusion that the wording of the clause is inadequate, for although it has worked remarkably well in non-controversial matters, its defects were shown up during the Covenant debate. Then it was apparent that the Basis and Structure had given unlimited authority to the Assembly for constitutional change. This was disturbing, firstly because we believe that 'Councils can err' and therefore need some check on their actions; secondly because in our Assembly each local church is not represented, and thirdly because the other councils of the Church, though consulted, do not have any power to limit the decision of the Assembly.

23. The Group therefore considers that considerable revision of the clause is required, but judges that it is not the mind of the Church to take from the General Assembly the decision to approve change about constitutional and doctrinal matters. What is proposed is therefore a method of referral which will enable other councils of the Church to halt the process of change if they feel so led.

24. The mandatory process should be that Provincial Synods are given the opportunity to vote on proposals for change. In the Synod every local church is represented, so this enables a very widespread expression of view. There are, however, occasions when referral also to District Councils and to local churches will be appropriate. We do not consider it possible in legislation to identify those cases and believe it must be left to the discretion of the Assembly.

The Group realised that in the event of a vote on church union, when parliamentary legislation would be involved, special provisions additional to those normally in force might well apply. The proposals therefore allow such special provisions to be adopted by the Assembly at one meeting if approved by two-thirds of the members present and voting.

25. The Group considers that a two-thirds majority for change is still the right proportion of the General Assembly members voting on a proposal to amend the Basis and Structure. However, when we consider a vote by local churches it becomes apparent that to require two-thirds of them to approve before any change takes place would ensure that change is made so difficult as to be almost impossible. In a church which believes 'Semper reformanda' to be a proper expression of faith, the Group does not consider that such a high barrier to action would be right. It therefore proposes a negative barrier which provides for those who dissent from a proposal to do so, and thus to affect the outcome.

26. The Group also considers that when highly complex or contentious proposals are being discussed, it should be possible to extend the period between the two votes in General Assembly so that all local churches may be properly informed.

27. Proposals for new clauses. It is recommended that the Assembly adopt the following amendments to the Structure of the U.R.C.

9.5.xi to read as follows:

To alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the URC.

New Section 10 of the Structure to be inserted as follows

- 10(1) No exercise by the General Assembly of the function of constitutional amendment contained in 9.5.xi shall have effect unless the following procedure has been followed:
- 10(1) a. The proposal for the amendment shall be made in accordance with the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.
- 10(1) b. The General Assembly shall vote on a motion to approve the proposal which shall require a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting to pass.
- 10(1) c. The General Assembly shall, if such motion to approve the proposal is passed, refer the proposal to Provincial Synods and may, if it deems appro-

ropriate, refer the proposal also to District Councils and in exceptional cases also to local churches.

- 10(1) d. The General Assembly shall in making any such reference set a final date for responses to be made, which shall normally be at an appropriate time before the next annual Assembly.
- 10(1) e. If by such date notice has been received by the General Secretary from more than one third of Provincial Synods (or, if it has been so referred, more than one third of District Councils or more than one third of local churches) that a motion 'that the proposal be not proceeded with' has been passed by a majority of members present and voting at a duly convened meeting of such body, then the Assembly in its concern for the unity of the church shall not proceed to ratify the proposal.
- 10(1) f. If by such date such notice has not been received, the General Assembly shall at its next meeting vote on a motion to agree the amendment which shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting to pass.
- 10(1) g. If such a motion is passed by such a majority the amendment shall have effect.
- 10(2) In the case of motions which would have the effect of terminating the separate existence of the URC, or of a Province within it, by union with other churches, the voting process to be used shall not be less stringent than in 10(1) and that process shall be determined by a single vote of the General Assembly which shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to pass.

Sections 10 and 11 of the Structure to be re-numbered 11 and 12.

28. If the amendments in Section 27 above are approved, it is recommended that the following additions be made to Standing Orders, Section 2.

Proposals for amendments to the Basis and Structure of the URC, which may be made by the Executive Committee or a Department or 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.

29. The Assembly approved the following resolution:-

'The Assembly, encouraging the further involvement of representatives of other churches in the councils of the URC, instructs the Constitution Review Group to prepare for the Assembly such amendments to the Structure of the URC as would enable us to receive as voting members of Assembly, Synods and District Councils, representatives of other British churches.'

30. The following additional sub-sections are suggested.

New 9(3) j. Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the District as the Council may from time to time determine.

New 9(4) j. Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the Province as the Synod may from time to time determine.

New 9(5) i. Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the U.K. as the Assembly, on the advice of the Executive Committee, may from time to time determine.

31. If these additional sub-sections are approved the Assembly would, at the point of its second vote to ratify them, also be invited to vote on a resolution setting out the maximum number in each section. It is recommended that there be widespread discussion of the appropriate numbers, noting that in the 1983 Reports to Assembly the figure of 12 was suggested for the Assembly itself. The World Church and Mission Department should bring its proposal in the light of Provincial discussion.

32. The Assembly passed the following resolution:

'The Assembly instructs the Constitution Review Group to prepare for the Assembly any amendments to the Structure of the URC that are needed to ensure that Local Ecumenical Projects which are listed as URC local churches may be represented in the councils of the URC by people who are in membership of the LEP from other denominational backgrounds.'

33. The key phrase in the Structure at 9(3)c is:

Representatives of local churches within the District who shall normally be members of the Elders' Meeting of a local church and who shall be appointed by the Church Meeting of such local Church.

The Group considers that this does cover the case of LEPs. If the LEP is listed as a local church in the URC then it can select its representatives according to its procedures. Normally those procedures involve Elders' Meeting and Church Meeting. Yet the use of the word 'normally' indicates that this is not an absolute requirement, and LEPs which have rather different local bodies may use them. The clause does not stipulate the denominational background of the representatives. No amendment is therefore recommended.

Resolutions from this Report are numbered 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Members of Constitution Review Group: Mr Peter Bunker (Chairman), Mrs Winifred Clark, Mrs C. Winter, Mr Norman Pooler, Mr Ray Heritage, Mr John Rhys, Revds M.F. Hubbard, J.H. Taylor, H.M. Springbett, D.R. Hannen, David Miller, Robert Smith, Bernard Thorogood.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE — APPENDIX 2

DEPARTMENTAL RE-ORGANISATION

1. The purpose of this proposal is to provide a revised structure in which there will be sustained, comprehensive and imaginative thinking and planning for two major areas of the life of URC. At present it is hard to carry through such planning because of scattered responsibilities and because the Church Life Department has to cover a very wide area. Within a Faith and Life Department and a Ministries Department the Assembly will have a more precise method of activity in two major fields.

2. The outline proposals were considered by the Executive Committee in 1982, were referred to Provincial Executive Committees, and, with comments received, were reconsidered by the Executive at three meetings in 1983/4.

3. The Executive is clear that although this change in structure appears right at this point, the door must be left open for further change, and perhaps for more radical change. What is now agreed should not be treated as constitutional material like the Basis of Union, but as our attempt to develop effectively the work which the Lord calls us to do today.

4. Faith and Life Department

4.1 This new department will carry the URC's central responsibility for the growth of the whole membership of all ages in discipleship and effective witness.

4.2 The following Committees will be in the Department:

- Christian Education and Stewardship
- Youth
- Children's Work and Pilots
- Doctrine and Worship
- Ministry of Healing

4.3 The Christian Education and Stewardship Committee will have 12 members and the following remit:

to support the local churches and the other councils of the church in the development of all aspects of personal discipleship within the membership of the URC,

to stimulate training programmes and provide aids for the deepening of the spiritual life and the stewardship of God's gifts,

to assist the churches in their training of elders,

to relate to ecumenical agencies and to sister churches as they work in this field,

to prepare policy for submission to the General Assembly through the Departmental Committee.

4.4. Staff. The Committees within the Department will continue to be served by their present Secretaries, one of whom will be invited to serve additionally as Departmental Secretary.

4.5 Departmental Committee. This will consist of 12 Synod Representatives, the Chairmen of the Committees listed in 4.2 plus five persons selected for special expertise and a Departmental Chairman.

5. **Ministries Department**

5.1 This new Department will carry the URC's central responsibility and care for those who are called to serve the Gospel in the Ministry of Word and Sacraments or in Supplementary Ministries.

5.2 Its particular responsibilities will be:

5.2.1 Recruitment, selection and training of ministers in co-operation with the Provinces

5.2.2 Formulation of policy about styles of ministerial service, and the strategy and deployment appropriate to the life and mission of the church

5.2.3 Relations with colleges and external bodies which train ministers, both stipendiary and auxiliary

5.2.4 Consideration of requests from Provinces for 'special' ministry posts, and consultation with other Departments about them when appropriate

5.2.5 Discharging the church's responsibility towards those in specialist or sector ministries

5.2.6 Recruitment, selection and training of supplementary ministries in the church, and support for those who serve, including Lay Preachers, CRCW's and Local Pastors

5.2.7 Co-operation with other denominations in ministry matters

5.2.8 Consideration of applications from ordained ministers who wish to enter or leave the ministry of the URC

5.3 The following Committees will be in the Department:

Applications

Ministerial Training (with the following sub-committees:

Stipendiary Board of Studies

Auxiliary Board of Studies

In-service Training

Ministerial Training Fund

Panel for Ministerial Recruitment)

Chaplains and Students

Supplementary Ministries

5.4 The Applications Committee will in future deal only with the cases of individual ministers. Cases of local churches will be dealt with by the Executive Committee for recommendation to the General Assembly.

5.5 The Assembly Pastoral Reference Committee, closely related to the Ministries Department, is just beginning its life and will remain as now constituted outside the Departmental structure until Assembly 1986 when a decision will be taken in the light of experience on both its composition and its relation to the structure.

5.6 Staff. The Ministerial Training, Chaplains and Students, and Supplementary Ministries Committees will continue to be served by their present secretaries, one of whom will be invited to serve additionally as Departmental Secretary. The Departmental Secretary will serve the Applications Committee.

5.7 Departmental Committee. This will consist of 12 Synod representatives, the Chairmen of the four main Committees listed in 5.3 plus five persons selected for special expertise and a Departmental Chairman.

6. **Costs.** Little change in costs is expected as a result of these proposals. There will be a saving of approximately £2,500 on the conclusion of the separate Deployment and Stewardship Committees and new expenditure on a Departmental Committee of about £2,000 p.a.

7. Relationships

7.1 Within the URC. Within most Provinces there is a Ministerial or Pastoral or Care of Persons Committee which will relate naturally to the Ministries Department. There are committees and officers at Synod and District level, with many different designations, working on the education and nurture of church members, and all these will relate to the Faith and Life Department. It is not expected that District Councils and local churches will wish or need to change their patterns of responsibility because of these proposals. Within Church House there will be continuing need for good liaison between Departments. This is firstly a staff responsibility and will in future be reviewed by the Executive Committee annually.

7.2 Outside the URC. The Church of England, Church of Scotland, Baptist and Methodist Churches already have Ministries Departments, so liaison there will be easier. The new Faith and Life Department will relate to the educational bodies and youth enterprises in other churches, and to the uniformed organisations.

8. **Review.** This relatively minor revision of structure comes after 12 years in the life of the URC and it is recommended that a more radical review should take place not too far ahead.

9. **Appreciation.** At the termination of the work of the separate Deployment Committee and the separate Stewardship Committee, the church expresses thanks for wide-ranging work done thoroughly in a good spirit and with a care for the whole church.

10. **Implementation.** The new Departments will operate as from 1 September, 1984 and new appointments will take effect then. The Finance Department will prepare separate Budget and Accounts from 1.1.85 for the two new Departments, with an appropriate division of Church Life Department budget for the September to December 1984 period.

Resolutions numbered 11, 12, 13, 14 to be taken with this Appendix.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE — APPENDIX 3

FORWARD POLICY GROUP

1. In proposing such a Group the Long Range Policy Group described it as
'a small national group to stimulate, support and comment on the forward planning of the Church at all levels.'

It is envisaged in the Report to Assembly as a continuing exercise without a terminating date. The Assembly instructed the Executive to produce detailed proposals for debate next year.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1 The Forward Policy Group is instituted by the General Assembly to stimulate, support and comment on the planning of the URC for its future life and witness.

2.2 The Group is not responsible for making decisions about the policy of the Church.

2.3 The Group may initiate consideration of any particular area of the Church's forward planning, and will respond, as time permits, to questions put to it by Assembly Departments or Committees, by the Executive Committee or by Synods.

2.4 The Group will examine, through Reports to Assembly and other publications, the trends of Church policy, will note inconsistencies and significant omissions, and will relate forward planning at all levels to realistic and hopeful assessment of the work God calls us to do in the future.

2.5 The Group will report on these matters to the councils of the URC as and when the need arises to do so.

3. Consultation

3.1 In carrying out its work the Forward Policy Group may consult directly any of the councils of the URC, the Departments and Committees of the Assembly and the local churches.

3.2 The Group may consult other denominations and agencies. It may engage in such research as is possible within its budget.

4. Composition

4.1 The Group will be composed of seven persons, a Chairman and six members.

4.2 The members will be appointed by the Assembly. The normal term of service will be three years, with a rotation commencing after the first two years, so that from then on two members retire each year.

4.3 Of the members at least three shall be lay people.

4.4 At least three shall have their main current involvement in the URC at the level of the local church and at least one shall have familiarity with the central life of the URC.

4.5 One member may be drawn from another denomination.

5. Officers

5.1 The Chairman will be appointed by the Assembly and will become a member of the Executive Committee and the Assembly, and will serve for three years with the possibility of renewal by the Assembly for a further period of not more than three years.

5.2 The Secretary of the Group will be nominated by the Group after consultation with the General Secretary, for appointment by the Executive Committee. The Secretary need not be one of the six members.

6. Nominations

The names of the proposed members and Chairman shall be presented to the Assembly by the Nominations Committee.

7. Relation to Structure

7.1 The Forward Policy Group will not be a part of the Departmental Structure. All the necessary links with the Assembly, its Central Committees and Departments will be made through the General Secretary's office.

7.2 The primary place for the Forward Policy Group to report will be the Executive Committee. Opportunity will be given for report to the General Assembly as required.

8. Budget

The budget for the Group will be provided within the Central Office costs and will initially be as follows, and will be reviewed annually:

Meeting costs	£480
Overnight meeting once a year	£120
Travel around the churches	£250
Office materials, research, postages, publications	£750
	<u>£1,600</u>

Resolution 15 follows this Report.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE — APPENDIX 4

NATIONAL PROJECTS ADVISORY GROUP

The Group considered submissions from two Provinces for national assistance with major projects, and understood that the two Synods were preparing resolutions for the 1984 Assembly.

1. The Group, having considered the North Western Provincial Synod Committee proposals for **Windermere**, advises the Assembly that from the aspect of importance for the training work of the Church, this project is a high priority; that from the capital works aspect the project is feasible and well researched, with an enhanced capital value; and that from the aspect of congregational renewal and confidence it deserves widespread support.

The Group advises that, if Assembly approves, an appeal should take place between 1.6.84 and 30.9.85, and that the Assembly should be in a position in 1985 to give authority to proceed with the capital works.

The Group considers that the post of interim Director should be supported by Maintenance of the Ministry, probably as a special category ministry.

2. The Group, having considered the East Midlands Provincial Synod request regarding **Milton Keynes** advises that, although this is not distinctive in kind from several other new town schemes, there is a scale of project, a wholly ecumenical commitment, and a dearth of local inherited resources which justify a national appeal.

The Group advises Assembly that it would suggest a provisional commitment that Milton Keynes become the focus for widespread appeal in 1986 and that this be reviewed at Assembly 1985.

3. The Group believes that the imagination and enthusiasm for these forward-looking projects should enhance the confidence of the URC in its life and witness. Any financial appeals should be directed towards the eagerness of URC people to make personal offerings and not be treated as another level of centrally budgeted giving.

RESOLUTIONS

- 10 1. Assembly receives the report of the Executive Committee for debate.
2. Assembly appoints:
 - 11 a. The Revd Michael Fortescue Hubbard, MA, BA, Moderator of the South Western Province for five years from 1 September 1984.
 - 12 b. The Revd John Ivor Morgans, BA, BD, B.Litt., Ph.D., Moderator of the Wales Province for five years from 1 September 1984.
 - 13 c. The Revd John Howard Williams, MA, BA, Moderator of the Northern Province for three years from 1 September 1984.
 - 14 d. The Revd John William Patrick Williamson, MA, STM, Moderator of the Mersey Province for three years from 1 September 1984.
- 15 3. The Assembly agrees to hold a meeting of the Assembly on a fully residential site at Caister, Norfolk, from 25th to 29th April 1986, the cost to be met by the Unified

Appeal with assistance from individual donations.

4. The Assembly agrees to hold the 1987 meeting of Assembly in the North Western Province at Blackpool from 11th to 15th May.
5. Assembly agrees to amend the Terms of Reference of the Executive Committee as set out in paragraph 9 of this Report.
6. Assembly receives the report of the Constitution Review Group, Appendix 1 to this Report.
7. Assembly instructs the Executive Committee to discuss the implications and practice of 'balance of ordained and lay' in the councils of the URC.
8. Assembly agrees to amend the Structure of the URC as follows:-

20 A (Report, para.6) New 9.3.g.

When a District Council appoints a Minister Emeritus as an officer of the District Council or as an Interim Moderator, that minister shall be a full member of the District Council for the period of the appointment.

21 B Re-number 9.3.g to 9.3.h.

All Ministers Emeriti not covered by clause 9.3.g. residing in . . .

22 C Re-number 9.3.h to 9.3.i.

23 D (Report, para.3) New 9(3) j.

Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the District as the council may from time to time determine.

24 E (Report, para.6) New 9.4.g.

When a Synod appoints a Minister Emeritus as an officer of the Synod, that minister shall be a full member of the Synod for the period of the appointment.

25 F Re-number 9.4.g. to 9.4.h.

All Ministers Emeriti not covered by clause 9.4.g. residing in . . .

26 G Re-number 9.4.h to 9.4.i.

27 H (Report, para.3) New 9(4)j.

Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the Province as the Synod may from time to time determine.

28 I New 9(5)i.

Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the U.K. as the Assembly, on the advice of the Executive Committee, may from time to time determine.

29 J (Report, para.27) 9.5.xi to read as follows:

To alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the URC.

30 K New Section 10 of the Structure to be inserted as follows:

10(1) No exercise by the General Assembly of the function of constitutional amendment contained in 9.5.xi shall have effect unless the following procedure has been followed:

10(1) a. The proposal for the amendment shall be made in accordance with the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.

10(1) b. The General Assembly shall vote on a motion to approve the proposal which shall require a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting to pass.

- 10(1) c. The General Assembly shall, if such motion to approve the proposal is passed, refer the proposal to Provincial Synods and may, if it deems appropriate, refer the proposal also to District Councils and in exceptional cases also to local churches.
- 10(1) d. The General Assembly shall in making any such reference set a final date for responses to be made, which shall normally be at an appropriate time before the next annual Assembly.
- 10(1) e. If by such date notice has been received by the General Secretary from more than one third of Provincial Synods (or, if it has been so referred, more than one third of District Councils or more than one third of local churches) that a motion 'that the proposal be not proceeded with' has been passed by a majority of members present and voting at a duly convened meeting of such body, then the Assembly in its concern for the unity of the church shall not proceed to ratify the proposal.
- 10(1) f. If by such date such notice has not been received, the General Assembly shall at its next meeting vote on a motion to agree the amendment which shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting to pass.
- 10(1) g. If such a motion is passed by such a majority the amendment shall have effect.
- 10(2) In the case of motions which would have the effect of terminating the separate existence of the URC, or of a Province within it, by union with other churches, the voting process to be used shall be not less stringent than in 10(1) and that process shall be determined by a single vote of the General Assembly which shall require a two thirds majority of those present and voting to pass.

31 L (Report p.6., para.27)
Sections 10 and 11 of the Structure to be re-numbered 11 and 12.

9. Assembly agrees to amend regulations of the Assembly as follows:-

(Report, para.15)

32 i. The Assembly instructs Provincial Synods to proceed to the nomination of persons for Moderator of General Assembly according to Part III, 3 (3) of Rules of Procedure (Manual, p.68) only after inviting suggestions from local churches and District Councils.

33 ii. The Assembly amends Regulation 8 (Manual, p.69) to read as follows:-

'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 its final session.'

34 10. (Report, para.28)

Assembly agrees to amend Standing Orders, Section 2 as follows:-

Proposals for amendments to the Basis and Structure of the URC, which may be made by the Executive Committee or a Department or 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.

35 11. Assembly approves the proposals for Departmental Structure set out in Appendix 2, with implementation at 1 September 1984.

12. The Assembly requests the two new departments to report to the next Assembly, through the Executive, on whether their Committee Structure enables them to fulfil the remit given to them.
13. Assembly discharges the Deployment Committee and the Stewardship Committee on 31.8.84, with appreciation for all their service to the church.
14. Assembly discharges the Church Life Departmental Committee on 31.8.84, recognising the many gifts that have been shared and the generous service given.
15. Assembly agrees to form a Forward Policy Group with a constitution and Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 3 to this Report, to commence work in September 1984.
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THE REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL MODERATORS

We rejoice with members of the Assembly at what God is doing amongst the family of the United Reformed Church.

1. **We thank God for local churches.** We have a unique opportunity of seeing the local church at work and sharing in its life. We are convinced of the centrality of the ministry of the whole people of God as the Lord Jesus Christ continues his ministry in and through the Church. We rejoice in the people who are studying "Exploring the Faith", not only to become lay preachers, but also in order to be better equipped as Christians. We rejoice in the work done by Elders in local churches and the continuing demand by Elders for further training. Church secretaries and treasurers continue to exercise a most significant ministry and but for these dedicated people churches would be unable to continue. We rejoice in the generosity of members. In recent years churches have met increased costs in spite of reduced membership. There is a growing willingness to consider how churches of various denominations can share the burdens, responsibilities and challenges of the gospel in local situations. We are encouraged as we see churches moving away from "maintenance" to "mission" as they search out the needs of their local community and of the world. Often we note that vacant pastorates put spiritual growth as their first priority and want a minister who will lead them in that direction.

2. **We thank God for ministers.** We have a unique opportunity of seeing local ministers at work and sharing in their lives. Much time at our monthly Moderators meeting is spent making suggestions of ministers for vacant pastorates. We rejoice in the many saintly men and women who serve in the ministry. We rejoice in the quality of those offering for the ministry and by the response to the three Vocational Conferences held during 1983 in Newcastle, Nottingham and Bristol. God is at work in the URC calling people to serve in the ministry, auxiliary and stipendiary, and as church related community workers.

3. **We thank God for Councils, Committees and Staff.** We share in the life of each District Council and rejoice in the work which they do. Many are deeply caring for the life of local churches and ministers; they are served by seemingly tireless secretaries and many others. We are members of most of the central committees/departments of the United Reformed Church and we rejoice in the work they do in encouraging church life, youth work, mission at home and abroad and concern for British and world-wide society; we are grateful for the stewardship of URC financial resources and the care which is exercised for retired ministers and widows. In particular, we rejoice in the plans made in response to last year's Assembly call to evangelism. We have direct contact with those who work in the central offices and we want to express our thanks to God for them, men and women, lay and ordained. The central office team serves the URC faithfully and well. We rejoice in the work of the British Council of Churches as it grows in importance. Before God the URC honours both that Council and its General Secretary as he becomes Moderator of the General Assembly.

4. **What questions does God ask of the URC?** Among many there are three which we share with the Assembly, arising from the scene as we have observed it during the last year.

4.1 **Is the URC properly stewarding local resources?** In local churches the worship is sometimes unimaginative and heavy going. The hymn sandwich is gulped down like nasty medicine. There is poor preaching and tuneless music; there are uncomfortable pews and crows nest pulpits which prevent rather than promote effective communication. Many church buildings reflect a dowdy God and a run-down creation. In older industrial areas many URC buildings have reached the end of their useful life and need replacing. Smaller churches, often in rural areas, need lower maintenance costs by reducing the size of their premises. Changing styles of worship and church life require a more flexible style of internal layout than in the past and there is a need to upgrade the standards of our buildings to meet the higher expectations of people today. Among members are talented people whose gifts are not used, because their local church life has never got beyond filling vacancies in a pattern of leadership established for a different age. Equally many who are used are weighed down with inappropriate traditional tasks. Is the URC properly stewarding its

resources, of people and premises? There is always a need to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Are there places where local unions within and beyond the URC would be beneficial; where the purchase of a mini-bus would be a better way of spending money than on the refurbishment of an outworn, out-moded building; where a large and hospitable house might be used instead of a drab and cheerless church? The URC needs visionary thinking and sacrificial giving to meet God's challenge.

4.2 Is the URC really equipping and supporting ministers adequately? Ministers are expected to work in inner city, town, rural or suburban pastorates; to know how to work within a team or to minister to a group of churches or a single church; to continue for 40 years with little or no re-training. Now that others (eg Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists) are actively discovering and experimenting with alternative patterns of training and ordination courses has not the time come for a re-examination of the present insistence that all students for the stipendiary ministry must attend one of the colleges?

Live-wire activism dedicated to the achievement of results and success is as much the creed of the Church as of the Western world. Some vacancy committees appear to be on the lookout for a 42 year-old blend of Gabriel and Superman. They want a minister who will be lively, energetic, challenging and perhaps above all one who will keep himself very busy. But ministers need to be stiller (not idler!), to take time out for unhurried prayer, reading and preparation of both self and sermons. There is an encouraging growth of reading parties and of Sabbaticals, though both should be a priority for the minister **weekly**, not just annually or less. But with 800 ministers and only £5,000 per annum available from the Ministerial Training Fund for in-service training the outlook is very bleak indeed. A Church concerned about the quality of its ministers will make the necessary resources available.

4.3 Is the URC making the best use of synods and district council meetings? Heavy with committee reports too lengthily presented and with "business" ponderously discharged, these area conventions can be singularly off-putting. They are meant to be the ideal of the church meeting writ large: that is, inspirational gatherings of the wider fellowship called to discharge God's business (which includes but isn't the same as the Church's business) in the setting of worship. They ought, like an official definition of broadcasting, to inform, educate and even entertain in the best sense. They should be designed to allow discussion on matters of faith and conduct, to guide members in Christian living and in applying Christian criteria and judgements to the issues of the day in such a way that each local church, through its representatives, both gives and receives to each others' enrichment, and together the whole council promotes the sense of belonging in the one family of Christ and of being concerned about God's world-wide mission. Skilful presentation of the agenda items and a careful blending of the formal and the informal will help to send people away cheerful and encouraged. Those synagogue officials at Antioch said to Paul and his companions: "We want you to speak to the people if you have a message of encouragement for them". (Acts 13:15).

5. Personal. We are twelve individuals called by the Assembly to exercise a ministry which has been defined in general terms by the Basis of Union. We seek to be faithful to that calling but are conscious of falling short of many of the expectations of churches and ministers. We are individuals, each with our own personal concerns and ministries. These ministries change and develop as we "grow" in our work. We see our role developing and changing with our own personal growth in Christ and in relationship to the opportunities and problems which we face within our Provinces and also within the wider community. We do have a "public face" (whether we like it or not) and are asked to represent the URC as provincial moderators. Each of us has to relate to bishops, chairmen and superintendents. We are sometimes called upon to welcome church leaders into our Provinces from many other countries — Russia, China, Eastern Germany, America, many parts of the African continent and most European countries. The world Church becomes more real to us through all these contacts, through the visit we made to Geneva in 1982 and through the visit to the Reformed Church in Hungary which is planned for the end of May. We are glad that on this visit we shall be accompanied by General Secretary Bernard Thorogood.

6. **Postscript.** We congratulate our colleague Alasdair Walker on his leadership during this year as Moderator of the General Assembly, not forgetting the demands made on him and his wife Judy, and on the Yorkshire Province.

RESOLUTION

That this Report be received for debate.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr F. H. Brooman

Secretary: Mr C. M. Frank

1. **Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1982** Appendix 1 gives broad analysis of the receipts and payments for 1980, 1981 and 1982 of those Churches which completed Financial Information Sheets. It will be seen that the "giving" increased by 21% from 1980 to 1981 and by 15% from 1981 to 1982. These figures like those for a number of years, are higher than the rates of inflation (13% and 12%) and members and local treasurers are again to be congratulated on the continuing increase in the real value of giving.
2. A breakdown of the 1982 figures, Province by Province, is given in Appendix 2.
3. **Contributions to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and the Unified Appeal 1983** The budgets for 1983 approved by Assembly 1982 (Record pages 70 and 71) provided for expenditure which was to be financed by contributions of £5,367,000 to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and £1,100,000 to the Unified Appeal. The contributions received are shown in Appendix 3. They fall short of the budgeted figures by some £13,000 for MoM and some £23,000 for the Unified Appeal. These are not large amounts in relation to the total budgets but they illustrate that it is not an easy matter to obtain contributions at the present levels, although the total for MoM and Unified Appeal in 1983 amounted to only about £46 per member of which £38 was for ministers' stipends and pension contributions.
4. **Expenditure on Central Activities 1983 — The General Fund** The accounts for 1983 had not been finalised at the time of writing this report, but we expect the expenditure on the General Fund to be about £1,173,000 an increase of £98,000 over 1982. The comparative figures adjusted for inflation are shown in Appendix 4.
5. **Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally** Information about the stipends and other conditions of service of ministers employed centrally is given in Appendix 5.
6. **Accounts for 1983** The accounts for 1983 will be published separately when the audit has been completed. They will be carried into the Record of Assembly in the usual way.

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr D. C. McMurdie

Secretary: The Revd G. E. Hooper

7. The Committee has met four times during the year; the Pensions Sub-Committee has met twice and the Officers have had six meetings. The Committee has been strengthened by the addition of two new members. The Rev Geoffrey Smith who was appointed by the Assembly Executive was welcomed by the Committee as strengthening the ministerial representation. The Committee also welcomed Mrs Joyce Cullum who brings to its deliberations the viewpoint of the wife of a minister serving a group of rural churches.
8. **Progress of the Fund** Once again your Committee has been encouraged by the generous response and loyal support it has received from local churches, Districts and Provinces. We budgeted for an income for 1983 of £5,457,000 and the sum received was £5,467,041.
9. Expenditure in 1983 amounting to £5,362,000 was again short of budget principally because the fund was called upon to pay fewer full-time ministers than expected. As a result we have been able to allocate a further £75,000 to the Ministers' Pension Fund to reduce the actuarial deficit that has arisen as a result of annual increases in pensions. In addition £20,000 had been added to the Stipend Payments Reserve and £10,000 to the General Reserve to maintain their true value in relation to the basic stipend.
10. **The Basic Stipend** At the Assembly last year approval was given to the MoM budget for 1984 which included a provision for a five percent uplift in the basic stipend. With this figure in mind the Committee has reviewed the matter in the light of the present level of

inflation and comparison of stipends in other Churches, and has come to the conclusion that it is appropriate to recommend an increase of six per cent in ministers' stipends to take effect from 1 July 1984. (Resolution 4)

11. The Committee has also provided in the budget for 1985 a further increase in the region of five per cent. (Resolution 5)

12. **Revision of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration** Since the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration was published in 1980 several amendments and improvements have been approved by subsequent Assemblies. At last year's Assembly when several substantial improvements were adopted it was indicated that the Plan should be revised to incorporate these various amendments. The document, printed as Appendix 6 to this Report, is mainly consolidation of what has already been approved by Assembly.

13. In reissuing the Plan the opportunity has also been taken to revise some of the administrative procedure in the light of experience derived from the working relationship between the central Committee and its permanent staff and provincial MoM Committees.

14. The Committee also considered that it would be helpful to publish along with the Plan several appendices already approved by the Committee. Some useful information notes have also been added. The Committee is recommending that Assembly adopt the consolidated Plan as the current basis for the remuneration and welfare of our ministers. (Resolution 6)

15. **Pensions** Throughout the year the Pensions Sub-Committee has continued to deal with the day to day problems in managing the Pension Fund. Increases in grants payable from the PSF and PWF are to be made from 1 July 1984, the rate of allowance per year of ministerial service being raised to £15 and £11.25 respectively. The income limits will again be raised in harmony with national figures for personal taxation allowances.

CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Chairman: Revd M. J. Husselbee

Secretary: Mr D. Banwell

16. This report of necessity concerns itself primarily with the present financial constraints facing the Committee, the reasons for the situation and the policies which are recommended for the future.

17. In 1978 the Committee was concerned that it was not giving sufficient help in the form of advice or money towards the construction, maintenance and management of buildings owned by the denomination. The funds which the Committee had at its disposal were not being used to any great extent and were tending to accumulate. It was decided that the Committee would try and play a more active part in providing an advisory service and in making grants and loans to churches for building work of all kinds.

18. The efforts of the Committee were more successful than we anticipated, with the result that applications for financial assistance increased considerably both in number and the amount being requested. The Committee always made it clear that it had no means of judging between the merits of schemes endorsed by Provinces and in these circumstances the Committee acted upon the assumption that if a scheme had Provincial support then assistance should be given.

19. In 1983 the volume was such that the funds available to the Committee, when allowing for promises already made, were almost exhausted and further grants and loans were not possible for the latter part of the year. Naturally it is very disappointing that the amount of financial assistance will have to be reduced considerably in the future but the Committee feels that the help it has been able to give over the last few years has been of benefit. They take the view that it is better that this money is now being used to further the mission of our Churches rather than that it should be lying idle.

20. Much of the money was lent to Churches and there is a steady stream of repayments being received. Indeed some Churches are able to repay their loans at a faster rate than the terms of the loan require and this is a great help to the Committee. It is anticipated that in 1984 there will be £180,000 available for loans. A summary of the loan account movements of the Church Buildings Committee shows the extent of the aid which has been given as follows:-

	Loans Outstanding Jan 1st	Advances	Interest Debited	Payments of Capital and Interest	Loans Outstanding Dec 31st
1978	90,721	39,450	3,243	26,922	106,492
1979	106,492	96,967	4,640	86,316	121,783
1980	121,783	185,545	9,882	97,187	220,023
1981	220,023	140,057	15,425	49,549	325,956
1982	325,956	127,775	22,028	98,593	377,166
1983	377,166	372,346	30,871	159,327	621,056

At 31 December 1983 the Fund had liquid resources of £118,000 and the following commitments:-

For Grants	8,000
For Loans	63,000
For Property Purchase	<u>35,000</u>
	<u>£106,000</u>

21. As soon as it was appreciated that the Committee was facing financial problems a series of discussions took place. At its meeting in October 1983 the Church Buildings Committee formulated new policies incorporating the suggestions made to it by the Central Committee. Details of these decisions were circulated to the Provinces in October last which, in summary were as follows:-

- Major changes will be necessary in the policy and constitution of CBC which will have an effect upon the whole denomination. The Central Committee of the Department was asked if it would prepare a paper for discussion at the General Assembly; because of the complicated nature of the subject this cannot be done before 1985. There is an advantage in this because a number of the present members are due to retire in that year.
- All promises of loans and grants would be met.
- For the time being no more grants would be made, other than those already promised.
- To encourage churches to make use of proper professional advice loans for this purpose would continue to be made on favourable terms i.e. 2 years interest free and thereafter to be repaid by quarterly instalments bearing 7% interest.
- The Committee would consider funding a few substantial schemes each year within the scope of its financial resources, such loans to be within the range of £15,000 to £30,000 or more. Assistance would be given as the Committee deemed most expedient in all the circumstances and not upon a strictly arithmetical division of the funds available.

22. These new policies were in very general terms and raised a number of points of detail. At its meeting on the 7th February 1984 the Committee considered these matters and resolved that for the present the following procedures would apply:-

- Policy for 1984 would be based on the assumption that £180,000 would be available.
- The level of applications for loans for professional fees could not be assessed but for the time being a sum of £50,000 be set aside for this purpose.
- The present minimum of £100 for loans for professional fees be retained.

d) Applications for loans for building works will only be considered where the total cost of the project is not less than £30,000.

e) Loans will be limited to not more than 50% of the total cost of the project and no loan will exceed £50,000.

f) The rate of interest on loans will be maintained at 7% for the time being, all other conditions to be unchanged.

g) With regard to applications for loans for building works Provinces will be given an opportunity to appear before the Committee to present their case. The deputation may consist of not more than two persons one of whom must be a member of the Provincial Committee responsible for property matters. In view of the amount of work that the Committee has to deal with the time for presentation will have to be limited to not more than 15 minutes excluding questions.

23. One matter that the Committee wishes to emphasise is the important role that the Provinces must play in the whole process of making applications to the CBC for loans of any kind. It is an extremely difficult task to decide the relative merits of schemes towards which financial help is being sought and the Committee must rely on the Provinces to support only those applications which they are convinced are deserving of support.

24. The view is held by the Committee that it would be of great value to the whole denomination if there could be regular consultation between it and the property committees of the Provinces. There is in its opinion much useful information that ought to be exchanged and if this view is held by the Provinces it follows that some suitable machinery should be established for the purpose.

25. Finally the Committee would remind churches that the advisory services continue to be available. The Secretary has been invited to many discussions over the years and apart from any helpful suggestions that can be made to the church concerned it also means that information is being obtained which can be passed on through CBC to other churches. In this way a common pool of information is being steadily built up.

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr H. E. Greening

Secretary: Mr R. S. Carruthers

26. During the year Revd Michael Hubbard, Mrs Joan Parkinson (Yorkshire) and Mr Geoffrey Parkinson (Thames North) were appointed to the Committee.

27. The surveys conducted in December 1982 indicated that some 21 retiring ministers would seek assistance with retirement housing in 1983 with a further 19 retiring ministers likely to apply in 1984.

28. In 1983 the Committee provided for the housing needs of 17 retiring ministers and 3 widows, in addition 2 retired ministers were rehoused in properties more suitable to their needs.

29. The 1983 housing needs were met by the purchase of 12 houses 7 bungalows and 3 flats; it was not possible to allocate any of the vacant properties. The 22 properties purchased include 14 properties purchased jointly by the United Reformed Church Retired Ministers' Housing Society Limited and a Province and/or the applicant, and 1 property wholly purchased with funds provided by a Province.

30. During the year 8 properties were sold and a further 3 sold subject to contract. At the year end 3 other properties were vacant. All the properties sold were in areas in which there was no current or immediate future demand for Society housing.

31. In 1983 donations to the Society, including covenants, amounted to £59,845 making a total of £282,000 for the four years 1980 to 1983. A further £157,796 was received from bequests including two properties valued at £48,500 and £8,000 respectively and £148,750

was received by way of loan from the Memorial Hall Trust grants to the United Reformed Church. At the year end the loan from the General Funds of the Church amounted to £75,000 an increase of £12,000 in the year.

32. Rents were increased from 1 July 1983, the increase for most properties being from £5 to £7 per week. Despite this increase the cost of repairs, maintenance, insurance and administration exceeded rental income in 1983 by £5,900. As the higher level of rents will apply for the full year in 1984 and taking into consideration the surpluses and deficits of earlier years, there will be no increase in rents during 1984.

33. At the July 1983 meeting the Committee decided against the adoption of "Fair Rents" because investigation and legal advice had revealed such complexity in the administration of the Scheme that it could not be introduced without creating worry and distress to the tenants.

34. In lieu of "Fair Rents" the Committee has adopted a policy of charging a level of rent which will meet the total cost of maintenance, repairs, insurance and administration. The Committee seeks the endorsement of the Assembly for this policy in Resolution 7.

35. The Committee is aware of the financial pressure on local churches and again recommends that no general assessment in respect of retirement housing costs be levied on them. Instead, despite the rising cost of the provision of additional properties, we look confidently to increased donations from churches and individuals and in both the immediate and the longer term to legacies and bequests of money and property. In addition the Committee will seek such loans through the Treasurership Committee as will be necessary to ensure that the housing needs of all eligible applicants are met without delay.

36. The Committee is able to report that the General Assembly Resolution of 1979 has been honoured, no eligible applicant for retirement housing was refused and there were no delays in the provision of housing in 1983 due to lack of funds.

37. Throughout the year the Committee maintained effective contact with all tenants in retirement properties through the visitations made under the oversight arrangements within each Province. In addition the Secretary visited some 27 tenants and 3 applicants throughout England and made two visits on Society business in Scotland.

WELFARE AND EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd M. D. Whitehorn

Secretary: The Revd B. G. Thorogood

38. To meet the special needs which are the Committee's concern, we are indebted to the generosity of past generations who have left resources to provide annual income. This, with an allocation from the Unified Appeal used mainly for the Christmas distribution, at present meets the calls made on the Committee.

39. The Committee has met three times during the year and has dealt with many cases of individual need, particularly among ministers and their widows. It appears that financial support is necessary particularly in times of severe illness and when elderly people have to move house. The Committee continues to make an immediate grant when a minister dies leaving a widow. There has been a further Christmas distribution to a number of retired ministers and ministers' widows which was again much appreciated.

40. Grants have been made from the Fowler Scholarship Fund to twelve ministers to assist with the equipment of children at school.

41. Spouses of ministers on divorce or separation. The Committee has had further discussion about the responsibility of the Church to both partners of a minister's marriage when there is divorce or separation. The Committee is now authorised by the Assembly to deal with the question of housing costs for a limited period. The Committee did not consider that any additional authority or powers are necessary at the present time to meet the need; and hopes that individual cases will be reported by those with pastoral responsibility. The

key role of a local Christian fellowship with the Provincial Moderator and Pastoral Care Committee is stressed.

42. The Committee can only report in general terms, but it is grateful to the General Secretary, the Treasurer and the Provincial Moderators for further particular caring, and is glad of the opportunity of giving help where it is needed. Our aim is that as we are enabled to assist one another, none of our people will be in serious need, as was said of the early church in Jerusalem where 'there was not a needy person among them . . . and distribution was made to each as any had need.' (Acts 4.34)

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH TRUST

Chairman: Mr J. A. Cumming

Secretary: The Revd B. G. Thorogood

43. The Trust reported to Assembly 1983 the action that had been taken to implement the resolution of Assembly 1982 regarding opposition to apartheid in South Africa. Since that report, the Trust has sold the shares in Barclays Bank and Rio Tinto Zinc as well as those in British Petroleum and Babcock International. The Church and Society Department issued a press release drawing attention to the action that had been taken.

RESOLUTIONS

- 41 1. Assembly receives the report of the Finance and Administration Department for debate.
- 42 2. Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31 December 1983.
- 43 3. Assembly notes the contributions made to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and the Unified Appeal for 1983 and thanks all those who have provided money, advocacy and administration.
- 44 4. Assembly resolves that from 1 July 1984 the whole time ministerial basic stipend shall be increased by approximately 6% to £5,016 per annum.
- 45 5. Assembly gives approval to the Maintenance of the Ministry Budget for 1985, noting that it allows for an increase of 5% in ministers' stipends payable from 1st July 1985.
- 46 6. Assembly adopts the 1984 edition of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, as printed in the Reports to Assembly 1984 as its method of financing and administering the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund with effect from the date of the passing of this resolution.
- 47 7. Assembly notes the decision of the Retired Ministers' Housing Committee not to implement a policy of fair rents. Assembly endorses the Committee's present policy of setting rents for its properties from time to time at levels which ensure that rental income on all its properties meets the total cost of maintenance, repairs, insurance and administration, the deficit or surplus in any one year being carried forward to the following year.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 1

Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1982 expressed as £s per annum per member.

	1980	1981	1982	Increase %	
	£	£	£	1982 over 1981	1981 over 1980
Receipts					
Giving and Legacies (note 2)	67	81	93	15	21
Loans and Grants	6	7	8		
Other Income	26	27	30		
	99	115	131	14	16
Payments					
Ministry Cost (note 3)	43	50	57	14	18
Churches and Halls (note 4)	27	29	32		
Unified Appeal and Benevolent Gifts	9	11	12		
Other Payments (note 5)	18	23	26		
Transfer to Reserves	2	2	4		
	99	115	131	14	16

Notes

1. The above figures are taken from the Annual Finance Information Sheets. The 1980 figures cover 117,000 members; those for 1981 113,000 members, and those for 1982 110,000 members. Although the returns are not complete, the amounts per member enable comparisons to be made.
2. Giving includes offerings, covenants, donations and special efforts.
3. Ministry Costs include MoM contributions, pulpit supply, manse upkeep, rates, heating etc, and car expenses.
4. Churches and Halls includes upkeep, heating etc.
5. Other Payments include capital works and loan repayments.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 2

Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1982, expressed as £s per annum per member

	NATIONAL TOTAL	PROVINCE NUMBER											
	£	1 £	2 £	3 £	4 £	5 £	6 £	7 £	8 £	9 £	10 £	11 £	12 £
Receipts													
Giving	88	71	79	90	96	92	79	98	86	94	102	95	66
Legacies	5	4	4	2	3	4	1	9	2	4	7	7	1
	<hr/>												
	93	75	83	92	99	96	80	107	88	98	109	102	67
Loans & Grants	8	5	5	2	6	7	3	15	3	10	16	11	5
Other Income	30	14	20	20	39	25	33	38	29	28	47	34	26
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	131	94	108	114	144	128	116	160	120	136	172	147	98
	<hr/>												
Payments													
Ministry Costs	57	49	48	55	61	56	52	61	57	59	71	57	48
Churches & Halls	32	21	32	30	37	35	36	39	30	27	43	29	28
Unified Appeal	7	6	6	9	7	9	7	9	8	8	9	8	5
Benevolent Gifts	5	2	3	3	4	4	5	6	7	6	7	7	3
Capital Works & Loan Repayments	18	7	12	6	12	23	9	25	8	16	23	21	7
Sundries	8	6	6	10	10	8	7	9	7	8	15	11	6
Transfers to Reserves	4	3	1	1	13	(7)	—	11	3	12	4	14	1
	<hr/>												
1982 Total	131	94	108	114	144	128	116	160	120	136	172	147	98
1981 Total	115	77	100	103	131	112	102	129	117	117	156	130	88
Increase %													
1982 over 1981	14	22	8	11	10	14	14	24	3	16	10	13	11
1981 over 1980	16	17	6	7	20	17	13	17	13	19	26	20	7

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 3

Contributions to Maintenance of the Ministry and Unified Appeal 1983

Province	Maintenance of the Ministry		Unified Appeal	
	£	% of amount promised	£	% of target
1. Northern	450,000	100	77,439	86
2. North West	500,000	100	97,007	100
3. Mersey	380,000	100	79,601	101
4. Yorkshire	375,000	100	82,559	103
5. East Midlands	308,000	100	65,507	100
6. West Midlands	431,728	99	82,761	96
7. Eastern	405,000	100	82,692	101
8. South West	355,000	100	71,774	101
9. Wessex	515,000	100	105,883	103
10. Thames North	620,000	100	126,993	102
11. Southern	773,885	99	167,300	100
12. Wales	<u>240,000</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>35,700</u>	<u>100</u>
Total from Provinces	5,353,613	<u>99.8</u>	1,075,216	<u>99.4</u>
Other receipts			<u>1,810</u>	
Amounts required by budget	<u>5,367,000</u>		<u>1,077,026</u>	
Shortfall	<u>13,387</u>		<u>22,974</u>	

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 4

The expenditure on central activities financed mainly by the Unified Appeal is set out below and in the right hand column we have shown it in terms of 1980 £s, i.e., adjusted for inflation by reference to the Retail Price Index.

	Expenditure	At 1980 prices
1980	915,000	915,000
1981	985,000	871,000
1982	1,075,000	849,000
1983 (provisional)	1,173,000	883,000

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 5

Stipend of Ministers Employed Centrally from July 1983

1. **Provincial Moderators** The stipend of Provincial Moderators is £6,312 per annum (plus any children's allowances). They are provided either with a house free of maintenance costs, rates, heating and lighting, or with a house allowance in lieu. Travelling expenses, telephone costs etc., in connection with church business are refunded. A car is provided, maintenance and running costs being met by the Church subject to an adjustment for private use. The Moderator may provide his own car and claim mileage allowances.

2. **Ministers at Tavistock Place** Stipends range from £6,312 per annum for Assistant Secretaries to £9,372 for the General Secretary (plus any children's allowances). The other arrangements are similar to those for Provincial Moderators but fares between home and Tavistock Place are met by Ministers.

3. **Preaching Fees and Travelling Expenses** When Moderators and Staff Secretaries visit a church or attend a meeting in the course of their official duties, any fee or reimburse-

ment of travelling expenses paid to the Officer is accounted for to the central funds of the Church.

4. **Academic Staff at Westminster College** Stipends range from £6,312 to £6,912 per annum (plus any children's allowances). The housing provisions are the same as those for the Provincial Moderators.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 6

THE PLAN FOR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTERIAL REMUNERATION

(Revised 1984)

This revised edition of the Plan first approved by Assembly in 1980 incorporates amendments made by Assembly in 1981, 1982 and 1983. It also includes revisions of the administrative detail of the Plan in the light of experience, particularly concerning the relationship between the central and provincial MoM committees.

This booklet also includes for ease of reference other information relating to ministers.

Abbreviations used in this Plan

URC United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom

MoM Maintenance of the Ministry

DHSS Department of Health and Social Security

PART 1 — GENERAL

1. Objects of the Plan

To provide a unified scheme for the remuneration of ministers in the service of the Kingdom of God within the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom (URC), and to ensure the provision of the necessary resources.

2. Principles of the Plan

- 2.1 The whole ministry of the URC is to be made available to the whole of the Church, and the financial responsibility for this ministry is to be shared throughout the whole of the Church. It is recognised that the extent and type of ministry will vary in different situations.
- 2.2 Payment of the basic stipends of ministers and certain other payments provided for by the Plan will be made from a central fund, known as the Maintenance of the Ministry (MoM) Fund, into which the local churches will pay their contributions.
- 2.3 The total budgeted requirement of the Fund shall be placed annually before Provinces by the central MoM Committee, and a provincial contribution agreed. Each Province will then be free to determine in its own way the contributions required from each of its local churches in order that the provincial total shall be guaranteed. In using the word "guaranteed" it is meant that each Province will do everything within its power to meet the agreed financial contribution. In this context it should be noted that the URC "guarantees" the stipends of ministers, and must therefore have assurances that the funds are available. It is the policy of the URC that the provision of stipends shall be the first charge upon the finance of the local church.

3. Administration and Consultation

- 3.1 The Plan is administered by a partnership between the central MoM Committee appointed by and responsible to the General Assembly of the URC and Committees appointed by each Province of the Church. The central MoM Committee recommends to the General Assembly any changes in the working of the Plan.

- 3.2 The contribution of each local church, as agreed between the local church and its Province, shall be remitted direct to the MoM Fund by regular monthly payments by a due date.
- 3.3 The following reserves shall be maintained at levels determined by the central MoM Committee.
 - 3.3.1 Stipend Payment Reserve equivalent to not less than one month's payments from the Fund to ensure that payment of stipends could continue should the receipt of intended monthly contributions from the local churches be delayed or interrupted.
 - 3.3.2 A General Reserve intended to cover all other contingencies and in particular the possibility that the budget may prove insufficient either because there are more ministers than forecast or because a decision is taken to increase the basic stipend by a larger amount than had been envisaged when the budget was prepared.
- 3.4 Normally in the October of each year, the MoM Committee shall consider the first draft of the budget for the year after next. Early in the following year a revised draft budget shall be considered by the Committee.
- 3.5 The total requirement of the Fund for the budget year, as approved by the central Committee, shall be placed before the Provinces for their response. To assist the Provinces in making their responses, the Committee shall make available appropriate information.
- 3.6 On the basis of the contributions thus guaranteed by the Provinces, the central MoM Committee shall bring its budget for the next year to the General Assembly for approval.
- 3.7 It is understood that the Provincial contributions for each year are freely negotiable rather than the result of a uniform percentage adjustment on the previous year's contributions.

PART II — SCOPE OF THE PLAN

4. Churches to be included:-

- 4.1 Each local church of the URC.
- 4.2 Each ecumenical situation involving the URC.

5. Ministers and students

Ministers to be included:-

- 5.1 Recognised ministers of the URC serving whole time a single church pastorate or a joint or a group pastorate, or holding a special appointment with a Province.
- 5.2 Recognised ministers of the URC holding whole time chaplaincies (to such number as shall be determined from time to time by the General Assembly) in the appointment of whom the URC has agreed and whose remuneration is derived in whole or in part from the MoM Fund.
- 5.3 Recognised ministers of the URC serving as Provincial Moderators or holding stipendiary appointments in the central offices of the Church; and those ministers inducted to teaching posts at Westminster College.
- 5.4 Recognised ministers of the URC holding appointments in ecumenical situations approved by the central MoM Committee.
- 5.5 Such ministers of other denominations working in ecumenical situations or otherwise serving the URC, as the General Assembly shall, from time to time, determine.

Whole time ministers NOT to be included:-

- 5.6 Ministers ordained under Assembly Resolution (AR) who have not completed such further training as is specified by the Ministerial Training Committee; and local pastors.

Part-time ministers to be included:-

- 5.7 Ministers (or retired ministers), ministers (AR) and local pastors who are not in full-time other remunerated employment.

Part-time ministers NOT normally to be included:-

- 5.8 Ministers, ministers (AR) and local pastors who are already in, or enter into, full-time remunerated employment.

Ministers NOT to be included:-

- 5.9 Auxiliary ministers.

Students to be included:-

- 5.10 Students for the URC ministry, who have already commenced training, giving ministry with District Council approval in vacation periods to URC pastorates which are in pastoral vacancy.
- 5.11 Students in special situations. Where an ordained minister is undergoing further training required by the Ministerial Training Committee and has pastoral oversight of a local church the minister may be paid such stipend and allowances as may be agreed by representatives of the local church, the Provincial Moderator, the District Council, the Ministerial Training Committee, the College where the minister is studying and the central MoM Committee, who shall agree from which sources the money shall be paid.

Special Cases to be included:-

- 5.12 Ministers to whom remuneration for specific periods has been authorised by the Assembly Pastoral Reference Committee.
- 5.13 Such other special cases as are accepted by the central MoM Committee.

PART III—ENTITLEMENTS

6. Remuneration of Ministers

The remuneration of each minister included in the Plan consists of a basic stipend together with other entitlements and allowances as set out below.

- 6.1 Amounts paid from and at the expense of the MoM Fund.
- 6.1.1 Basic stipend: The basic stipend will be fixed from time to time by the General Assembly having before it the recommendation of the central MoM Committee. In the case of "part-time" pastorates the proportion of whole time basic stipend which is appropriate, having regard to the work involved, shall be determined by the provincial MoM Committee upon the recommendation of the District Council, subject to the approval of the central MoM Committee.
- 6.1.2 Children's allowances: From 1 January 1982 no new children's allowances are payable but existing allowances (in the sums then being paid) shall be continued for those children for whom allowances were being paid at that date (see Appendix B).
- 6.1.3 Payment during sickness: Remuneration shall be paid during periods of sickness for such periods and in such sums as shall be determined from time to time by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the central MoM Committee and having regard to the arrangements operated by the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS).

- 6.1.3.1 Ministers who are unable to work because of sickness or accident shall be paid full stipend (less any National Insurance Sickness Benefit or Industrial Injury Benefit received) for a period of six months during any period of twelve months. Approximately three months after the beginning of any illness, the central MoM Committee shall take steps to determine, in consultation with the Provincial Moderator, what further help, if any, should be given when the entitlement to full stipend comes to an end.
- 6.1.3.2 During the first eight weeks of any period of sickness the URC recovers statutory sick pay from DHSS. It is important that all ministers who are unable to work for more than three days should advise the Finance Department, as soon as possible during their illness, in order that the necessary recoveries can be made.
- 6.1.3.3 Ministers who are sick for periods in excess of eight weeks will draw sickness benefit from the DHSS and should notify the Finance Department of the amount of the benefit each time it is received in order that the next available stipend payment may be reduced by the amount of the total benefits notified. Where the weekly sickness benefit from DHSS received by a part-time minister exceeds the amount of the remuneration under the Plan, the amount of the deduction from stipend shall not exceed the amount of remuneration, on a weekly basis.
- 6.1.3.4 Treasurers of local churches shall pay the fees and expenses of pulpit supplies during the minister's sickness and reclaim the cost (up to the approved rates plus appropriate travelling expenses) from the MoM Fund at suitable intervals, following the same administrative procedures as in a pastoral vacancy (see para 10.1).
- 6.2 Amounts paid through the payroll system of the MoM Fund at the expense of the local church.
- 6.2.1 Stipend supplement: The decision of the local church in matters of remuneration above the basic stipend shall be respected by the Plan, and payments of the higher sum will be made through the central payroll system, the costs (including, for example, additional National Insurance contributions) being an expense of the local church.
- 6.2.2 Housing allowance and other taxable remuneration: Where allowances are paid to a minister who does not occupy a church-owned manse (see para 6.3.1), the allowances and the additional National Insurance contributions based upon them should be paid through the central payroll system, the costs being an expense of the local church.
- 6.3 Financial Responsibilities of the Local Church(es)
- 6.3.1 House, free of rent, rates, etc: For the purposes of the Plan a house or manse means a home for the minister and his immediate family provided and maintained in good repair and decoration, free of rent, ground rent, all rates and property insurance; and payment of costs of removal into such accommodation. If the manse is not owned by the church, a housing allowance, approved by the Province, shall be payable to the minister. Guidelines for calculating such allowances shall be issued by the central MoM Committee (see Appendix C).
- 6.3.2 Heating and Lighting: The cost of heating and lighting the manse and of all other normal domestic fuel consumption shall be borne by the local church(es) or other appropriate body. The heating and lighting payments are intended to cover the normal needs of the minister and his immediate family. In cases where special expenditure is needed the estimated additional costs shall be dealt with by agreement between the

local church and the minister. In the case of "part-time" ministries the local church or other appropriate body shall bear the same proportion of these costs as the minister receives of the basic stipend.

- 6.3.3 Travel: The costs of travel on church business shall be met as follows.
- 6.3.3.1 Car: Where the regular use of a car is considered necessary by the local church(es) in consultation with the District Council, it is the responsibility of the local church(es) to provide a suitable vehicle; the costs of private motoring shall be borne by the minister under locally agreed arrangements. Where, however, the minister provides the car, financial arrangements in regard thereto, satisfactory to the minister and the local church(es), shall be agreed with the provincial MoM Committee.
- The central MoM Committee shall make available to Provinces information about suitable schemes and rates of car allowance in relation to minister-owned cars.
- 6.3.3.2 Other Travel: The cost of travel on church business by public transport shall be reimbursed by the local church(es) or other appropriate body.
- 6.3.3.3 Where a minister, following an introduction by a Provincial Moderator, visits a church in pastoral vacancy otherwise than in connection with a preaching engagement, the cost of travel shall be paid by the church visited. A grant, which shall not exceed the cost of travel within the United Kingdom of the minister and his spouse, shall be paid from the MoM Fund to the church.
- 6.3.4 Expenses: Each minister shall be reimbursed sums expended in respect of postage, telephone and stationery incurred on official business by the local church(es) or other appropriate body. The reimbursement of expenses will be on the basis of actual cost incurred, and not by a predetermined lump sum.

7. Additional Paid Work

Stipends and other allowances to whole-time ministers shall normally be paid on the basis that these represent the main earned remuneration. It is recognised that a minister will from time to time accept other paid work (e.g. hospital chaplaincies or teaching). Where this work, in the view of the District Council and Provincial Moderator, can be performed without detriment to the pastoral care of the church, congregation, and area of local church witness, the additional remuneration shall be retained by the minister involved, provided the work does not exceed the equivalent of one working day per week. Where more than one day per week is involved, the central MoM Committee may reduce the stipend by an appropriate amount after consultation with the minister's District Council and Provincial Moderator.

8. Miscellaneous Allowances to Ministers

Grants and loans are payable from the MoM Fund as follows:-

- 8.1 Resettlement Grant
- 8.1.1 Every stipendiary minister, whether whole-time or part-time shall be entitled to a Resettlement Grant upon settling into his/her first pastorate and each subsequent pastorate or into a full-time appointment of the URC and upon final retirement always provided that the settlement involves a change in place of residence and that such grant shall not be payable more than once in every three years. Where the pastorate is part-time the grant shall be pro-rata according to the proportion of whole-time basic stipend in respect of the pastorate to be served. Where a minister's years of service up to normal pension age have not all been whole-time the proportion of the Resettlement Grant on retirement shall be determined by the central MoM Committee.

8.1.2 The Resettlement Grant shall be 12 ½% (twelve and a half per cent) of the current whole-time basic stipend or such other amount as the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the central MoM Committee, shall from time to time determine.

8.1.3 In the case of a minister who dies before retirement (no matter whether he/she has already passed retirement age or not) his/her spouse shall be entitled upon first changing her/his place of residence to the equivalent of a Resettlement Grant.

8.1.4 Where a minister does not move upon final retirement (e.g. because he/she continues to live in his/her own dwelling or is permitted to remain in a manse that is not required for another minister), he/she shall be entitled upon first changing his/her place of residence (subject to the three years' restriction in para 8.1.1 above) to a Resettlement Grant, and if the minister dies after final retirement but before first changing the place of residence then his/her spouse shall be entitled to the equivalent of a Resettlement Grant.

8.2 Ordination Loan

An interest free loan, as a help towards the furnishing of a manse, is available to ordinands for the whole-time stipendiary ministry: this loan shall be up to 20% of the current whole-time basic stipend repayable over a period of not more than five years of such other amount and period as the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the central MoM Committee, shall from time to time determine.

8.3 Retirement Removal Grant

The cost of removal, within the United Kingdom, shall be paid on the first removal (whenever made) of a minister following final retirement from pastoral charge or from a full-time appointment of the URC (or to the spouse of a minister who dies before retirement) provided that at least two tenders have been obtained and normally the lowest figure claimed and that in any event the grant payable shall not exceed 10% (ten per cent) of the current whole-time basic stipend or such other amount as the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the central MoM Committee, shall from time to time determine.

8.4 Supplementary Provisions

8.4.1 Notwithstanding what is written above in paras 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3, in a case of husband and wife being ministers their combined entitlements shall not exceed that of one whole-time minister.

8.4.2 In a situation other than those covered above the central MoM Committee shall have discretionary power to pay, in whole or in part, a Resettlement Grant, Ordination Loan and Retirement Removal Grant.

8.4.3 The above Resettlement Grant, Ordination Loan and Retirement Removal Grant shall be payable whether or not the manse or retirement dwelling is church-owned.

8.4.4 Grants and loans expressed as a percentage of the basic stipend shall be rounded to the nearest £10 above.

9. Remuneration of Students

9.1 Students fulfilling student pastorates to which para 5.10 applies may be paid from the MoM Fund such amounts as the central MoM Committee shall from time to time determine. Housing and all out of pocket expenses (including the cost of travel to and from the pastorate) shall be borne by the local church.

- 9.2 Students in the circumstances to which para 5.11 applies may be paid such stipend and allowances as may be agreed in accordance with that paragraph.
- 9.3 Except as provided for in the preceding paragraphs, the Plan does not provide for the remuneration from the Fund or for the pastoral expenses of any person prior to ordination.

10. Pulpit Supply Fees

In the following circumstances, pulpit supply fees may be recovered from the MoM Fund by local churches subject to Provincial approval of claims.

- 10.1 When a local church is in pastoral vacancy and the provincial MoM Committee's administration of the Plan does not provide for the local church's contribution to the Fund to be reduced to recognise the vacancy, the local church may reclaim the actual cost of pulpit supply fees up to such maximum as the central MoM Committee shall from time to time determine, together with appropriate travelling expenses. In group pastorates and part-time pastorates, the refunds shall be available only in respect of those services which would have been conducted by the relevant minister had the vacancy not existed.
- 10.2 When a minister is receiving sick pay in accordance with para 6.1.3 the local church may recover from the MoM Fund, pulpit supply fees and appropriate travelling expenses on the same basis as in para 10.1 above.
- 10.3 When the Moderator of General Assembly in any year is in local pastoral charge, the cost of pulpit supply fees and appropriate travelling expenses shall be borne by the MoM Fund.

11. Pension Fund

The Church's contributions to the URC Ministers' Pension Fund shall be borne by the MoM Fund.

12. National Insurance

The Church's contribution to the National Insurance Fund shall be borne by the MoM Fund.

13. Grants

The MoM Fund shall bear the cost of grants in support of ministry in ecumenical situations exercised by recognised ministers (of the URC or other denominations) as follows:-

- 13.1 For sharing the responsibility where the minister serving a pastorate is succeeded by a minister from another denomination (see Appendix D).
- 13.2 In providing remuneration for a minister other than a URC minister who is in pastoral charge of a local church of the URC (see Appendix D).
- 13.3 In funding particular ventures approved by the central MoM Committee.

PART IV — CONTRIBUTIONS

14. Local Church Contributions

- 14.1 In order to ensure the necessary funds for the proper support of ministry within the scope of the Plan, each local church within the URC shall contribute to the Fund.
- 14.2 To assist reasonable distribution of the MoM budget (paras 15.1 & 16.2), every local church shall provide from time to time such returns of membership and financial standing and such copies of its accounts as the central MoM Committee and/or provincial MoM Committee shall require.

15. Role of the Central MoM Committee

- 15.1 The central MoM Committee shall prepare annually a budget for recommendation to the Assembly and through the provincial representatives

on that Committee shall agree the proportion of the budget which shall be contributed from local churches within each province of the URC. The Officers of the Committee shall make available to provincial representatives such statistics as the Committee shall require in considering contributions. The statistics provided shall include details of membership, income and ministry, and an analysis of the budget between "local ministry" and "wider ministry" as defined from time to time by the central MoM Committee (see Appendix A).

- 15.2 True Cost of Ministry: The central MoM Committee shall issue calculations showing the "True Cost of Ministry" (stipend, National Insurance, pension costs, etc) in order to help these provinces which use this element in settling the contribution of local churches.

16. Role of the Provincial MoM Committee

- 16.1 Each province shall have a Committee referred to in this document as "The Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee". This committee should include the provincial representative on the central MoM Committee, along with representation of each district in the province.

- 16.2 Each provincial MoM Committee shall be responsible for the distribution of its share of MoM budget over the local churches in its own area on the basis that contributions from local churches will normally cover both local and wider ministry (see para. 15.1 and Appendix A). The method by which this distribution is achieved is for the provincial MoM Committee to determine, and shall be subject to the concurrence of the Provincial Synod.

- 16.3 The provincial MoM Committee, normally acting through District Council, shall agree with each local church the contribution which the local church is to make towards the province's share of the budget. This contribution shall be the first charge on the finances of the local church.

- 16.4 It is recognised that the provisions of para. 16.2 above will mean that churches in different parts of the country may be asked to contribute on varying bases if provincial Committees are to be allowed freedom from nationally determined rules, and properly to represent the needs of the churches in their care.

- 16.5 The provincial MoM Committee shall, no later than the last day of October in each year, furnish the central MoM Committees with a schedule, showing the church names and numbers, and the agreed contributions for the succeeding year.

PART V — PAYMENTS

17. Payment of Stipends

- 17.1 The payment of the basic stipend, together with any children's allowance and supplementary payments under para. 6.2 shall be made monthly on the 26th day of each month by the central MoM Committee.

- 17.2 The Officers of the central MoM Committee shall be responsible for keeping proper records for the purpose of making statutory deductions from stipend and making payments and returns to the Inland Revenue and DHSS as required by law.

18. Payments by Local Churches

Churches' contributions shall normally be paid at the rate of one-twelfth of the annual sum on the 20th day of each month by means of the "Direct Debit" system of the Central Clearing Banks. Payment is collected to the central account of the URC. The central MoM Committee shall ensure that Direct Debits are operated strictly in accord with the requirements of the Central Clearing Banks.

APPENDICES

- A. Local Ministry and Wider Ministry
- B. Approved rates under the Plan
- C. Guidelines for Housing Allowances
- D. Ecumenical Support Grants

NOTES

The following notes we give for information.

- 1. Holiday provisions for Ministers
- 2. Continuation of Minister's Service at Retirement Age
- 3. Removal Costs

APPENDIX A — LOCAL AND WIDER MINISTRY

1. LOCAL MINISTRY

The cost of Local Ministry includes the following payments to ministers having whole-time or part-time pastoral charge of local churches:-

basic stipends, children's allowances, related National Insurance and pension fund contributions, resettlement grants, ordination loans, and retirement removal grants.

It also includes refunds of pulpit supply fees and related travelling expenses, and any other payments directly related to local churches.

2. WIDER MINISTRY

The cost of Wider Ministry includes the corresponding payments to ministers serving as Provincial Moderators, Staff Secretaries or in teaching posts at Westminster College or in special ministries as determined by the Deployment Committee.

It also includes grants and other expenditure not directly attributable to local churches, including in particular any budgeted contribution to make good an actuarial deficit in the Ministers' Pension Fund.

APPENDIX B — APPROVED RATES UNDER THE PLAN

1.7.83.

para

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 6.1.1 | Basic Stipend, whole-time | £4,730 |
| | Maximum Stipend, part-time | 75% of whole time |

para

6.1.2 Children's allowances

Allowances being paid in December 1981 continue at the rates then applicable for each child until his/her 19th birthday whilst continuing at school. The annual rates are:

for children born

1 January 1963 to 31 December 1971	£140
1 January 1972 to 31 December 1976	£100
1 January 1977 to 31 December 1981	£ 60

para

8.1 Resettlement Grant

12 ½% of current whole-time basic stipend (rounded to £10 above)

para

8.2 Ordination Loan

Up to 20% of current whole-time basic stipend (rounded to £10 above)

para

8.3 Retirement Removal Grant
Actual removal costs up to 10% of current whole-time basic stipend (rounded to £10 above)

para

9	Maximum weekly payments to students	£32
	Maximum weeks for which payment made	10

para

10. Pulpit Supply Fees
(maximum refund per service):-
where the church's contribution
is up to £1,500 pa £4*
is in the range £1,500-£3,000 pa £8*
exceeds £3,000 pa £12*
* plus appropriate travelling expenses.

APPENDIX C — GUIDELINES FOR HOUSING ALLOWANCES

1. RESOLUTIONS OF ASSEMBLY 1979 (Record pages 11 & 12)

a. The Assembly resolves that the provision of a dwelling for the minister shall continue to be part of the normal conditions of service.

b. Assembly acknowledges

- (i) The wish of some ministers to be owner-occupiers and
- (ii) The problem such a course can create for the stewards of the Church's material resources;
- (iii) The desirability of reviewing housing allowances annually.

c. The Assembly requests District Councils to take note of the condition and facilities of the manse, or of alternative housing arrangements, before concurring in calls and when making visitations.

d. The Assembly calls upon local churches whose minister does not have the use of a separate room as a study to provide one.

2. BASIC PROVISION

It is the responsibility of the local pastorate (perhaps with the help of the Provincial Synod) to provide a manse and to ensure, as far as possible, that the minister has the use of a separate room as a study. In some cases, ministers may agree to use a room at the church but normally it should be expected that a separate room will be made available at the manse itself.

3. BASIC UNDERSTANDING

In most cases, therefore, the minister who lives in his own house is doing so by choice, a choice, which the Assembly has recognised he may make, whilst acknowledging at the same time that it can create problems for the Church. He is entitled to expect that the local pastorate will pay, in lieu of the manse accommodation, as much money as it would otherwise be finding if he were living in the manse; and, presumably he will not expect the local pastorate to make greater provision than it would if he were living in a manse (assuming that the manse would be adequate for himself and his immediate family).

4. ALLOWANCE

There are allowances currently being paid which may have been calculated on various bases and for different reasons, and it is expected that these allowances will be honoured.

When determining new allowances the following should be taken into consideration:

a. **Heating and Lighting** As ministers living in a manse receive this particular allowance, it seems right to treat this separately, calculating the allowance on what the cost would probably be if the minister were living in an adequate manse.

b. **Allowance specifically 'in lieu of manse accommodation'** This allowance should cover the cost of the following items which the local pastorate would normally have to meet:

- (i) rates (half of Local Authority rates because manses are rated at half the full amount)
- (ii) water rate
- (iii) interior and exterior re-decorations (estimated yearly average)
- (iv) repairs (estimated yearly average)
- (v) property insurance.

c. The minister would therefore be paid the Heating and Lighting Allowance PLUS the total of the allowance in lieu of manse accommodation.

d. The allowance (both parts) should be re-calculated annually.

5. OTHER FACTORS

a. In some cases where the manse is let, it could be reasonable to take into consideration the net rent (i.e. the rent after meeting all expenses of the up-keep and letting) to see whether a further sum is available for payment to the minister. (The net rent is only being received because the minister is not living in the manse and the local pastorate would have paid all the expenses in 4.b in any case).

b. In those cases where a manse has been sold (perhaps because the minister or his predecessor wished to have his own house), and the money realised has been invested, the situation is more complex. Experience has shown that the only way to ensure that sufficient capital is available to purchase another manse in future, is to retain virtually all the interest being received on the original capital. Therefore the local pastorate should give very careful consideration before using any part of this interest other than to add to the capital available for the purchase of a future manse.

6. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Where a District Council feels that a settlement has been possible only by the willingness of a minister to provide his own accommodation, it should encourage the local pastorate to pay a higher allowance than would otherwise be the case. In particular, consideration should be given to recognising the capital element contributed by the minister in providing his own dwelling. There may be other exceptional circumstances which justify a higher allowance.

Exceptional circumstances could also require the local pastorate to 'gross up' the allowance so that the sum received by the minister, after paying tax upon it, is not less than the equivalent original accommodation entitlement (the value of which is tax free). At a 30% rate of tax, this 'grossing up' would mean that every £100 has to be raised to £142.86 to produce £100 after tax had been paid.

7. PART-TIME PASTORATES

The proportion of part-time is normally the determining factor.

a. **Heating and Lighting** The proportion (e.g. 40% if part-time is 40% of whole-time basic stipend) of what the cost would be if the minister were living in an adequate manse.

b. **Allowance in lieu of manse accommodation as in 4.b.** The proportion (e.g. 40% if part-time is 40% of whole-time basic stipend) of the full value in 4.b. should be paid. (However, it is recognised that there is an anomaly where a part-time minister is living in a manse—the local pastorate should normally meet in full all the items in 4.b. and the minister should use the manse without any adjustment being made to the percentage proportion of the stipend).

8. CENTRAL PAYROLL

To avoid complications regarding tax and National Insurance, payments of housing allowances (including the heating and lighting part) should always be made through the central payroll system.

9. PROCEDURE

The central MoM Committee acknowledges that the determination of a fair allowance depends very much upon local knowledge. Therefore, each District Council should forward its recommendation to the provincial MoM Committee for a decision, unless the provincial MoM Committee has delegated authority to the District Council.

APPENDIX D — ECUMENICAL SUPPORT GRANTS

These grants may be made

a. when a pastorate is faced with the responsibility of contributing towards the cost of ministry of another denomination after the MoM contribution for that pastorate has already been agreed. For example, in a UR/Methodist church, where a UR minister is replaced by a Methodist minister, the MoM contribution would normally continue at the same level for the remainder of the MoM financial year, but the pastorate would probably have to contribute extra to the Methodist Circuit and a grant from the Ecumenical Support Section of the MoM Fund would enable it to do this.

b. where a local Church is paying its fair contribution (as determined by Province) for local ministry (see Appendix A) and District Council deems it appropriate that such local ministry should be provided by the minister of another denomination, then central MoM Committee (on the recommendation of the Province) may make a grant from the Ecumenical Support Section of the MoM Fund bearing in mind the proportion of ministry being received.

NOTE 1 — HOLIDAY PROVISIONS FOR MINISTERS

The following guidelines have been approved by the Executive Committee and were reported to Assembly 1982.

- (i) We recognise the need for adequate holiday, which is freedom from all pastoral and preaching duty, and we believe that every local church will seek to ensure this for its minister. Ministers are urged to take holiday as provided, for the sake of effective future ministry.
- (ii) We offer as guidance the provision that there should be 5 weeks such holiday in each calendar year; and that each minister should be enabled to take one further Sunday away from his/her pastorate without any claim upon him/her to arrange or pay for pulpit supply. On further occasions of Sunday absence from the pastorate the minister would be responsible for arranging and paying for pulpit supply.
- (iii) We consider that circumstances may arise when one week of holiday is carried forward to the following year.
- (iv) When a minister serves a part year in a local church on appointment or transfer or retirement, holiday provision should be pro-rata, according to paragraph (ii) above, but we do not think that service of under three months in a calendar year should be a basis for such a calculation.
- (v) The above sections do not refer to sick leave.
- (vi) The above sections do not refer to in-service training courses or Sabbatical leave for study.

NOTE 2 — CONTINUATION OF MINISTER'S SERVICE AT RETIREMENT AGE

This procedure is to be followed when a minister in pastoral charge approaches normal pension age (Reports to Assembly 1982, page 3 and Record page 14).

- (i) When the minister has reached the age of 64, the Provincial Moderator is re-

quired to ascertain whether the minister wishes to continue in that pastoral charge beyond normal ministerial pension age (i.e. 65).

- (ii) If the minister wishes to continue, the minister will apply to the District Council for permission to do so.
- (iii) On receipt of an application the District Council, through its appropriate committee, will consult with the minister, and, separately, with the Elders of the church/es and with the Provincial Moderator.
- (iv) The appropriate committee will place a recommendation before the church/es concerned;
 - a. that the ministry should be terminated at normal pension age,
 - or b. that the ministry should be extended, in the first instance up to a maximum of three years, and the position reviewed in the final year.
- (v) In the light of comments from the church/es, the minister and the Provincial Moderator, the appropriate committee will place a resolution before the District Council.
- (vi) Any requests for further extension will be dealt with as above.

NOTE 3 — REMOVAL COSTS

The local church(es) to which a minister is called is responsible for meeting the costs of removal (see para 6.3.1) but when removal costs exceed £250 a grant is available from Central Funds and application should be made via the MoM office.

Where the cost of removal within the United Kingdom is

£251-£1,000	The local church bears the first £250 plus 50% of excess over £250. Central Funds bear 50% of excess over £250.
over £1,000	The local church bears £625. Where prior approval has been given Central Funds bear £375 plus excess over £1,000; this approval will not be given until at least two estimates are submitted for approval to the MoM office.

Where a minister is called from abroad a special application needs to be made to the Treasurership Committee.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 7

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Chairman: Mr D. C. F. Haggis

Vice Chairman: The Revd A. J. Knight

General Manager: Mr D. Jones

Secretary: Mr D. J. Rawson

The Association's Committee of Management has reviewed the consultations which have occurred with local UR Churches over the last 4 years. They did so bearing in mind the welcome and support given by the May 1979 General Assembly of the Church to the Association's proposal to expand its work, with the intention that where the appropriate alternative use of a Church site or premises was for housing, the members of local Churches and Trust Bodies would automatically consult with the Association (rather than consider disposing of Church property outside the denomination, as had unfortunately and unavoidably occurred in the past), and the acceptance that Church sites are the major source of sites available.

In consequence, the Committee is pleased with the many enquiries which have been received either from, or on behalf of, local UR Churches since 1980. The result of such consultations is reflected in the increasing number of housing schemes within the Association's current Development Programme.

The Committee wishes to encourage local Churches and their consultants to consider the URC Housing Association as their first option when wishing to provide a housing development on their sites.

The Committee conclude that the excellent relationship which already exists between the Association and the Provincial Moderators of the United Reformed Church should be further strengthened by closer consultation at Provincial level, particularly with a view to ensuring that members of local UR Churches, Trustees and their Professional Consultants are fully aware of the role of the Association **before** the closure of a church occurs. Meanwhile the Association welcomes the initiative of the Church and Society Department in promoting a more general awareness of housing needs within the URC as a whole.

The cutback in public housing sector expenditure continues to delay the implementation of our Development Programme and if the Association is to obtain the funds which are available, it is essential to have the co-operation of the URC Trust Bodies in considerably reducing the time scale involved in site acquisitions. Meanwhile, as a result of recent funding allocations by the Housing Corporation, it is expected that building work in respect of certain schemes will start this year.

Whilst preliminary progress is being made with proposals in the East Midlands Region of the Housing Corporation, the Association and local UR Churches in the Wales Province continue to be frustrated by the lack of support from the Corporation's Regional Office at Cardiff.

Major repair works in the order of £300,000 to our older blocks of 3-storey flats at Poplar are now well advanced.

The expansion of the Association's work load arising not only from the Development Programme but also from Housing Management pressures at Poplar, has resulted in the employment of a second full-time officer. Similarly, the need for additional office space has involved the Association in moving from the City Temple to commercial office accommodation nearby, at Holborn.

The Association is deeply indebted to the Ministers, Elders and Members of the City Temple for making the Minister's Robing Room available as an office, thus enabling the Association to become operational in 1980.

Pending the receipt of acquisition and development allowances from the Housing Corporation, the Association is now at a difficult financial stage. In consequence, it has been necessary to encroach on Charitable Funds to meet the additional costs directly attributable to expansion.

Accordingly, the need by the Association for short term interest free loans for a period of three years or more has now become a matter of considerable urgency. Any assistance which local UR Churches or individual Church members can give to the Association would be much appreciated. The Association's new address is:-

*Room 4/5, First Floor, Halton House, 20/23 Holborn, London EC1N 2JD.
Telephone: 01-404 4281*

CHURCH LIFE DEPARTMENT

Chairman: The Revd Richard F. Taylor

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

1. The aim of the Church Life Department has been "to serve the URC by discovering and releasing resources, particularly for use in local churches so that people of all ages may worship God, engage in God's mission in the world and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ". Each of the nine Committees has been achieving parts of this aim. In the Provinces and Districts it has often been helpful to focus on an annual theme in Church Life. This year the underlying theme of the report to General Assembly is **evangelism**. Our experience has been that when the Church is clear about its task in the world, then it is more able to receive the gifts that are needed. The renewed sense of purpose and confidence in God is leading to more conviction about our need to pray. The recovery of prayer and Bible reading is a sign of renewed health and strength.
2. The Church cannot avoid being part of the preaching. "Physician, heal thyself". It is not only our words that will be judged but also the way we are in the Church. This is why the continued struggle to achieve a fuller community of women and men in the Church is so vital for our evangelism. The Church has to be a model of all the gifts and talents, affirmed and cherished. The way in which young people participate in Church Life and particularly in its worship, is also a clear pointer to the extent of its renewal. If we are to carry conviction in the world, then we have to demonstrate that we are a people of all ages. Perhaps when we have re-discovered the place of children in the centre of our Church Life, then we shall really be on the way to being part of the Gospel.
3. The ministers and lay preachers who serve our churches are our evangelists. Nurture in the faith goes hand in hand with sharing the faith with others outside. Worship and stewardship are the two dimensions of growing up as the whole people of God.
4. The Church Life Department has given particular attention to the proposals of the North Western Province for a training centre for the URC at Windermere. We have followed the development of this new life with great interest, and many of the aspects of Church Life will be enriched if such a centre materialises.

Richard F. Taylor

CHAPLAINS AND STUDENTS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr Leslie Green

Secretary: The Revd A. Peter Peirce

5. **Personalia and Situations** We were deeply saddened during this year by the untimely death of Philip Nash, Chaplain/Lecturer at the Sheffield City Polytechnic. Philip had only recently taken on the responsibility of Secretary of the Polytechnic Chaplains' Standing Committee. We give thanks for his integrity and for all that he achieved, aware that much was left unfinished by his sudden death.
6. Three URC ministers have left full-time Chaplaincy: Bernard Moss who had served the University of Keele with distinction, David Lawrence who pioneered the work of the Free Church Chaplaincy at Southampton University and Colleges, and Peter Peirce who had served as Ecumenical Chaplain at the Hatfield Polytechnic. To this last post another URC minister, David Tatem, was appointed as successor. It has been noted in past reports that URC applicants appear to fare well in Ecumenical appointments. Two new full-time appointments have been created, in which the URC has made a financial commitment: the Free Church Chaplaincy at Bristol University, and the Ecumenical Chaplaincy at the Polytechnic of Wales, Treforest.
7. A number of changes has taken place in the list of part-time Chaplains. We are grateful for the invaluable contribution these chaplains offer; the groundwork is often frustrating

and time-consuming. We note the responsibility of the Provinces in the making of these appointments.

8. **Further Education** We continue to share a concern for the field of Further Education through our representation on the National Ecumenical Agency in Further Education. We are grateful to the Revd A.D. Tucker for his contribution in this field. Douglas Thacker has been asked to represent us in the future. We hope to examine in more detail the needs of chaplaincy in Further Education and make a more significant response to Assembly.

9. **Support of Chaplains** Conscious that the frontier ministry of chaplains in Higher and Further Education places a heavy burden on individuals, at times involving deep frustration and loneliness, as well as moments of high exhilaration, we are constantly aware of our pastoral responsibility to serving chaplains. Lack of time makes proper support and concern difficult to achieve.

10. **The Biennial URC Chaplains' Consultation** is one important contribution in this field. The Consultation this year was residential in Sheffield, on the theme of 'Chaplaincy as Mission'. With input from Mrs Sally Abbott, the Revd Kenneth Cracknell and Dr Jim Gomersall, we explored the theme in terms of 'What is Mission?', 'Mission and Other Faiths' and 'The Psychology of Mission'.

11. **Student Link-up** One of the greatest and perennial difficulties in chaplaincy is making student contacts, especially for the part-time Chaplain. We are extremely disturbed by the lack of referral, through the 'Student Link-up' Scheme or direct to the Chaplain, of our young people going on to Further and Higher Education. We do not believe, for example, that only 7 students went from United Reformed Churches to Oxford University this last autumn. A conservative estimate would be that we do not hear from local churches of 75 per cent of the students going away to College—an estimate based on the number of contacts chaplains find from other sources, and will not include the many never discovered. We urge local churches to take seriously their responsibility in making referrals and to send the full information in good time.

12. The move away to University, Polytechnic, College of Further Education is a most important part of the development of young adults. It is a formative part of their lives. Undoubtedly many find the opportunity to 'look around' in terms of Church and religious affiliation, and many are glad of the excuse to make a break. It is perhaps worth telling potential students that Chaplains are aware of this and generally will not act like preying vultures, and will be ready to share in the student's search. It can be of invaluable help in a strange environment to know that there is a link with someone to whom one can turn simply as a friend, or as spiritual guide.

13. **Ecumenical Work** We are committed to working with the other denominations through the Churches Higher Education Liaison Group (CHELG). An important function of CHELG is training for new Chaplains. A number of new URC Chaplains attended the Preparatory Course at Westminster College, Oxford in April. So much chaplaincy work is ecumenical that this shared experience of training is invaluable.

14. **Student Christian Movement** We are encouraged by the development and growth which has been taking place in the SCM.

15. In the last two years twelve new groups have been formed. A great deal of effort has been expended by the regional secretaries and it will now be necessary to consolidate this period of growth. It is particularly gratifying to note that this academic year has witnessed the involvement of many more first year members in these groups. The possible further expansion with new groups will depend upon the SCM being able to recruit more staff.

16. The observance of the International Day of Prayer (this year in February) is now becoming an established feature of the calendar for local groups, Chaplaincies, and importantly in local churches. SCM places great store on its links with Chaplains and Chaplaincy groups and it seeks to deepen this working relationship.

17. The inaugural meeting of Senior Friends of SCM took place in Regent Square Church, London.

18. **Chairman** The committee is indebted to the Revd Dr Leslie Green for leadership that he has given in the six years since it became an Assembly Committee. With his gentle strength he has shared his vision and understanding of chaplaincy and we have witnessed the warmth, compassion and commitment to the gospel which have exemplified his own ministry in Sheffield.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Stephen Orchard

Secretary: The Revd Margaret T Taylor

CHILDREN'S WORK COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A. Greenslade

Secretary: The Revd Margaret T. Taylor

19. The Christian Education and Children's Work Committees have had a fruitful year, with a number of working parties producing useful material for local churches. There are many concerns before the committees but these all seem to be part of a pattern and we are hopeful of responding effectively to the needs of the churches. We see our task to be the provision of resources of material, ideas and support to help local churches in their work of Christian nurture. Requests come in various ways from individuals, local churches, districts and provinces and cover the needs of elders, Junior Church leaders, discussion and Bible Study groups, women's meetings, mid-week children's groups, parents, and new and prospective members, among others. The committees, through their working parties, seek to anticipate these needs and respond to them, but with limited resources of time, money and personnel we have to choose priorities. Much is being done locally and in some provinces, and we are glad to hear of such initiatives and to encourage a wider use of materials produced in this way where possible. If we could be told of local initiatives in the early planning stages more fruitful cooperation might be developed.

20. A major task this year has been the following up of the report 'Understanding Christian Nurture'. A Working Party has wrestled with the ideas contained and their implications. A set of booklets has been produced under the general title 'How Can A Child Choose Faith?', with booklets on 'The church's attitude?', 'The parents' role?', 'The church's worship?' and 'The child's freedom?' We hope they will provoke discussion which will enable local churches, members, parents and children to develop new and creative ways of growing together in faith and in understanding of the Gospel. (Resolution 2)

21. Another achievement during the year has been in relation to the training of those who lead children's groups on Sundays. A small sub-committee, working with Baptist colleagues, has been able to make some progress in helping those who tutor the 'Equipped to Teach' course, and in preparing improved notes for tutors. We are most grateful to those who responded to our request for more tutors and hope that the work which tutors and sub-committee members are doing will contribute to the better Christian nurture of children in the United Reformed Church.

22. The 'On The Way' material for new members has been well received and churches are beginning to make use of it. Some have found it useful not only for one-to-one discussion between a new and an experienced member, but also in elders or church meetings or with groups of people of some years membership.

23. The Christian Education Committee, has turned its attention to the consideration of resources for the training of elders and the preparation of people for membership. Some of the current material is still useful, in particular 'Being an Elder in the URC' and 'Being a Member of the URC', but additional material is also needed and will be prepared during the year. The committee would like to hear from anyone who has ideas about what is required.

24. We are very much aware that, although the Christian Education and Children's Work Committees are responsible, through the Church Life Department, to the General Assembly for the direction, resourcing and stimulation of the education work of the church among children and adults, the actual work in local churches is done by many people. A particular responsibility falls upon ministers and we have therefore been glad to be involved in two of the working parties set up by the Ministerial Training Committee to follow up the 1983 Review and have some comments to make on the reports concerning the place of colleges in Lay-training, the relationship between the educational methods used in colleges and the minister's role as educator, and the link between the work of the colleges and that of our committees, which we hope might be helpful.

25. The committees noted the proposals for restructuring the Church Life Department and were in general of the opinion that, should Assembly agree to the proposals, the committees within the proposed new 'Faith and Life Department' will need to give careful consideration to the committee structure which will best deal with all the concerns of the department.

26. Both committees look forward to interesting developments in the near future, most of them involving ecumenical cooperation. The Children's Work Committee will seek appropriate involvement in the new National Association for Children's Play and will take an initiative in considering the use of the Bible with children, hopefully through the British Council of Churches' Consultative Group on Ministry Among Children. The Christian Education Committee is supporting its Secretary's involvement with a working party looking at cooperation with the Open University, and also with an initiative in theological exploration by lay people under the 'Theology for Living' programme begun by Dr Ian Fraser in Birmingham. These are only some indications of the concern for understanding Christian faith and life which appears to be growing in the Church.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd John B. Simpson

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

Aims

27. The aim of the Christian Stewardship Committee is to continue to challenge each person, each local church, each District, each Province, each Committee and each Department of the United Reformed Church to assess the maximum potential of all resources available to the whole people of God for doing the work of Christ. The committee has seen its priorities as follows:

- i) to encourage local churches to embark upon stewardship programmes
- ii) to help 'service' such programmes with material and secretarial time
- iii) to prepare and produce helpful material for use in Stewardship programmes
- iv) to initiate training days based upon the URC Christian Stewardship material.

Stewardship in small Churches

28. Arising out of the Christian Stewardship Committee's concern to help 'small' churches to carry through Christian Stewardship programmes, the committee sought the co-operation of other committees within the CLD and arranged a consultation to consider the stewardship principles and opportunities in small membership churches. (37% of all Protestant churches in England have a membership of less than 25). The consultation was held at Melbourne URC Derbyshire and representatives from 36 churches shared in the day.

URC Training Centre

29. The committee have shared in the discussions involving the North Western Province and the Church Life Department concerning the proposals to establish a URC Training Centre at Carver Memorial URC Windermere.

British Council of Churches' Stewardship Committee

30. The committee cooperates in the work of the BCC Christian Stewardship Committee which brings together the members of denominational Stewardship Committees, together with the central staff members, helping each other in the task of making local churches aware of the implications of working out the principles of Christian Stewardship.

Re-organisation of Assembly Committees

31. The committee has given consideration to the proposed re-organisation of Assembly committees and Departments and notes that the proposed Faith and Life Department will be responsible for promoting the principles and practice of Christian Stewardship.

Christian Stewardship Promoters

32. It is fatally easy to allow stewardship principles to slide. 'We've done stewardship' is a common response in churches. But the truth is that stewardship is never completed; it is an ongoing programme, and all good programmes need an efficient producer. We recommend most strongly that each local church, or group of churches, appoints a **stewardship promoter**. Someone in every congregation needs to be responsible for stewardship thinking and action, otherwise it will not happen. That which is everyone's responsibility, is in practice, no-one's responsibility. The task of a promoter is not to push programmes or to organise campaigns, but to have an overall responsibility for seeing that stewardship education is carried out in all the activities of the congregation and through all available means. The promoter will be able to challenge bad and twisted stewardship thinking; he will see that members are kept informed about the whole work of the church so that their interest is aroused and sustained, and that this interest is turned into practical action.

33. To help the **stewardship promoters** in their task, there will be training days and support material. (resolution 3)

And Finally

34. It is the metaphorical colour of balance sheets which first interests people. Are we 'in the black or in the red'? Most church treasurers are anxious to produce a healthy balance sheet at the end of each financial year. For everything we have from God we are, of course, debtors. We are invited to give to Him in return—the thankfulness of heart and life; service and commitment, and for the ongoing work and mission of the church, money. The latter is something we can in some measure control. The gifts here are tangible; they can be recorded, and a balance sheet produced. The least we can do is be generous and prayerful in our giving.

35. The church's income is simply the sum of its members' wealth. Each year, faithful stewardship means that we must render an account. Let us do it honestly and critically. Examine carefully how we give to God in worship and service, in prayer, in involvement in the Life of the world, in educational growth and evangelistic outreach, and in money. Over the past nine years the Christian Stewardship Committee has tried to bring before the church its need for a regular spiritual audit, to examine under God its total life and witness. This work will now be undertaken within the proposed new Committee structure. The theme of Stewardship, 'It must come to mean more to be a member of the Church', must continue to sound in the years ahead.

Appreciation

36. The Christian Stewardship Committee wish to place on record its warm appreciation and thanks to the Revd John B. Simpson for his chairmanship of the Committee since November 1978. The Committee is grateful for the imagination, dedication, enthusiasm and friendly way in which he has led the Committee and shared his persistent concern for Christian Stewardship in the councils of the United Reformed Church.

THE COMMUNITY OF WOMEN AND MEN

Secretary: The Revd Margaret T Taylor

37. The Working Party was set up in 1982, in response to the Sheffield Consultation and other initiatives by the British Council of Churches, at the request of the World Church and Mission and Church Life Departments. An interim report was given to Assembly in 1983 and a degree of informal consultation with the URC undertaken. The following people shared in the Working Party:

Susan Armitage, Pamela Cressey, Martin Cressey, Derek Gardiner, Barbara How, Kate McIlhagga, Ruth Mealand, Norah Morgans (who also represented the URC on the BCC Working Party), Timothy Sykes, Margaret Taylor (Secretary) and Richard Taylor.

38. The Working Party has very much valued the sharing of experiences and the new understanding gained during its work, and comes to the end of its specific task with the firm belief that the insights into people's feelings and the incentives to change of which it has become aware need to be carried on into the life of the URC. A brief leaflet has been prepared outlining some of the responses to the questionnaire. Copies of this will be sent to those who wrote to us and some will be available, on request, at Assembly.

39. A small booklet from the United Church of Canada has come to our notice. Called 'Bad Language in Church', it is a most sane and helpful comment on the hurt caused by exclusive language and the possibility of replacing this by inclusive language. Copies (at 50p) will be available at Assembly.

40. We share our findings and concerns with the General Assembly in the following terms:

1. "In Christ there is neither male or female". Christ has set us free from stereotypes and prejudice so that we can accept and value one another as individuals. As a church we rejoice in this and are always open to new ways of deepening and giving fuller expression to our oneness in Christ. Are we not 'united' and 'reformed'? We must therefore
 - continue to explore the relationships between men and women in the light of both Scripture and contemporary experience, believing that God guides us through both;
 - enable everyone to use to the full the gifts that God has given them for the building up of the Church;
 - ensure that cooperation between the sexes is shaped, not by domination but by a reciprocity which reflects the relationship of mutual love between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. To those who do not see this as an issue, and to those who feel that the URC has already achieved a right relationship in this area, we say
 - there is a real hurt and frustration among both men and women in the URC. We must be careful lest we miss 'the beam in our own eye';
 - there is a need to show our solidarity with fellow Christians in Churches which do not yet ordain women to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and a responsibility to share our experience with them;
 - moreover the examination of the relationship between men and women is part of the continuous effort needed to build and maintain true community within the Church, as part of our Christian witness. "The world will not come to believe because of what we say, but because of the quality of our life as a reconciling, loving, inclusive community in Christ";
 - and the BCC has asked member denominations to respond to the issues raised by the 1981 World Council of Churches Conference on the Community of Women and Men in the Church.
3. We have a vision of the Church which offers
 - positive support to all, whether in the Church or not, who are trying to find

their identity as human beings created in God's image;

— a place for deep and searching dialogue about different patterns of marriage and family life, about sharing power and responsibility and about where authority lies in these areas;

— a practical sign of hope that women and men can progress together towards human wholeness.

4. As a Reformed Church, claiming to follow Scripture, the URC must be prepared
 - to face up to the generally 'patriarchal' tone of the Bible, and the difficult texts in the Epistles which subordinate women to men;
 - to ask ourselves whether we are doing justice to the richness of the Biblical image of God which on the one hand includes both feminine and masculine characteristics and on the other hand transcends both;
 - to make clear through the language we use that the people of God comprises both men and women.
5. The role of existing women's groups in the Church has been much debated. These are valued by many and can play a useful part in building confidence and teaching leadership skills needed by the wider Church. It can also be helpful for men and women to discuss separately what it means to be male and female today in the light of their faith. We recognise, however, that it is no more acceptable for women to acquire confidence and freedom at the expense of men, than it is for men to exercise leadership roles at the expense of women.
6. Many people, particularly women, find their ability to contribute their talents restricted by practical considerations. Synods, District Councils and committees could help, for example, by changing times of meetings, seeking to remove obstacles in the way of those who would otherwise take part, offering training opportunities, and by including appropriate questions on visitations.
7. These issues are threatening and sometimes make us feel defensive or react defensively, but we have discovered that it is through experiencing the hurt and working through the insecurities produced by the changing role of women and men that we can begin to make a new creative dimension to our life together, in the URC and beyond (Resolution 4).

DOCTRINE & WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr Brian O. Johanson

Secretary: The Revd Dr Colin P. Thompson

41. This time next year we shall be presenting to Assembly the official response of the URC to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, which should need no further introduction. Work has been going on up and down the country as Church Meetings, Districts, Synods and other groups and bodies study the text and prepare their findings, on which this response will be based. We need always to be reminded that the *BEM* stands at the climax of fifty years of study, and earlier drafts have already been widely discussed.

42. As the preface states, *BEM* is not intended to be 'a complete theological treatment of baptism, eucharist and ministry...The agreed text purposely concentrates on those aspects of the theme that have been directly or indirectly related to the problems of mutual recognition leading to unity'. We are not now asked for further textual amendments, but for a response to it as a whole. And this response is asked for through our answers to four questions:

- the extent to which your church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church through the ages;
- the consequences your church can draw from this text for its relations and dialogues with other churches, particularly with those churches which also recognize the text as an expression of the apostolic faith;

- the guidance your church can take from this text for its worship, educational, ethical, and spiritual life and witness;
- the suggestions your church can make for the ongoing work of Faith and Order as it relates the material of this text on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry to its long-range research project “Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today”.

It will therefore be of the greatest help if all of us engaged in formulating the URC response answer to these questions, instead of flying our own particular kites.

43. The work of collating the material is to be undertaken by Dr. David Thompson, a member of this committee. It should be sent to him at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge CB3 0DG, where possible by 31 October. It would also be helpful to indicate the source of the material—whether from individuals, study groups, Church meetings, Districts, Synods; and, if prepared ecumenically, in which other denominations participated. As valuable further assistance, we commend *Responding to Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Word to the Reformed Churches*, by a former member of the committee, Alan Sell, of the Department of Theology, World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

44. Other ecumenical matters have come before us. We have given a first response to the British Council of Churches on two important and related matters: the possibility of an ecumenical certificate of baptism; and the enquiry to be undertaken into the theology and practice of church membership among the British churches.

45. We have also begun to make a full study of the URC understanding of ordination both of elders and ministers, an issue which is complex and of concern to many other churches in similar ways. We have started to look at the issues remitted to us from *Preparing the Way*, the report of the Long Range Policy Group to last year's Assembly. These mainly concerned Reformed ecclesiology, and the Biblical and theological bases of Christian concern for social and political questions, the latter a subject of much current debate. In all honesty we have to say that a great deal of work has already been done on these questions by Christian thinkers and by our own Church and Society Department, and it may be that the weakness of our witness here has more to do with the unwillingness of many congregations to become actively involved in such searching areas than with a lack of resource material. Nevertheless, we shall try to provide some help. A very good way of getting the debate open at the local level is for congregations to study an important booklet also from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, *Called to Witness to the Gospel Today*. This deals directly with many of the concerns voiced in *Preparing the Way*—the nature of the Church and its life, Christ's Presence in the World, Witness in a Threatened and Divided World. There is, for example, a provoking account of the World Alliance's suspension of two member churches because of their continuing adherence to apartheid. The booklet is designed for use by discussion groups. The issues it tackles are vital—they concern the life and death of our world and the meaning of Christ's life and death for our world. We believe that they belong to the Church as a whole, not the Doctrine and Worship Committee; and that local congregations should be much readier to tackle them than they seem to be.

46. We have continued to share in the working party which has now produced a study booklet on human sexuality, another issue which we tend to shy away from, though it is part of our God-given nature. The certificate for parents bringing children to an act of thanksgiving and dedication has been published, and *Scripture Readings* 1983 sold in gratifyingly large numbers, in spite of some criticism of its new format. It is hoped that the 1985 edition will be ready before the end of this year; delays in obtaining some of the material were the reason for a later appearance of the 1984 edition than we should have wished.

47. Membership of the Guild of Organists and Choirmasters has doubled in two years and now stands at 410. A new branch has been formed in the East Midlands, and the advice panel on organs is now in operation. Training days for church musicians continue to be an important feature of the Guild's work. The Hymnody Group, a sub-committee of Doctrine and Worship, meets but once a year, but is busy reviewing new hymn books as they appear.

48. Lest we be thought only concerned with the traditional, Assembly may like to know that work is proceeding on *Guidelines* arising out of our discussions on the theology of art. We are hoping to produce booklets dealing with our architectural inheritance and the meaning and use of our buildings, something many churches find themselves considering when they face redevelopment; and also with our musical inheritance and practical aspects of music-making, not only the playing of the merry organ and sweet singing of the choir, but the encouragement of other musical resources and talents as well. We are always glad to hear of creative ideas and approaches to worship which have brought about its renewal. We have especially been asked to collect examples of liturgical material arising out of inner-city culture, and invite anyone with access to this to send copies to the secretary of the committee.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mrs Joan Boulind

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

INTRODUCTION

49. The work of our committee has reflected a growing awareness of the diversity of ministry now available to the church and the need for a greater flexibility in the training provided. Added to this is the concern that there should be a clear strategy implicit in all we are doing, and here we have been helped in our thinking by the reports of the Long Range Policy Group and our own Review Group on Ministerial Training.

50. During the year we have taken particular care in making more use of the links we have established with the appropriate ministry committees in the Provinces, believing that we are working in partnership. There is now a regular two-way exchange of information and ideas, and this will be particularly helpful as we move into new patterns of departmental work.

ASSESSMENT CONFERENCES

51. We now assess candidates for the Auxiliary and Stipendiary ministry together rather than at separate conferences. We have also made some improvements to the assessment process itself in the light of experience. We are widening the expertise of the assessing panels and paying close attention to the entrance rules. We wish to draw attention to the fact that someone may only start the applications process through their District Council when they have been a member of the URC for at least one year, unless there are exceptional circumstances. At least five 'O' levels are required or their equivalent, with D grade and below not being acceptable. We are giving particular consideration to the requirement that an applicant must be of a certain maturity, and where we find that a recommendation for some experience in the world of work is not practicable we make alternative proposals to the Province.

52. We believe that the choice of the right college is crucial, and have established that a candidate's own wishes shall be the starting point in the process. With the help of the Provinces, we have now established the following *Code of Practice*:

1. National Assessment Conferences shall take careful account of any wishes expressed by a candidate.
2. Assessment Conferences shall recommend a particular college to a Province. Factors to be taken into account would include:-
 - (a) The College milieu which will best enable the student to develop personally and spiritually.
 - (b) The kind of course most suitable;
 - (c) The size and balance of the student body at any particular time.

- (d) The final choice is without prejudice to the admission procedures of the college.

A change of college at the request of the candidate shall only be recommended if good reasons can be clearly stated to all concerned.

N.B. Finance shall not be a determining factor. In the case of Queen's College, funds are available only in special cases.

3. Provinces shall normally only call for a change in the recommendation of the national assessment if new factors come to light, and only after direct consultation with the Ministerial Training Committee. No promises or guarantees shall be made until this has taken place. The Ministerial Training Committee shall consult with the Province, those who made the original recommendation, and the colleges concerned.
4. In the interests of all concerned, an individual candidate may obtain details of the colleges, but shall not enter into private negotiations with a college, and thus hinder the due process of consultation.
5. In the case of dispute, the Ministerial Training Committee shall offer advice, with the final decision resting with the Province.

MINISTERIAL RECRUITMENT

53. We can report that the special Vocational Conferences held in Newcastle, Nottingham and Bristol were attended by 70 enquirers for various ministries, and proved to be very worthwhile. There may be a pattern here for the future, involving Provincial initiatives, though we return to national enquirers conferences for this current year. We have produced a Tape/Slide set entitled "Were you wanting me, Lord?", which is available in each Province, and are now working on new literature for the Auxiliary Ministry and special ministries. Numbers at assessment conferences have increased, but it is too early to say whether or not we shall achieve our target of 30 new ministers a year.

AUXILIARY MINISTRY

54. A report of the Board of Studies together with a list of students is set out below. At the Assembly last year, we were reminded of the implications of this new development in the URC, and even the word 'miracle' was used. We are therefore pleased indeed to report that the numbers coming forward continue to be significant, and we are also researching ways in which we might commend those forms of ministry that are very local to a congregation, and those that take the church out into the whole community. We would urge District Councils and Provinces to give the matter of ministerial strategy attention as we begin to see real growth in the support given to the ministry of the whole people of God.

STIPENDIARY MINISTRY

55. We are aware again of the range of ages and situations reflected in the student body in each of our colleges, and of the complex task of training which we place upon members of staff. Much attention has been given to the recommendations of the Review Group report 'Preparing Today for Tomorrow's Ministry' and important changes are now taking place in each college.

At the invitation of the Church of England we participated in a visitation to the Queen's College, Birmingham, and have indicated our desire to continue to send students there for whom training in that ecumenical context would be particularly helpful.

56. The Revd. Professor R. Buick Knox has indicated his retirement from the Alex C. Nivison Chair of Church History at Westminster College in 1985, and the Ministerial Training Committee has taken note of the teaching needs in this field and of the qualifications in it of existing members of the teaching staff. We are also aware of the need at this stage for a general consideration of our staffing strategy at the college in the light of the various recommendations of the Review Group, and of work in the Cambridge Federation of Theological Colleges.

It is hoped that the Committee on Nominations to Teaching Staff at Westminster College will be able to bring a name to the 1984 Assembly for the Nivison Chair, so that the effect of the consequent appointment on the balance of staffing can be known well in advance of Dr. Knox's retirement.

57. Keeping student grants continually under review, and on the recommendation of the Ministerial Training Fund committee, we are now to pay a Mature Student Allowance to those over the age of 26, who have been in full time employment for at least 3 years before the commencement of their training. This is a recognition of their special needs and is in line with LEA grant policy and the practice in other denominations.

REVIEW GROUP

58. Much committee time has been concerned with the recommendations of the Review Group, and using working parties we have made progress in the following ways:-

Ministerial Skills and Staffing

59. The starting point for the review of ministerial training was an analysis of the fundamental qualifications required for ministry, and the consequent implications for those in our colleges whose task is to develop appropriate skills in the students. Representatives of the Ministerial Training Committee in consultation with the Joint Staffs' Conference of the URC-related colleges which included St. Andrew's Hall, Birmingham, have produced a report which indicates the extent to which each college has already taken the Review Group's report on board, and which identifies priorities for future action.

60. There is to be special concentration on skills which enable ministers to work collaboratively with others and which alert them fully to the range of resources in and beyond the life of our churches. The creative possibilities of an Internship Programme, of appropriate secular placements, and of freer movement into, out of and between our colleges are to be exposed and explored. The appointment of staff on a short term or visiting basis is to be encouraged and new skills are to be developed among existing members of staff so that they may develop with greater confidence the student's ability to reflect theologically upon their radically changing collegiate experiences, and thus to prepare theologically, and therefore effectively for the practical pressures of local ministry which lie ahead of them. An immediate and necessary consequence of this is the provision of a sound administrative base in each college. Further examination of this is a priority.

61. Each college has given indication of its awareness of the importance of what we are saying.

Contextual Training through Placements

62. Aware of the significance accorded to practical training in the Report of the Review Group, a group was called together representative of the colleges, the Ministerial Training Committee and the whole church to consider ways in which this might be developed. Already the Assembly has decided that it shall be done by a system of placements in secular contexts, and we feel that these in turn should affect the way all teaching is carried out, and indeed the actual life of the college community. Recommendations have now been made to the colleges as follows:-

- (i) all basic college training should include a secular placement or placements covering at least one day a week for two terms or 5-10 weeks of a vacation.
- (ii) each placement should be planned and supervised jointly by a local organizer or field supervisor and a member of the college staff.
- (iii) Evaluation of placements should take place in a seminar in college for all those who have undertaken placements in the previous academic year or long vacation.

63. Because of the thinking that has taken place in this most important area of ministerial training, we consider it useful to make available the full report of this group in the form of an occasional paper entitled "Training Ministers in the Community". We believe we have begun to take some important steps forward as the result of this work, but success can only

be measured long term through the actual exercise of ministry in the URC.

In-Service Training

64. The Review Group arranged for the central co-ordination of the whole programme of In-Service Training in the Provinces and this is now taking place. The proposals by the Assembly were:-

- (a) ministers to be released for periods of at least SEVEN DAYS' concentrated study each year, not counting as part of holidays. Attendance at Summer Schools and similar events might be one form of study, but there are many others;
- (b) financial provision for this should be made by the local church, the District or Province and the Ministerial Training Fund;
- (c) all ministers are encouraged to take a sabbatical term of ONE to THREE MONTHS every TEN YEARS.

65. Provincial In-Service Training Officers have details of the many and varied training courses available. The committee is also considering the needs of Auxiliary Ministers.

The Ministry of the Whole Church

66. Underlying all our assumptions regarding ordained ministry is the understanding that it is trained to equip and enable the whole Church for ministry. The membership of our churches is helped in many ways in an educational programme and this is the particular responsibility of another committee. Bearing this in mind, a working party, representative of the Ministerial Training Committee and the Christian Education Committee was gathered to consider ways in which this ministry might be furthered, and in particular by using the resources available at our colleges. We conclude that this can in fact be done in a number of ways. The training of ministers alongside lay people is important, so that we avoid paternalism and encourage partnership. We believe that we should draw on lay skills in our ministerial training programmes, and also make available resources of books, materials and staff expertise in the colleges to the whole membership of the Church.

67. Because of the inadequate geographical spread of our colleges, we bring into our thinking St. Andrew's. We also wish to encourage the development of other local centres to provide materials, and expertise for groups of ministers and lay people, perhaps on an ecumenical basis. A useful model to consider is what is made available for our auxiliary ministers through diocesan ministry courses. They are the product of growing ecumenical co-operation, geographically well-spread, do not depend in the main on elaborate structures and buildings for their work and often enable lay members to train alongside those who are preparing for ordination.

68. We noted a resolution from the Yorkshire Province accepted by the Assembly last year on this whole subject and feel that we have begun to move in the right direction. The practical and financial implications will be the subject of further work in both our committees, and the general programme of the Christian Education Committee is a witness to the way in which we take these matters seriously. The whole Church needs to glimpse this vision of continual learning. Theological education is more than the acquiring of knowledge and skills; it is a life-long process of personal and corporate growth in mind and in method for the totality of ministry in, with, and through the whole Church.

Post Ordination Training

69. In 1982 the General Assembly received and approved in principle the report of the Review Group on Ministerial Training in the URC entitled "Preparing Today for Tomorrow's Ministry", noting in particular paragraphs 47-48 and passing the following resolution:

"The General Assembly resolves to adopt the programme of Post Ordination Training as set out in this report, and instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to implement it from the summer 1984, subject to any modifications agreed by the Assembly in 1983."

The proposals relating to the training of our Stipendiary ministers were the subject of much

debate in 1982, and it has been very gratifying to follow the course of many subsequent discussions on the subject in many areas of the Church. Because the response has been so great and diverse, and because we all regard the matter as one of the utmost importance for the future ministry in the URC, a special Working Party was set up by the MTC to examine the proposals in detail. This group, under the Chairmanship of the Revd. Bernard Thorogood, with representatives of all three main theological colleges, the Ministerial Training Committee, the Moderators' Meeting and of local church interests, sought and gained the permission of the URC Executive to postpone the Church Life Department response to the Assembly until 1984, in order that we might get it right. We now offer our final report for implementation in 1985.

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE SCHEME AS PROPOSED

70. It soon became clear to us that, whilst some aspects of the Post Ordination programme could have worked out satisfactorily with more detailed planning, there are fundamental questions which had not been faced:

- a) What is the basic purpose of Post Ordination Training? If it is both continuing training with assessments and the provision of pastoral support, how can the two be related satisfactorily to one another?
- b) How can sanctions be applied if work is not satisfactory, without putting into question the ordination that precedes it?
- c) In what way can a first ministry begin with Post Ordination Training, and then continue without the upheaval of a move after only two years?
- d) Are there enough church situations strategically placed throughout the country to provide the base for the assistantship programme, and have we enough ministers who can take on the responsibility of this further training?
- e) How would this Programme relate to the Internship and Pastoral Programmes already contained within the Foundation Period offered by all three colleges?

BASIC WORKING PRINCIPLES

71. It became clear from the debate that we had certain agreed objectives, and ought to work them out in the light of some basic working principles. The two main objectives are that (a) all students should receive sound initial training in pastoral responsibility, and (b) all newly ordained ministers should receive pastoral support and be offered the opportunity to assess their progress in a new job. The working principles are that we should entrust training to our colleges as at present, that ordination marks the transition from preparation to service, and finally that the church as a whole should be responsible for the care of its ministers through the appropriate councils.

72. As we follow out these objectives and remember these principles, we believe that the problems attached to the earlier programme fall away as we present the following modified scheme, which is in two parts:-

MODIFIED PROPOSALS

(A) Initial Training in Pastoral Responsibility

73. We see an appropriate pattern in the Internship Programme offered at Northern College, Manchester, and wish to see this encouraged and improved in the light of experience. The possibility of such a scheme should be considered by Mansfield College, Oxford and Westminster College, Cambridge.

74. An Internship period can take place in the middle or at the end of a normal course, which will need to be increased to four years, as it is at present in Manchester. It will normally be undertaken in a church within reasonable distance of a college. This will avoid the disruption of family life for the student and facilitate regular return for theological reflection and report. It should be undertaken in a church which has a minister and not during a vacancy. It would be the responsibility of the college to oversee the work, setting aside a particular member of staff with appropriate skills for this purpose. The Ministerial Training Committee should be ready with advice and help where necessary to offer to the college

and the churches involved. That committee will consider an individual's internship programme of an exceptional nature referred to it by the college concerned.

75. It will be the responsibility of the college to determine what amount of internship training should be included in shorter courses — Courses III and IV, and to waive the requirement where a student already has had pastoral experience of this nature (i.e. such as through Auxiliary Ministry).

76. **We therefore propose that** every course of ministerial training for the stipendiary ministry shall include an element of continuous theological and practical training in a position (or, at most, two positions) of pastoral responsibility, lasting approximately 9 months, to take effect from 1985 when it will be phased in and offered to current students at our colleges, but made a requirement for new students.

(B) Post Ordination Support

77. We believe it to be essential for an effective ministry in the future to have a scheme of post-ordination care. We propose to replace the existing systems of Post Ordination Reading and Local Pastoral Support with a general In-Service training programme designed to support the minister in the first years after ordination.

78. We recommend that after the first six months, there shall commence a Post Ordination period of support of two years, which then leads towards attendance at a Refresher Course at the end of the third year (currently undertaken for the church by Westminster College and Cheshunt Foundation). Oversight of this programme shall be the responsibility of the Province, together with the District Council and the local church, and will not involve the colleges.

79. District Council in consultation with the Provincial Moderator will allocate to each newly ordained minister a Pastoral Adviser, ministerial or lay, who will be responsible to the Council for Post Ordination care. The two should meet regularly, which indicates that they should live in proximity to one another, and the senior colleague shall advise the new minister in matters theological, spiritual and practical, and encourage continued reading. We are aware of the work-load on all our ministers. This proposal is made with the possibility in mind that retired ministers and retired lay people may be able to help, and that the Province is unlikely to need more than four or five such Pastoral Advisers at any one time. The Synod through its Regional In-Service Training Officer shall encourage further training courses, and the local church shall be made aware of what is offered alongside their own close support.

80. Pastoral Advisers should be offered support themselves by the Province, and by the Ministerial Training Committee. Appropriate training will be necessary, and our recommendation is that this should be through Provinces with the support of the Ministerial Training Committee. We would wish to encourage the development of Provincial gatherings of the newly ordained meeting with the Moderator and the appropriate Provincial committee (e.g. Pastoral).

81. We see useful patterns emerging in the Church of England which will help us give appropriate support to both trainees and trainers in these vital early stages of ministry.

82. During the two year period the new minister and the Pastoral Adviser shall compile a report of what they are doing, which will reflect the opportunities being taken for personal growth and for ministry in a locality. Guidelines for such work will be provided by the Ministerial Training Committee and offered to the District Council/Synod who will be responsible for receiving the report at the end of the period, to see that it has been effectively done. (Each Synod is requested to decide whether these responsibilities will be carried by the Synod or the District Councils.)

83. It is not required that the report shall be marked, only that it accurately reflects what has been achieved in those first years. The value in this report is that it is written, not that it has been marked.

84. Some funds will need to be made available for this part of the Programme but we

do not anticipate that they will be great, bearing in mind what is already offered to new ministers by way of book grants and travelling expenses when taking up further training opportunities.

85. We do not envisage that there will be any exceptions to these requirements other than those who have already undertaken a supervised period of ministry in some other form.

86. **We therefore propose that this support and shared evaluation should normally be made available to all new ministers by the District Council/Synod for a period of two years commencing six months after ordination, and will take effect from the autumn of 1985, when it will be phased in and offered to current students as they leave college, but made a requirement for new students.**

87. N.B. These proposals for Post Ordination Support relate to the training of Stipendiary ministers and arise from the particular needs identified by the report of the Review Group. However, we draw attention to the fact that Post Ordination Training and In-Service Training will also be provided for *Auxiliary Ministers* who already will be associated with a Stipendiary Minister. The requirements as set out above in Section B will then follow. This being a new form of ministerial situation, the Ministerial Training Committee will need to monitor progress in this area and make any necessary adjustments in the light of experience. The policy is clear.

COSTS

88. **Internship Training** It is no simple matter to estimate extra costs to the Church of introducing an extra internship year into our training in the Foundation Period. We are unsure about student numbers beyond 1984, and do not know how the LEA grant situation will develop. However, preliminary calculations lead us to suggest that we ought to be prepared by the academic year commencing October 1985 to finance up to 6 students at Westminster College and 3 at Mansfield College at an average of £3,000 for the year (£1,800 maintenance and £1,200 fees), a total cost of £27,000. This figure can be contained within the current budget of the Ministerial Training Fund.

89. **Post Ordination Training** We need to make allowance for the training needs of Pastoral Advisers and the general costs of training each ordinand in the Province through appropriate grants. We consider that £3,000 would be adequate for 1985.

90. It will be noted that the Review Group in its report to the 1982 Assembly indicated that if all its recommendations were fully taken up, the costs to the Church might be in excess of £70,000 p.a. What we are proposing is in connection with a significant part of that programme, and falls within and below that global figure. (Resolution 5)

TRANSFERS

91. Now that we have two main forms of ministry, Auxiliary and Stipendiary, we can expect some movement between them, and the question of transfer arises. It is too early to lay down rules, but we have had to consider what should be required of a candidate studying for one form of ministry who wishes to change to another. In general we would not want to encourage transfer during training, believing it would be better to offer some service first in that form of ministry for which one has been trained. However, we recognize that circumstances change and thinking develops during the training period. We therefore have advice to give to those who wish to transfer during training from Stipendiary to Auxiliary service, and vice versa, so that they may be properly prepared. The General Assembly in 1976 decided in principle that a minimum of one year at a recognised college was required of those seeking Stipendiary Ministry. Acknowledging that decision, we advise a student who wishes to transfer from Auxiliary to Stipendiary Ministry to complete the course of training begun, and thereafter to have a year at a college which will provide an internship training programme.

NON-RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS OF TRAINING

92. We now have three years' experience of other forms of ministerial training following the acceptance of Auxiliary Ministry, including those courses arranged by Anglican or ecu-

menical bodies. We believe it now to be important to analyse those forms of training that are offered outside the traditional residential college to see what might be appropriate for our ordinands, bearing in mind those elements already present in our Courses for mature students. This is a matter under discussion within the committee, and will be the subject of special consideration at a meeting in June, but we also consider it should be a major concern for the new Ministries Department should that come into being this Autumn.

BOARD OF STUDIES FOR THE AUXILIARY MINISTRY

93. The Board meets three times a year, to exercise oversight of all students and their training programmes, and to make policy recommendations to the Ministerial Training Committee. We are glad to report that 81 students are currently in training, 34 on the URC Course, and 47 with external courses. 35 are due to complete their training in 1984. Of particular significance is the commencement of annual summer schools. In 1983 these took place in the Upholland Institute, near Wigan, and in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, and were attended by a total of 34 students. We are now revising the Training Programme in the light of experience, finding ways of increasing personal contact with students to ensure they are fully supported in their study, and developing relationships with the various training bodies whose courses our students use. The help given to us on a temporary part-time basis by the Revd Roger Scopes has been invaluable during a busy and formative year.

94. **Auxiliary Ministry Students in Training in January 1984** (Those who have not started, or who have suspended studies temporarily, are not included.)

- I. **Northern Province**
William Ellerby, Sheelah Stevens, Barbara Williams
- II. **North Western Province**
William Austin, Alan Batterbee, Sarah Brewerton, Eddie Fallows, Robert Good, John Hetherington, John Mallas, Yvonne Oldfield, Helen Pike, Ian Ring, Thomas Taylor
- III. **Mersey Province**
Ruth Farnworth, Alan Johnston, James Morris, Martyn Poole, John Rooke, Katherine Stocks, Robert Thomson, Glyn Williams
- IV. **Yorkshire Province**
John Brearley, Catherine Evans, Trevor Holborn, Steven Knapton, Michael Moss, Kevin Waters
- V. **East Midlands Province**
Jean Cook, Stanley Crane, Malcolm Deacon, Graham Maskery, David Williams
- VI. **West Midlands Province**
Janet Hargis, Jennifer Martin, Alan Taylor
- VII. **Eastern Province**
Joyce Benfield, Robert Canham, Michael Powell, Lydia Rapkin, Eileen Ritchie, Roy Ritchie, Julia Stone, John Wade
- VIII. **South Western Province**
Tom Bush, Henry Dickenson, Sandra Lloyd Langston, Colin Mee, Leslie Phillips, Mary Piggott, Evelyn Ridout, Basil Rogers, Sheila Scarr, Peter Southcombe, Phyllis Trace, John Woolley
- IX. **Wessex Province**
Jeanne Christie, Anita West, Margery Woodland
- X. **Thames North Province**
Fred Bates, Pat Carpenter, Gordon Hearne, David Jenkins, Vaughan Jones, Doris Knee, Robert Maitland, Mark Parker, Timothy Poh, Audrey Proffitt, Philip Stewart, Martin Truscott, Jackie Woods, Stuart Yeates
- XI. **Southern Province**
Joan Duncan, Geoffrey Finch, John Hall, Helena McKinnon

XII. Province of Wales

John Forrest, Kirsten Lehnert, Pamela Lewis, Bette Walker.

COLLEGE REPORTS

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

95. **Evaluation of Courses** Much time has been spent this year in careful evaluation of the College course in its setting within the Federation of Cambridge Theological Colleges. This has been in part in response to the Review Group report and in part the further working out of the federal relationship, strengthened now by the work of a Federation Council of staff and students and by an annual meeting of the four College Principals with representatives of the governing boards and the sponsoring churches' ministerial training committees. Staff and student representatives have also taken part in the working groups set up by the Ministerial Training Committee to develop further aspects of the Review Group report.

96. **Contact with Former Students** This is an appropriate year in which to mention in this report our contacts with former students. These are maintained through the Friends of Westminster and Cheshunt Colleges, whose membership also includes many lay people interested in the College and former senior associates who have visited us when on Sabbatical leave from colleges overseas, particularly in the U.S.A. 1983 brought one of the occasional conferences for former students, organised every three or four years with the help of the Friends, and also the Reid Lectures, given at least once in three years in memory of the Revd. James Reid of Eastbourne on some important aspect of ministry. This series was given by Dr. Horace Russell, a leading Baptist minister from Jamaica, on 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry in a Caribbean Perspective'.

97. **The College Buildings** The Management Committee, appointed by the Ministerial Training Committee, has continued its careful oversight of the finances of the buildings. The Tower woodwork has needed some repair, including a new flag pole; some residential accommodation above the kitchens has been adapted as an extra College flat; and a major improvement has been made in the residential wing by fitting washhand basins in the 52 bed-sitting rooms. The wing houses our single students and those whose spouses live elsewhere than Cambridge, provides a valuable service in term-time to undergraduate lodgers and is the essential resource for conference work, both URC and external.

98. **Settlements** Settlements during 1983 were as follows: Martin Ambler, Glenorchy, Exmouth; Ann Cole, Grafton Square, Clapham and Stormont Road, Battersea; Derek Gardiner, Enderby and Whetstone; Frank Hall, Hopton, Mirfield and Ravensthorpe; Ruth Mealand, Hatherlow and Woodley; Alan Pickles, St. George's Newcastle; Victor Ridgewell, assistant at Crowstone, St. George's Westcliff-on-Sea; Michael Ryman, Paignton and Foxhole; Edward Symmons, Forest of Dean Group; Clive Thomson, Coggeshall and Kelvedon; Chris Wood, Brackenhall, Huddersfield; Rhona Jones has been ordained to work as a hospital chaplain for a year in Atlanta, Georgia, and then to return to Britain; Fred Hutchinson has added Little Waltham to his previous oversight pastorate at Bocking; Timothy Roffe is revising a thesis with the help of a bursary from the Dr. Williams' Trust; Stephen Brown and Eileen Springbett received their College certificates: Stephen is in Germany for a year on a WCC Scholarship and Eileen Springbett has been working in a lay capacity with the ministerial team in St. Ives, Fenstanton and Houghton.

99. **URC Ordinands** (arranged according to their year of anticipated entry into ministry)
1984

Stephen Brown, BA; Bernard Grimsey; Glyn Millington, BA; Timothy Roffe, BA (and external); Jennifer Millington, BA

1985

Kwadwo Amaning, BA, BD; Colin Bones, BSc; David Brown; Ron Forster; David Hamblin; Jeffrey Armitstead; David Jones; Elizabeth Scopes, MA.

1986

James Bolton, MSc; Adrian Bulley; Janet Flawn; John Vickers; Chikako White, BA; David Whiting, PhD;

1987

Paul Breeze; Cecil White; John Wadhams

MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

100. **Students** Theological students now number 34 and of these 17 are ordinands. The Ordination Course felt the effect of 8 settlements in 1983 but numbers are building up again.

Completing Course in 1984

Paul Dean, BA, Hazel Martell, Cert.Soc.Sc., Catherine Middleton, BA, Ph.D.

Completing Course in 1985

The Revd Michael Bond, Mitchell Bunting, Michael Durber, BA (Congregational Federation), Susan Durber, BA, Marie Roe, BA, Patrice Sessions, Gwen Thomas

Completing Course in 1986

Michael Armstrong, BA, Terry Hinks, BA, Martin Manley, BA, John Rees, BA, Gregory Thompson, BA, Yvonne Workman, Dip.Dom.Sc.

Completing Course in 1987

Christopher Ball

101. **Staff** We warmly welcome as Lutheran World Federation Fellow in Theology the Revd Dr Jan Womer who will continue the teaching functions of Dr Satrom and maintain links with the Lutheran Council of Great Britain and the British Council of Churches. Though the College was very sorry to lose him, we congratulate the Revd Dr John Muddiman on appointment to a Lectureship in New Testament at the University of Nottingham and welcome Mr George Carras, MA., BA. to teach New Testament this year. It was with a real sense of loss that we said farewell to the Revd Gordon Trowell, MSc., Librarian since 1968. His period as Librarian was marked by many well thought out changes in the Library. The College is fortunate in being able to appoint as successor the Assistant Librarian, Mrs Alma Bartholomew. Dr M.S. Freeden continues to act as SCR Librarian.

102. **Settlements** Settlements during 1983 were as follows:

Lesley Beale, BSc., MSc., PhD—Coventry; David Bending, Cert.Ed.—Braintree; Lesley Charlton, BA—Purley; David Fox, BSc—Tenby; James Gould—Feltham; Molly Kenyon, BA,—Sheffield; Sheila Maxey, MA, BD,—Brentwood; Patrick Taylor, MA—Wrexham

In addition, the Revds Wilfred Diggins and Kenneth Davies successfully completed a year's study at the College.

103. The Commemoration Preacher was the Revd. Dr. R. O. Latham, and the preacher at Valediction was Dr. Stewart McKerrow, an elder of St. Columba's Oxford. The Wednesday evening service continues to be a central part of the life of the College, with preachers frequently meeting the ordinands in the afternoon for discussion of their particular skills and experiences. This year we have been glad to welcome the Revds. Bernard Thorogood, Stanton Durant (Vicar of Paddington), Basil Osborne (Greek Orthodox Priest), Thomas More Mann (Warden of Greyfriars), Colin Gunton, Bernadette and Robert Hingley, John Reardon, David Wilcox (Principal of Ripon College, Cuddesdon), the Right Revd. Alasdair Walker and Rabbi Lionel Blue. The centenary of the birth of C. H. Dodd was marked by a service at which the preacher was the Revd Professor G. B. Caird. Other visitors who have come for discussion with the ordinands have included Ann Weber from Age Concern, Hamish Walker of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and former students now in the ministry, Dick Wolff, George Gibson and Alan Wise, contributing as they did from remarkable varieties of experience.

104. **Internship Year** After exploration of the benefits of an extra year's training in a church context under supervision, Mansfield looks forward to developing this programme and will appoint the Revd. Justine Wyatt, Assistant Chaplain, to supervise the project. A visit to Northern College, Manchester by the Chaplains and Mrs. Elizabeth Jupp of the Board of Education was arranged and the discussion with staff and students proved very helpful. It is also fortunate that Dr. Womer has already had experience of internship training schemes in the U.S.A.

105. **Oxford Theological Colleges** Relations with the theological colleges remain good, even if we have not seen as many joint activities as we would have liked. The supervisory committee has decided to tackle this problem at its most difficult point, proposing to develop a pilot scheme for more joint teaching and the liturgy tutors are currently setting up a common course. Frank discussions in other areas are proceeding.

106. **The Centenary Appeal** The Centenary Appeal makes good progress, and is now over half a million pounds. The College is however aware of the problems to be faced in reaching the full target, essential as it is for the future of Mansfield.

NORTHERN COLLEGE MANCHESTER

107. **New Name of College** After repeated attempts to find a name which proved acceptable to the different churches using the college and to the Charity Commissioners, we now have our new name, viz. NORTHERN COLLEGE (United Reformed and Congregational).

108. **Federation of Colleges and Training Agencies in Manchester** The Federation will comprise Hartley Victoria College, the Northern Baptist College, Northern Ordination Course, Unitarian College, Manchester, and ourselves. Therefore, the training of students for both the stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministries will be a feature of the Federation. To begin with, a Council with representatives of each of the participating bodies will be set up. It will have the responsibility of looking after all joint training and future planning and will be assisted by ancillary committees. As soon as is practical, the Federation will operate from a single site, and it is envisaged that this will be the Northern Baptist College. Accordingly, Northern College has been put on the market for sale. It is hoped, in time, to plan regional centres of training to service the various forms of training in ministry which are developing. While the Federation is in many ways the logical outcome of years of close co-operation in ministerial training in Manchester, it is also an attempt to respond to new patterns of ministry and training.

109. **The College and the World Church** Thanks to assistance of churches and colleges overseas and help from the Council for World Mission, we have been able to arrange for some students to do the fourth and final year of their training abroad. David Bedford spent a very useful year with the United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman and the United Theological College of the West Indies. Nigel Uden is at present in Johannesburg in a joint Congregational and Presbyterian scheme. We are pleased to have with us for part of the year the Revd Chang Sik Lee of the Hankuk Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea.

110. **Mission, 1984** This year's mission, in Bolton, is a joint effort with students of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. The Revd J.E. Francis and his students have worked with the local churches throughout the winter preparing for the mission and look forward to joining with the students of Ridley Hall.

111. **Settlements** Settlements during 1983 were as follows:- Hilary J. Collinson—Brighton Road, URC, Gateshead; David R. Bedford, BA—St Helen's Trinity URC Group; Andrew Francis—St Stephen's Wavertree and Woolton URC, Liverpool; Richard J. Gill (Revd)—Darwen URC Group; Nigel M. Goodfellow—St John's URC

Buckley and Ewloe Green Presbyterian Church of Wales; David A. Herbert, BSc. BD.—Sheffield South URC Group; Peter C. Noble—Plough Brecon URC, Libanus URC and Cwmcamlais Union of Welsh Independents; G. Howard Sharp, BA, BD—Pontypridd United Church; Alan Williamson—Blyth URC

Students presently in training at the College and the year of their expected entry into the stipendiary ministry:-

1984

Hazel M.M. Addy, Robert A. Barthram, R.J. Bushby, Beryl A. Chatfield, Christopher J. Ford, BA, Richard A.W. Goddard, John A. Hardaker, Martin T. Hazell, Alex J. Jacob, David Pennells, David C. Philips, Timothy W. Royds, Robert G. Shallcross, BA, Nigel P. Uden, BA, Philip Woods, BA.

1985

Helen M. Drummond, BA, K. Cox (Revd), Grenville S. Fisher, Martin P. Ross, Noel J. Stancliff, Darren K. Wimbleton

1986

Bethan D. N. Davis, MA, Andrew Fairchild, Kenneth C. Jones, Phillip Jones, Martin J. Nicholls, Martin J. Whiffen, BA, Celia A. Whitman, Eric P. M. Wollaston, MA.

1987

Wendy P. Baskett, BA, Michael A. Hodgson, Tracey A. Jones, Nicola J. Lowen, BA. AKC, Raymond S. Singh

112. Training Statistics

Training Course	Total Nos. URC in Training	Entry into the URC Ministry				Actual no. entered in 1983
		1984	1985	1986	1987	
Westminster, Cambridge	22	4	9	6	3	13
Northern, Manchester	34	14	7	8	5	9
Mansfield, Oxford	16	3	6	6	1	8
Queen's, Birmingham	1	—	—	1	—	—
Totals	73	21	22	21	9	30
Auxiliary Training Programme	81	35	27	8	9	12
GRAND TOTAL	154	56	49	29	18	42

PERSONALIA

113. We note with gratitude the service rendered to the Ministerial Training Fund of the Revd Ralph Calder as he now retires from various trust bodies. We are sad to report the early death of the Revd Basil Hudson Sims, MA, BLitt (Oxon) who was Principal of Western College, Bristol from 1960–68, and much beloved by staff and students alike.

MINISTRY OF HEALING COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd David H. Dale

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

Healing — A Growth Industry

114. It is seldom these days that any committee of the Church is able to see itself as part of a 'growth industry'. Yet that has been the enviable position of this committee over the past year or two. There is still no room for complacency. The problems that face any branch of church life today are not inconsiderable. Happy are those who are able to see the problems balanced by possibilities and opportunities for growth.

A Holistic World View

115. This is one of the factors making for possibilities of growth and it is emerging strongly on a wide front. Set against the context of division between East and West, between North and South and those disturbing social factors that make for brokenness and alienation in modern society there is also an encouraging sense of change and transformation taking place in our view of ourselves, our society and our world.

This can best be seen in terms of the word 'holism', coined by Jan Smuts in 1926, but reflective also of a much more ancient train of thought. This is 'the tendency of nature to produce wholes from the ordered grouping of units.' In medical terms the word 'holism' has come to be used to emphasise the need for people who treat patients to treat them as whole persons, body, mind and spirit, and to see people not in isolation but against an affecting environment — in short, to treat them as human beings and not as walking symptoms.

Healing and Curing

116. Healing, then, is seen not simply in terms of bodily cure but in terms of restoration of harmony within the individual and with the whole—the whole environment, the whole of society and the whole of self—and this through the living energies of earth and heaven. Here we are not far removed from the theological concept of atonement, reconciliation with the Holy and with one another through God's intervention in Jesus Christ.

What is happening now is that the most advanced thinking of our scientists is re-discovering the wisdom of antiquity and, incidentally, many of the truths of biblical revelation.

Whilst we would not in any way set limits to the power of God to bring healing to those who are sick, we, on the Ministry of Healing Committee, are not in the business of 'instant cure', or even that of 'alternative therapies' (we prefer the term 'complementary therapies'). We rejoice when God brings healing to anyone and pray continually for a renewal of New Testament power, but we are also concerned to see established those conditions which make for wholeness; to be able to help people to make the appropriate response to life with all its ambiguity, complexity and suffering; and to co-operate with all true agencies of healing.

The British Holistic Medical Association

117. This past year has seen the setting up of this pioneering movement in medicine. Membership of the Association is at present limited to doctors and medical students, though it is hoped to have an associated body to include non-medics. The aim will be to educate doctors, medical students and other allied professions in the principles and practice of holistic medicine. It is also hoped to engage in a three year research programme designed to monitor the impact of holistic policy within an established medical centre. We were fortunate that a member of our committee was able to be present at the first conference of the association, attended by 250 members of the medical profession. We were also invited to be represented on a small panel to give evidence on Christian healing to the BMA Working Party on Alternative Therapies.

The Churches' Council for Health and Healing

118. This Council now has a full-time administrative Secretary, Miss Carina Doyle and,

under the part-time Directorship of the Revd. Denis Duncan, is proceeding into a phase of productive movement and development. The aims are:

- (a) to co-ordinate the healing ministry in all churches and
- (b) to provide a link between religion and medicine and also between the various healing centres and agencies.

One of the interesting developments in the life of this Council arises from the location of its London headquarters at St. Marylebone Parish Church. Here an ambitious Christian Healing Centre is planned using the crypt of this historic parish church as a centre for the healing of body, mind and spirit.

Towards a Christian Understanding of Human Sexuality

119. This study guide, which has absorbed a considerable amount of committee members' time during the year, should be available in booklet form in time for Assembly 1984. We have been grateful for the co-operation of other committees, notably Doctrine and Worship, Church and Society, Youth, and Christian Education Committees, who have seconded members on to the Working Party and to a number of other members of the Church who have made significant contributions. Without this help the work would have been impossible. Our aim in producing this study is not to frame policy or produce original research—others are in a better position to do the latter—but simply to put into the hands of our church members current information about this complex area of life that is as accurate as we can make it, readable and at a reasonable price.

120. Areas covered will be:

- (i) Sexuality and the Bible
- (ii) Recognition of our Sexuality
 - a) Body, Mind and Spirit—personal growth and wholeness
 - b) Sexual Orientation
- (iii) Expressing our Sexuality
 - a) Marriage Today/Fidelity/Exclusivity.
 - b) Single People and Sexuality
 - c) Age/Youth/Children and Sexuality
 - d) Sexuality and the Disabled Person
- (iv) Broader Issues
 - a) Women and Men in Society
 - b) The Basis of Decision-Making
 - c) Counselling and Pastoral Care

121. There will also be papers suggesting how the study might best be used to enable people to think, pray and talk together about these areas of concern in day conferences and house groups. We fully recognise that we shall not be able to meet all points of view in this sensitive area. Whilst we have not tried to avoid controversial issues, we have tried not to give deliberate offence. Those who have prepared this study guide are a mixed group of committed people who, within the bounds of their Christian commitment, are seeking to recognise and respond to the questions, dilemmas and joys of human sexuality in today's world. We hope that the Church, without being asked to 'agree' it, will see it as a contribution to the widespread discussion that is going on in society today.

World Council of Churches' Christian Medical Commission

122. The Report 'The Search for a Christian Understanding of Health, Healing and Wholeness', a report on the study programme of the CMC 1976-82, deals with various areas of interest covered by Regional Conferences and Workshops, concentrates on primary health care and the need to put more resources into this area.

Sections include: Biblical and theological concepts of health
care of the environment
interpersonal relationships
traditional and alternative medicine, the Church's role.

Cruse Silver Jubilee 1984

123. The Director of Cruse, the Revd D. Nuttall, has invited all Churches to take bereavement, widowhood etc., as the theme for one of the Services on Sunday October 7th, 1984 and to share in Cruse Week 6–13th October 1984. Cruse does admirable work in the support of the bereaved and it is hoped that General Assembly will commend the observance of Cruse Week to our churches. We were able to represent the URC at an international conference on Bereavement following Violence held in London last September. (Resolution 6)

Ageing and the Aged

124. At the request of the Church Life Department we have been asked to look at the problems associated with ageing. This raises the question as to who are the elderly? In one sense only individuals can answer that for themselves. For most people 'the elderly' are retired pensioners and there are nine million of those in Britain today; approximately one person in six. One third of these live on their own. Half of them try to make ends meet on less than half the average wage. The number of elderly people in the community is increasing, especially those over 80. Information of this kind is well presented in a 'Visitor's Action File' produced by the Church of Scotland.

125. This is a very comprehensive study dealing with such questions as:

- The Church and Elderly People
- Death and Bereavement
- Mental Health: The Elderly in the Community
- Housing
- Clubs and Day Centres
- Visiting the Elderly
- Education, Hobbies and Interests,

and includes a range of other devotional leaflets and other helpful hints and practical papers.

126. This is a publication to be commended. Copies can be obtained from The Church of Scotland, Committee on Social Responsibility, 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN.

URC National Conference on Health and Healing 1985

127. This will be held at Swanwick from 19th to 21st April 1985 (Friday to Sunday). A programme for the Conference is currently being worked out. It is hoped to be able to accommodate 150 to 200 people.

Ministries of Healing

128. This committee has felt it appropriate at this stage to suggest that the healing ministry is the normal, not the extra-ordinary, ministry of the Church. We are all called to share in that ministry. The process then should be as far as possible inclusive rather than exclusive. In so far as members might be required to perform any special function, such as the laying on of hands, then the primary criterion would be the Church's choice rather than self-selection. These qualities seem then to be desirable:

- i) the ability to offer prayer on behalf of the Church
- ii) the person called to minister should have the confidence of the Church
- iii) the ability to express and embody the Church's caring ministry
- iv) openness to the Holy Spirit and the faith that God is able to do 'more abundantly than all that we ask or think'.

129. When Paul suggests that we are all to desire the highest gifts, it seems that we should all work and pray for ever greater endowment of the Holy Spirit. This surely means that we must allow God to have His way with us and be ready for Him to develop within us gifts perhaps at the moment unknown to us.

Publications

130. The revised study pack, '*Health and Healing*', continues to be in great demand and

is in use in all denominations. Something like 3,000 copies have so far been distributed. The filmstrip *'Christian Healing in the Local Church'*, is widely used in our churches. We have also received commendation for two more recent pamphlets: *Mental and Emotional Suffering*—a discussion paper; *Visiting the Sick at Home or in Hospital*.

Future Concerns

131. We are hearing much from the American churches about 'ministerial burn-out'. We would like to see some work done here in terms of a ministers' and church leaders' survival kit.

132. We are also anxious to establish some form of training for the healing ministry and to see greater preparation for this being given in our theological colleges. Whilst thorough training may be given in salvation theology, there is evidence to suggest that more could be done to link this with the Church's ministry of healing; that is, to make more explicit what is already implicit in terms of pastoral theology.

133. Speaking to the Central Committee of the WCC in July 1981, Dr. Philip Potter said, "The process of healing operates only as we turn away from our sickly selves and enter fully by faith into a living communion with God and as we faithfully give ourselves into solidarity with the sick persons and communities for their healing.....Are we and our churches such healing communities? Are we really engaging ourselves with God's controversy with those who spread sickness around? Are we enabling our sick people and societies to diagnose their true sickness and find the resources for healing? Are we prepared to place ourselves beside the sick, the deprived, the oppressed, with the healing power of God?"

Personalia

134. The committee wish to place on record its very warm appreciation and thanks to Revd. David H. Dale for his chairmanship of the committee since its formation in July 1978. The committee is grateful not only for the quality of his chairmanship and the personal contribution he has made to the life of the committee, but also for the way in which he has encouraged local churches, District councils, Provinces and the General Assembly in the development of the Ministry of Healing in the URC. His leadership, wisdom and integrity are recognised in the URC and in the major denominations of the British Churches. We wish him well in his new ministry as 'Lincolnshire Course Director of the East Midlands Ministerial Training Course'. The committee wish to place on record its warm appreciation and thanks to those who complete their period of service on the committee in May 1984.

135. The Church Life Department has invited the Revd. David H. Dale to serve as URC Adviser on the Ministry of Healing in a part-time honorary capacity, in order that he may be able to continue to promote the Ministry of Healing in the denomination.

PILOTS PANEL

Chairman: Mrs. Alma Kendall

Secretary and Master Pilot: The Revd Margaret T Taylor

136. The decline in the number of children in our churches is sadly acknowledged, but it is very encouraging to be able to report that the children's organisation of our Church, PILOTS, is still growing. Although six companies closed during the year, sixteen new companies were registered. PILOTS presents an excellent opportunity to extend the nurture of children in our churches, and also, to increase the numbers in Junior Church.

137. The pressure of dealing with the responsibilities of Children's Work and Christian Education in addition to the administration of Pilots, led the committee to seek for some part-time help on a voluntary basis with Pilots. The Revd John Robinson of our Hayes (Kent) church has been appointed to this work, and from November he began to assist the Master Pilot. He will give a maximum of 2 days a week, working from home, and of those days, 2 a month, being spent at Church House. It is hoped that this will not only enable Pilots

to be administered adequately, but also, that efforts can now be made to extend the work of Pilots nationally.

138. In 1986, it will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of Pilots, and to mark this special occasion, there is to be a celebration in the Westminster Central Hall, London, on the afternoon of Saturday 14th June. Plans are beginning to be made and we look forward with enthusiasm to this special occasion. More details will be available in due course.

PREACHING FEES

139. **Introduction** During 1983 the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee asked the Church Life Department to give them Guidelines to amend the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration concerning the payment of preaching fees, and reimbursement from the MoM Fund. After an inter-departmental consultation a statement was included in our report to the 1983 Assembly, and following a brief discussion, we invited further comments by letter before the end of September. In essence we do not wish to depart from our tentative conclusions last year. Further debate and correspondence appears to confirm our judgement.

140. **The Current Situation** There is currently a great diversity of tradition and practice in the URC regarding the offer of preaching fees for the conduct of normal Sunday worship. However, certain factors ought to be taken into account. A reasonable stipend is now offered to all ministers in pastoral charge. Ministry has become widened to include a non-stipendiary Auxiliary Ministry, and increasingly operated in an ecumenical context where different practices have been established. We would also want to note that service to a local church is offered by many members without expectation of financial gain. Nevertheless, we must recognize certain needs, principally among bona fide students training for the ministry, and those who are retired, and should also ensure that appropriate travelling expenses are always paid.

141. **Conclusion** We do not think it right or necessary to dictate what should or should not be paid by a local church. However, we consider that the chief element in the offer of a preaching fee these days is an expression of thanks for help given, and it is the prerogative of a local church to decide when and how a gift is to be made. It is our opinion that it is not now appropriate to offer a preaching fee as such. (Resolution 7)

SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Dr Richard D Jurd

Secretary: The Revd Charles K Meachin

INTRODUCTION

142. The Supplementary Ministries Committee has two principal tasks. Firstly, it looks after the interests, education and training of the URC's large number of lay preachers who conduct more than a third of our services.

143. Secondly, the Committee oversees the exciting, newly developing ministry of CRCWs. The two ministries are very different, yet both are greatly concerned with taking the Gospel to God's people

LAY PREACHERS

144. (a) **Statistics** District Council submitted 25 names for inclusion in the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers; 1062 are on the register; the Exploring the Faith Course (a qualifying course for the URC Lay Preachers Certificate) continues to attract new students.

145. Thirteen students completed the course during 1983; 449 students are working through the course. The course is still in a relatively early stage of presentation.

146. (b) **Accreditation** The committee considered the 'rules' for admission to the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers as agreed by the 1979 General Assembly.

147. The committee consider the time has come to require all new lay preachers to undertake specialist training and ask Assembly to amend the regulation for accreditation 7 (d) to read 'have completed the Lay Preachers' Certificate of the United Reformed Church to the satisfaction of the Tutors and Assessors appointed, or, have other acceptable qualifications'. (7(d), Page 16, Record of Assembly 1979) and remove the escape clause 'The committee may modify or dispense with the requirements in (d) above on grounds of age, qualification and experience and asks the Supplementary Ministries Committee to give sympathetic consideration to those experienced lay preachers who do not hold a lay preachers' certificate particularly during the initial stages of the scheme' (Record of Assembly, 1979 Page 16) (see Resolution 8).

148. (c) **Publications** During the year the committee produced two new leaflets in the series 'Lay Preaching Matters', "Meeting Together" (12) and "Praying Alone and Praying Together" (13); and a booklet 'The Preparation and Delivery of Sermons' (20p).

149. (d) **Shergold Memorial Fund** Having decided to discontinue the Shergold Expository Sermon Competition, and use the income of the memorial fund to enable a lay preacher to attend a study conference, the committee invited Mrs D R Davis of Redditch who completed the Exploring the Faith Course in 1982 with the highest overall mark.

150. (e) **Students Conference** The committee have arranged an Exploring the Faith students study weekend at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick 1-3 June 1984.

151. (f) **Recruitment** Realizing the acute shortage of preachers in many areas of the country, the Committee continues to encourage the recruitment of lay preachers for training, as a matter of urgency. A survey carried out by the Lay Preaching Commissioner in the East Wales District revealed among other interesting statistics that 32 churches with a total membership of 1,016 are served by 5 Ministers, 5 accredited Lay Preachers and 4 student Lay Preachers. A survey carried out in the South Wales District revealed that 31 churches are served by 12 Ministers and 20 Lay Preachers.

DEACONESSES

152. The committee maintains contact with 4 retired Deaconesses and has had the pleasure of making them a gift of £50 each at Christmas.

Miss Kay Salvage accepted a call to serve at St. Andrew's URC, Brockley, London.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS

153. The committee considered the proposals for the re-organisation of the Church Life Department and expressed the hope that if a division of the CLD took place appropriate arrangements would be made to make sure that communications be kept open between the resulting departments.

PREACHING FEES

154. The committee were fully involved in the consideration of the 'future' of preaching fees and support the recommendations made by the Working Party.

CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKERS

155. (a) **Personnel** Miss Mary Williams was commissioned by the North West District Council of the Thames North Province at Trinity Church, Harrow, on 7th September 1983. The committee has three Church Related Community Workers serving in local churches and four CRCWs in training and is actively seeking suitably trained personnel to fill some of the vacancies for CRCWs.

156. (b) **Finance** The committee considered the 1983 Assembly Resolution requesting the resources to finance Church Related Community Workers. The committee was represented on a group consisting of representatives from the Budget Committee and the Church Life Department, and supports the recommendation of the group 'that a sum of £20,000 be put into the budget for 1985 to enable grants to be made to proper sponsoring

bodies'. The Supplementary Ministries Committee would administer the monies available, having received advice from the Provinces. It was felt that no grant should be continued for more than three years without a full re-application being made and that each application should include with it a full financial report on the circumstances surrounding the case. The committee hope that Provincial Treasurers will support this appeal for 'new money'.

PERSONALIA

157. The committee wish to express appreciation for the service of Mrs Ena Stewart who completes her period of service as a member of the committee in May 1984. Mrs Stewart, as Secretary of the Interim Association of Congregational and United Reformed Church Lay Preachers, served first as a co-opted member of the SMC before becoming a full member of the committee.

URC FORUM

Chairman: The Revd Michael G Dunford

Secretary: Mrs Betty Taylor

158. FORUM affords an opportunity for a holiday combined with an experience of Christian worship, fellowship and learning in lovely surroundings. It is an activity of the whole Church. Members of all ages, from a few months to 80+, gather for a week's holiday conference at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire.

159. It is open to anyone who likes to meet with fellow Christians from other parts of the country and some from overseas and with them explore the theme in a variety of ways. Children and young people also follow the theme in their own ways in their own groups.

160. In 1983 the Forum was led by the Revd John Francis when 360 people shared his thinking and worship on the theme 'Sharing the world together'. Bookings are going well for Forum 1984 which is to be led by the Revd C C Franks (Moderator Southern Province) on the theme 'EBB and FLOW—the Rhythm of Worship and Life', with the Revd Colin Evans as Chairman.

161. This is a holiday with a difference—one of real Christian fellowship with all the ingredients—good food, leisure time and activities, lovely surroundings and 'conference' facilities—all for £67 (reductions for children).

UNITED NAVY, ARMY AND AIR FORCE BOARD

162. During the year there have been several changes in URC Chaplains to the Services. The Revd C.G. Prenton has ended his period of the service in the Royal Air Force. The Revd J.B. Spencer has been appointed a Chaplain in the Army. The Revd Samuel L. Williams has been transferred to HMS Cochrane at Rosyth and the Revd Frank Beattie to HMS Nelson at Portsmouth.

163. The Revd George A.D. Mann, HCF, died on the 26th March 1983. At a crowded funeral service in Eastbourne his very considerable contribution to chaplaincy over many years was remembered with gratitude. The Revd E. Philip Schofield replaces him as Secretary of the Board.

164. A conference for all United Board serving chaplains took place at Amport House on February 23/24, 1984. This is a biennial event much appreciated by both Board members and Chaplains for whom this is the only occasion of extended fellowship together.

165. The co-operation of ministers and local churches is sought for the commending of individuals who enter the Services. This should be done as quickly as possible so that the appropriate chaplains can be informed. Advice should be sent to the Revd Philip Schofield.

166. The United Reformed Church is thankful for those whose ministry leads them to serve in the challenging context of the armed Forces. They frequently have the opportunity of speaking about faith to those who have had no contact with the church, and in particular

to meet those newly entering the services. They also have a significant pastoral role towards service personnel and their families, especially in times of crisis. The URC is grateful for their witness.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Duncan Wilson

Secretary: The Revd Paul Quilter

167. In presenting reports of the work of committees, it is easy to forget that we are talking about work which involves many people whom the committee seek to serve. Perhaps the obvious is stated, but for the Youth Committee and its sub committees and working parties we are actually talking about a group of people aged between 13 and 25, who number something like 80,000.

168. The 1984 FURY Assembly, which included a Consultation of District and Provincial Youth Secretaries, emphasised once again that the Youth Committee represents and serves a group of people which, in size, is almost two thirds the total number of members in the United Reformed Church. Young people who are part of today's church, but without doubt are becoming the leaders of the church of tomorrow, young people who are trying to make sense of a complicated world, whilst trying to come to terms with their own humanity. During a few short years each lad and each lass has to come to an understanding, not only of the world, but such important matters as their own sexuality, emotions, skills, weaknesses and personality. Each and every one of our young people has to come to terms with a God who challenges them through the man Jesus Christ, who is asking them to walk a path which can sometimes seem awfully steep, and one that we, more experienced people, have found worthy of walking, partly because the experiences of life have proved it to be so. Young people do not have the advantage of the same experiences, but the task of the Youth Committee with the whole church is to prepare them to walk with Christ for the rest of their lives.

169. So it is, then, that we would like to ask the whole Church to participate in the International Youth Year which the United Nations has designated 1985 so to be. It will have a three fold theme: PEACE, PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT. We talk of the "Peace of Christ", we want our young people to participate, and we pray for guidance as we assist in their development. May we call upon the whole church to share in IYY with a real sense of commitment. (Resolution 9)

170. The highlight for many during 1983 was the success of "IMAGE", THE FURY WORSHIP PROJECT. We have tried to apply the things we have learnt from "IMAGE" to the follow up called "TOUCH AND GO", which is due to be launched in the autumn of this year. The title indicates the basic concept of the project. We are touched by the "Life of Christ" and inspired to new life and action—the result: "to go into the world". We, therefore, ask your support for the resolution dealing with "TOUCH AND GO". (Resolution 10)

171. Development of young people depends on many things, not least that of the good leadership of people working with them, outside of their immediate families. By July 1st we hope to have completed our Youth Leadership Training Officer scheme by the appointment of two more Officers. We hope to be able to develop the scheme one further, final stage. A grant is being sought from the Department of Education and Science to enable the most experienced YLTO, Mr. Roger Tolman, to spend half of his time in the support and co-ordination of the YLTO team.

172. The arrival of Mrs Clare Laffin and Mrs Sandra Dears as YLTOs to the four Northern Provinces has led to the team, as a whole, developing some exciting new areas of work. Under the guidance of the Training Sub-Committee new courses are being prepared to follow the basic course. By next winter we hope to have a follow-up course dealing specifically with the preparation of Youth Leaders in their endeavours to nurture the Christian faith amongst our young people. A course entitled "Living in Britain" is also being prepared and this is a course that will enable people to explore social, cultural and ethnic differences of

British society in relation to the Ministry of the Church. Perhaps the most exciting development is the preparation of a Tutor Training Course which leads us to believe that within a year or so throughout the United Reformed Church there will be many experienced Youth Leaders supporting our YLTO's in preparing women and men in the leadership of the Church's greatest resource, its young people.

173. In brief we should mention that the Youth Committee has, and will continue to assist both the Church as a whole and the Uniformed Organisations to see that each needs the other, and the young people in the organisations within United Reformed Churches are part of FURY. There is a working party exploring the relationship that churches have with groups of young people of differing national, cultural and racial background, particularly in relation to young people. Finally, the FURY Mailing is beginning to prove its worth and the Trust Fund set up to assist young people to attend national youth activities has been valuably used.

174. In conclusion, we strongly urge the United Reformed Church to invest all it can in our young people. FURY Assembly proved once more that they are worthy of a great deal of time and energy. We are proud that a former FURY Chairman, Miss Alison Pagan, was chosen to be a member of the BCC team of representatives who went to China for three weeks at the end of 1983.

175. We thank God for that which is being achieved with and by every one of the 80,000 or so individuals striving to find a path and answers to difficult questions today, and in the days to come.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

176. The enthusiasm of the Golden Jubilee in 1982 spilled over into 1983 with celebrations continuing in many places. Slides were made available of the Royal Albert Hall celebration and have been much in demand, to be followed by a sound film.

177. The basic draft of the 1983 service was prepared by a group of women in the Caribbean; the theme was 'New Persons in Christ'. A number of letters of appreciation have been received and many more branches have indicated how much the service was enjoyed. The committee do try to retain the special concerns and culture expressed in the service by the country of origin. In 1983 for instance two Caribbean songs were included in the service and it was interesting that some branches invited a soloist or a school to learn these and 'perform' them in the service. An Anthology on the theme was produced—this was well received and thanks go to Mrs June Lunn for all the work she put in on this. Also very popular was the special Children's Service. Reports on the 1984 service "Living Water from Christ, our Hope" are again favourable, the material coming from Sweden.

178. Background notes and Bible study notes are sent out as usual and are well used—some groups meet for several weeks before the actual Day of Prayer studying the theme and generally preparing for the day. However we know that in some places the publications which the committee send out get no further than the branch secretaries. This is a pity, so for 1984 we produced a booklet which contained the Bible Study notes, the Anthology and a host of other information all under one cover. This was available to everyone and ensured that all those who support the Movement were very much better informed. It is hoped to produce this each year. Another busy year! It really is a privilege to work with such a dedicated and enthusiastic group of people.

179. May the voice of prayer never grow silent, nor the strain of praise ever die away.

180. Material for 1985 is to be prepared by the women of India and is on the theme "Peace through Prayer and Action".

RESOLUTIONS

- 48
1. The Assembly receives the Report of the Church Life Department for debate.
 2. The Assembly notes the publication of the leaflets "How can a child choose Faith?"
- 49

and encourages local churches to give careful consideration to the ways in which children and adults can best be nurtured in the Christian faith.

50 3. The Assembly urges every local church, or group of churches, to consider appointing Christian Stewardship promoters, whose main task will be to ensure that the principles and practice of Christian Stewardship are actively pursued in each congregation and asks the appropriate committee to consider provision of necessary support material, encouragement and training for stewardship promoters.

4. The Assembly

51 (a) receives the report of the working party on the Community of Women and Men in the URC, and requests Synods, Districts and local churches to give consideration to the issues raised.

52 (b) requests Synods, District Councils and local churches to develop ways of enabling women to use their gifts in the service of the Church and asks Synods to inform the Nominations Committee of progress by January 1987.

53 (c) asks the Nominations Committee to review the membership of Assembly Departments and Committees in the light of note 6 (a) in the URC Manual (p. 79) and to report to the Assembly in 1985 on the steps to be taken to achieve a minimum of one quarter men and one quarter women on every committee by June 1987.

54 (d) asks Departments and Committees to take steps to ensure that all future publications use inclusive language.

(e) expresses its ecumenical solidarity by:-

55 (i) urging members to support movements for the ordination of women

56 (ii) requesting those responsible for staffing in Local Ecumenical Projects to consider the appointment of women ministers where they are at present unprepared to do so, and

57 (iii) recognising the contribution of feminist theology.

58 5. The Assembly adopts the proposals for Initial Training in Pastoral Responsibility and Post Ordination Support contained in paragraphs 73-86 of the Report of the Ministerial Training Committee which will take effect from the autumn of 1985.

59 6. The Assembly notes the Silver Jubilee Year of CRUSE (The National Organisation for the Widowed and their Children, founded in 1959) and commends CRUSE Week 6-13th October 1984 when churches are invited to take bereavement as the theme for one of the services on Sunday October 7th, 1984.

60 7. The Assembly agrees that:-

(a) Payments by the MoM Fund to a local church shall not normally include the reimbursement of preaching fees, but in those cases where the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration (revised 1984) provides for Preaching Fees to be reimbursed, appropriate travelling expenses shall continue to be reimbursed by the MoM Fund.

(b) Reimbursement for Preaching Fees (together with appropriate travelling expenses) will be paid in the case of:-

(i) bona fide students for the ministry of the URC;

(ii) retired ministers of the URC;

(iii) exceptional situations established by the local church and the District Council in consultation with the MoM committee.

(c) The Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration be amended accordingly, taking effect from 1st July 1985.

61 8. The Assembly resolves to admit to the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers those who:-

(a) are members of the United Reformed Church;

- (b) have been commended by their Church Meeting to their District Council;
- (c) have been accredited as lay preachers by their District Council; and
- (d) have completed the Lay Preachers Certificate of the United Reformed Church to the satisfaction of the Tutors/Assessors appointed, or possess other equivalent qualifications.

(This supersedes Resolution 7, page 16, Record of Assembly 1979)

- 62 9. The Assembly encourages Provinces, Districts and local churches to become involved in International Youth Year 1985 and asks the Youth Committee to provide national support.
 - 63 10. The Assembly, encouraged by the success of "IMAGE", the FURY WORSHIP PROJECT in 1983, calls on all local churches to participate in the follow-up project "TOUCH AND GO".
 - 64 11. The Assembly expresses thanks to the Revd David Dale, Chairman of Ministry of Healing Committee, the Revd Dr Leslie Green, Chairman of Chaplains and Students Committee, and the Revd John Simpson, Chairman of Christian Stewardship Committee, as their terms of office come to an end; and to retiring members of the various committees in the Department.
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WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. **The World Church** Anyone who was present at the World Council of Churches' Assembly in Vancouver in the summer of 1983 has spoken of the worship offered to God in the great yellow and white striped tent, open on one side for the world to look in and for the assembled people to look out. One of the aims of this Department is to create within the URC a sense of belonging to the World Church in all her ways of glorifying God and serving God's creation. A local worshipping community may be small in numbers but it is part of a great company of believers throughout the world. This report shows how wide are the relationships of the URC with other Churches of the Reformed family and the Disciples of Christ, with our 27 partners in the Council for World Mission, with the British Council of Churches and through it with Christians in China and with the World Council of Churches.

2. **Inter-departmental group on Evangelism** An inter-departmental group on Evangelism was set up as one result of the last Assembly's call to the URC to emphasize evangelism. Through this Department it is making its first report to Assembly. It has offered to the churches a definition of evangelism — "All that activity, living and speaking by which those who know and love Jesus Christ enable others to know and love Him" — and sets the basis of outreach in the renewal personally of commitment and spirituality, congregationally of worship and reflection and in community involvement.

3. **Ministers from Overseas** There are now opportunities for churches to seek ministers to serve local congregations from overseas. The Department wishes to bring to the attention of churches and District Councils this possibility so that churches may consider calling a minister from overseas when there is a vacancy. The Personnel Committee holds stimulating meetings for ministers from overseas, CWM missionaries in this country and students on URC scholarships at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, together with members of the World Church and Mission Department to exchange experiences and ideas.

4. **Communication** Much of the Communication Section's work during the year has been ecumenical. We co-operate through BCC and CWM with other churches and missionary societies who share our desire to interpret the world scene for local congregations and build up their sense of involvement in the wider life of the church. Our joint productions include information sheets, study material and audio-visual aids. Examples are *Witnesses for Christ* (a series of stories from the World Church, some designed as discussion starters for evangelism and others as an introduction to the World Church today for children); *Who are These Lebanese Christians?*; *Blessed Are The Poor* (Study and Worship Material for Education in Mission); AVA and Study Material on the Church in China; *Go to work on Vancouver* (AVA and Study Pack on the WCC Assembly).

5. Conscious of the need to help local churches understand the Department and its work, the Communication Group has drawn on the fine work of the Derbyshire District to produce a Handbook for World Church and Mission Secretaries.

6. Our advocacy of CWM remains important. The Communication Section enabled some local churches to contribute to the Six-Yearly Review. We gave extensive help to running the 1983 Swanwick World Mission Conference and are now deeply involved in planning the 1984 Conference to be held from 4-10 August on the theme 'Truth to Tell — a Conference about Witnessing'. We have promoted CWM material, including the 1983 Biennial Report *Cost of Partnership* and the 1984 Prayer Handbook *Proverbs for Today*.

7. At its December Executive CWM decided not to produce a Prayer Handbook after 1985 and will seek more effective ways to involve its member Churches in prayer. After careful consideration of this decision, the World Church and Mission Department believes the URC should produce an annual prayer handbook incorporating both the CWM family and URC concerns. The co-operation of other British CWM member Churches would be welcome.

8. **Ecumenical Directions** The Department commends for wide discussion a paper prepared by the General Secretary called *Ecumenical Directions — a personal review*. It is a

paper designed to carry forward the discussion of ecumenical concerns within the URC and to enable us "to ask the right questions in the right spirit".

Rosalind Goodfellow, *Chairman*
Donald Elliott, *Secretary*
Helen Lidgett, *Secretary for Communication*

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK AT HOME COMMITTEE

9. **World Council of Churches** The Committee has been inspired by news brought back from the WCC Assembly in Vancouver, and hopes that local churches are using *Go to work on Vancouver* and seeking the stimulus of those who participated in the experience of the Assembly. Major pointers for the URC have been identified as (a) the need to set the discussion about doctrine in the widest context of the life of the Church; (b) the need to look again at the place given in certain aspects of our life to women, the disabled, children, youth; (c) the need to examine the use of power in church life to ensure that we are acting in Gospel ways; (d) the need to help our nation to have a realistic view of our place within the world community.

10. **British Council of Churches** The BCC Assembly has accepted a URC amendment to its resolution about the working party on mutual recognition of church membership and a common church membership certificate asking the Division of Ecumenical Affairs to tackle this issue "with urgency and a concern for practical ecumenism".

11. **Unity in Britain** Very few responses have been received to the 1983 Assembly's invitation to churches to share their thinking on the directions to be tested in the quest for unity in these lands. The Revd Bernard Thorogood has prepared a paper entitled *Ecumenical Directions — a personal review* to help the Church to bring into perspective the recent experiences and future hopes in seeking unity. We commend this document to the widest consideration throughout the Church and comments upon it addressed to the new Chairman of the Committee would be appreciated.

12. Besides continuing growth in the number of ecumenical projects there are now emerging situations in which initiatives in local ecumenism are being pursued by means of a Local Covenant. The Committee commends this approach also to the consideration of local churches and Districts. There is a valuable new Roman Catholic statement on such Local Covenants which includes material produced by one of our own ministers, the Revd John Weller.

13. The Methodist/URC Liaison Committee has issued the fourth edition of *Local Co-operation between United Reformed and Methodist Churches*. The Committee has advised long standing Methodist/UR Churches, some of which predate the URC itself, who have been made anxious by the resolution of the 1983 Assembly on the requirements for local constitutions, that this legislation is not retrospective.

14. The churches in the Swindon area have re-submitted to the denominations their proposals for a Bishop for all the churches in Thamesdown. The Committee is seeking to make a considered response to this document encouraging these churches in the development of ecumenism.

15. **Urban Mission** While trying to discover what initiatives are afoot in Provinces to stimulate and encourage the URC in their own areas in Urban Mission, the Committee's own labours have been concentrated on the endeavours to advance the proposal of the Assembly of 1982 for an Urban Consultant. A job description has been drawn up and we are continuing conversations with one of our Provinces and with other Committees and Departments involved in this field. The Revd Peter Loveitt has attended a CWM Consultation on Urban Mission in Bangalore. Valuable papers on ministry to the urban poor including principles for involvement and recommendations and suggestions emanating from the Consultation can be obtained from him.

16. **Rural Mission** As requested by the 1983 Assembly a network for support and communication to assist the Rural Consultant has been established.
17. **Scotland and Wales** We have been concerned to help our churches in Scotland to play a positive role in maintaining relations with those Churches in Scotland with which we have long historic links.
18. The Committee has been listening with great interest to the developments in Wales following the Covenant for Unity in that country.
19. **New Enterprise in Mission** We have disbursed £14,800 on 9 projects submitted by local churches, Districts and Synods.
20. **Evangelism** The Committee's commitment to evangelism has been vested in the work of the Inter-departmental Working Party on Evangelism whose report appears as an appendix to this Department's report.

David E. Marsden, *Chairman*
Bernard Thorogood, *Secretary*

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

21. "Our experience confirms our belief that the WCM Department should continue its policy of sharing information and building bridges between the Churches of East and West Europe". (Report of URC visitors to the Reformed Church in Hungary, 1983).
22. "I was surprised to find out that the people we met were very little, or hardly at all, or falsely informed about life in the GDR". (Frau Irene Scherz of the Evangelical Church of the Union, East Germany, writing of her visit to the URC, 1983).
23. The learning process and the building of bridges between East and West Europe are major concerns of the Abroad Committee, along with the longer-standing relationships with CWM member Churches around the world and others such as the Pfalz and Waldensian Churches.
24. The canvas is broad and, for the most part, communication has to be by correspondence, but each year sees new opportunities developing for interchange of personnel as well as information.
25. Exchange programmes with East Germany are becoming more frequent, the visit to Hungary is opening new possibilities (e.g. for young URC German speakers to work for a year in the Church Diaconal Homes). A close friendship is being formed between the North Western Province and the Waldensian Church, Wales is getting to know Hungary and there have been holiday exchanges between URC members and those of the Swedish Mission Covenant Church.
26. Continental Europe is more easily accessible to UK church members than the areas of CWM work overseas and the Abroad Committee is glad to foster and expand the inter-Church fellowship. (Ask about the Holiday/Study programmes for young people in Italy and Germany this summer).
27. **CWM** Church members sometimes look back wistfully to the times when visits from missionaries were more common and local churches felt they had a more direct line than now to them and their work. If they feel that the relationship is now more remote there are several reasons, among them:
 - (a) Most CWM Churches are members of large United Churches and no longer look solely to the URC.
 - (b) Our fellowship with overseas CWM Churches, as meaningful to us as ever, is practised now through our participation in CWM as equal partners in an Inter-regional Council, although we do have opportunities, e.g. through the Zambia/India youth exchanges, and other Provincial and personal links for some direct engagement.

28. The URC takes its part as one member Church among many in finding resources of money and personnel and in discussion on policy and administration. We should feel greatly privileged in this sharing and recognise that, whilst we may still have much to give to those whom we used to call "younger churches", we also have much to receive from them particularly in terms of enthusiasm and commitment to mission, mission where we are.

29. We are very pleased that for the first time the Moderator of Assembly has been able to include visits to CWM Churches in Zambia and in Malawi, and that the Departmental Secretary has already visited parts of South East Asia as well as Churches in Europe.

30. The Six Yearly Review of CWM will bring about certain administrative changes, taking effect in the coming year. Dr Fred Kaan was recently appointed to be the first Deputy Chairman.

31. We note with pleasure that the Assemblies of the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa and the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa have voted in favour of a union between their two Churches.

32. **China** There is thrilling news of church growth in China, brought back by the BCC Group which was there recently under the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr Philip Morgan, and in which the URC was doubly represented, by Dr Morgan and Miss Alison Pagan. The BCC Report, to be published shortly, will make exciting reading and should be a **must for all our churches**.

33. **Taiwan** Dr C. M. Kao, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, remains in prison where he personifies the Hope of the Gospel and has become a missionary to his fellow-prisoners.

34. Further government legislation in Taiwan is pending and will require registration not only of religious buildings but also of "religious propagators". It will place Churches and Temples firmly under the administration of the Ministry of the Interior and is a threat to the independence of the Church.

35. **Chaplaincy** There has been a change in the Ghanaian Chaplaincy in London. The Revd Ben Tetty has worked here for nine years and has seen the concept of chaplaincy change from a commitment to Ghanaian students to a total ministry to Ghanaian and other West African nationals.

36. Mr Tetty has also had a major share in establishing the Ghana Union in London, of which he is Chairman.

37. The Revd Anthony Beeko succeeded to the Ghanaian Chaplaincy in January 1984. We welcome him and his wife into the URC and we assure Ben and Margaret Tetty of our prayers and good wishes as they take up new work.

Derek Cole, *Chairman*
Donald Elliott, *Secretary*

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION

38. A major part of the Council meeting held in Singapore in July 1983 was taken up with the Six Yearly Review. Although the vision of CWM's foundation document 'Sharing in One World Mission' is being realised in many ways, much more needs to be done to strengthen and carry forward the principles of partnership in mission, and to communicate these effectively so that church members in local situations as well as church leaders become involved and share in the whole partnership in mission enterprise. Steps are being taken to bring out a new handbook up-dating the earlier document, with an expanded theological statement, and descriptions of CWM member Churches and the ways in which they share through CWM—share ideas about mission, people in mission, and money for mission.

39. **Education in Mission** The Singapore Council re-affirmed CWM's priority-emphasis on Education in Mission and approved guidelines for the use of the Education in Mission Fund. This will make resources available for new initiatives in mission in accordance with

member Churches' priorities in mission plans. The mandate of CWM's Communication Unit was strengthened with particular emphasis on supporting Education in Mission.

40. New Secretarial Pattern Because of the withdrawal of the person appointed to succeed Revd Maitland Evans as Secretary for Education in Mission, the CWM Executive Committee decided to rethink the pattern of Secretarial responsibilities. Under the new agreed pattern the General Secretary, preferably someone from the Third World, will be freed from the burden of much office administration to read, reflect, write and speak, and to move about the CWM member Churches and maintain ecumenical links. The General Secretary will be responsible for Education in Mission and will be supported by a Secretary for Administration. Revd Brian Bailey returns to the pastoral ministry in September. Mr Barrie Scopes has been nominated as Secretary for Administration, and new appointments will be made to the posts of General Secretary and Secretary for Communications.

41. New Initiatives Resources are being made available to member Churches in order to organise new kinds of personnel exchange and new ways of training leadership through wider exposure to other Church and mission situations. The Ministry with the Urban Poor programme has been re-affirmed and will be the responsibility of the General Secretary. The encouraging success of the Training in Mission programme, which is catching the imagination of young people and helping them to realise what partnership in mission means, has led to the decision to have another such year of training from September 1984. The Executive Committee believes this to be a sound investment in the process of developing potential leaders. A series of Youth Consultations has led to the setting up of Action and Reflection Groups, and Miss Jet den Hollander is seeking to activate a more vigorous participation by young people in CWM youth programmes.

42. Finance An increase in property income took place in 1981. However, the rental income will remain fixed for twelve years, so CWM depends on its 28 member Churches, all of which contribute to its funds, to increase their contributions in line with inflation if it is to maintain the level of its work and support for mission. In this connection it is encouraging to report that a number of overseas churches are taking an increasing share of financial responsibility.

Barrie Scopes, General Secretary

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

43. At each meeting of the Committee this year URC missionary candidates have been interviewed. Six have entered St Andrew's Hall and two have gone to Jamaica for missionary training.

44. The Committee has met URC missionaries who have been in this country, two missionaries from overseas working in the URC and the overseas students on URC scholarships at St Andrew's Hall. Joys and problems have been shared and our knowledge of the mission of the World Church has been enlarged.

45. The Committee continues to pass on to CWM requests for ministers to work in special situations in this country. We are learning much from those already here and would encourage churches to explore the possibilities of similar help with mission and outreach in their situation. Another possibility which could bring new insight and encouragement to a church is the opportunity of calling a minister from the United States or from the Palatinate to a pastorate for an initial period of 3 to 5 years. We look forward to the growth of this scheme.

46. A visit of six women from the churches of Southern Africa is being planned for Christmas 1984. They will stay in families and share experience of their life informally in the life of our churches.

47. The Committee is glad to report that one of the 16 young people on the second CWM Training in Mission programme is Miss Cheryl Bradshaw of the URC.

48. The Committee is grateful to its Secretary for undertaking a visit to churches in Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. She has been able to learn more of these churches, to take our greetings to our sister churches in person, and to visit our URC missionaries. The Committee is convinced of the value of such visits and looks forward to further visits of WCM staff to other churches.

49a. People appointed as missionaries to serve overseas:

The Revd Norman and Mrs Olive Kemp : Samoa (reappointed)
The Revd Paul and Mrs Jean Floe : Jamaica

49b. Candidates in training at St Andrew's Hall for service overseas:

Miss Marie Auld : Trinity Church, Harrow
Mr Michael Hall : St Peter and St Paul, Lingfield
Mr Keith and Mrs Gillian Peace-Brown : Richmond Methodist Church

50. Missionaries who have completed their service with churches through CWM:

Miss Jean Fisher : Botswana
The Revd Norman and Mrs Suzanne Healey : Kiribati
Miss Dora Smith : India
Mrs Eleanor Stronge : Samoa

51. People serving the URC, recruited through the World Church and Mission Department from overseas churches:

The Revd Chong Kah Geh and Mrs Shirley Chong : Presbyterian Church in Malaysia : London Chinese Chaplaincy and minister of the London Chinese URC

The Revd Dr Ferenc Kenez : Reformed Church in Hungary : pastoral ministry in Central London District

The Revd H. B. and Mrs Annie Singh Rahi : Church of North India : pastoral ministry at Winson Green, Birmingham

The Revd Anthony and Mrs Beatrice Beeko : Presbyterian Church of Ghana : London Ghanaian Chaplaincy

52. People from overseas who have completed their service with the URC:

Mr Wickramasinghe Tilakarathne : Presbyterian Church in Sri Lanka : pastoral ministry in Swindon

53. Students from overseas supported by the URC:

The Revd Kim Sung Ho (Korea) St Andrew's Hall
The Revd Lee Hae Dong (Korea) St Andrew's Hall
The Revd Abraham Ofori (Ghana) St Andrew's Hall
Mr Samuel Ofosuhene (Ghana) Birmingham University/St Andrew's Hall

54. A full list of URC missionaries appears in the Year Book.

Mary Marsden, *Chairman*
Sheila Rudofsky, *Secretary*

ST ANDREW'S HALL

55. As this is the first report St Andrew's has made to the General Assembly some introduction is called for. St Andrew's Hall is one of four missionary training colleges which in turn are part of a federation of colleges known as the Selly Oak Colleges. Altogether there are nine colleges and seven of them are Christian foundations. St Andrew's is sponsored by the URC, the CWM and the Baptist Missionary Society. The college was established in 1912 to provide intending British women missionaries with the kind of education the clergy received in theological colleges; now it exists to train men and women from the whole world for mission in the whole world — including Britain. The training is done ecumenically, internationally, and interracially in conjunction with the other missionary colleges by means of a federally organised Mission Department.

56. The year 1982/83 saw students from 24 nations resident in the college, taking various courses provided by the federation. In the present session the college has been full to overflowing since September with the promise of even more countries being represented than during the previous year. Old patterns of mission have changed but mission flourishes in many new forms and the training for it demands a worldwide context. This we provide.

57. The college is developing its conference facilities and wishes to extend its range of usefulness in many other new areas. We are seeking ways of strengthening the missionary aspect of ministerial training; of doing more to aid mission in Britain; to increase the number of those bodies with a stake in St Andrew's and to provide opportunities for ministerial sabbaticals. We rejoice in the URC's great contribution to our work and look forward to doing more for the Church in return.

H. D. Beeby, *Principal*

MISSION AND OTHER FAITHS COMMITTEE

58. The Long Range Policy Group said last year that our Committee's work should 'be given a higher place on the agenda of the church's life'. We realise that this is easier said than done. Not all members of the URC come into daily contact with people of other faiths, and many of those who do are embarrassed by their own ignorance and perhaps feel a little disloyal to their own faith if they extend the hand of friendship too readily and recognise that other religions also have their value. The Committee offers help to the URC in exploring these issues.

59. At the same time, many of our church members are engaged in inter-faith relationships at various levels, and they need the understanding support of us all. There are some who are married to partners of another faith, RE teachers in schools where several faiths are represented in the classroom, ministers and community workers who see relations with people of other faiths as an important part of their calling. It would be a great pity if our churches showed no interest in them or begrudged them the time they were giving to those not of our fold. There is always a risk that Christian witness may become muted in the interests of inter-faith ecumenicity, but opportunities for Christian witness which would never have arisen otherwise may also present themselves. The recent British Council of Churches report *Can we pray together?* meets a widely felt need for guidance on worship in a multi-faith society. We believe that Provinces and Districts can do much to keep local churches alive to the importance of our relationships with those of other faiths, and we are preparing some guidance for their mission committees.

60. The Committee is always glad to hear of inter-faith initiatives taken locally. It also continues itself to promote dialogue with representatives of other faiths. Our Jewish-Christian consultations continue, and we are pleased to note that Rabbi Norman Solomon (who addressed our last Assembly) has been appointed a Lecturer in Jewish Studies at the Selly Oak Colleges. A group from the Committee has held a conversation with the Ven Sathivira Sangarakshita of the Western Buddhist Order and meetings with other Buddhist groups are planned. A Sikh-Christian conference will be held in London in the summer.

61. It is a comparatively rare event for someone brought up in this country to become a convert to one of the major world faiths. It is much more common to be attracted to one of the New Religious Movements (NRMs) which have multiplied in recent years. In this area the Committee will provide information about religious groups for those who inquire (potential members, parents, churches approached about the hire of premises); will give news of what is happening on the NRM scene (correcting false impressions as well as drawing attention to possible dangers); and will consider engaging in dialogue with NRMs, provided they are clearly willing to do so in the spirit of the BCC guidelines.

62. After this Assembly the Committee loses the services of the Revd Iorwerth Thomas as Secretary. We are grateful to him for his hard work and his wise guidance in this capacity over the past five years.

Roger Tomes, *Chairman*
Iorwerth Thomas, *Secretary*

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING PARTY ON EVANGELISM

1.1 The Holy Spirit is at work in the Church, transmitting the Good News of salvation. He brings about conversion in all sorts of people and change in all kinds of human situations.

1.2 We offer the following definition of evangelism, not as an exclusive or complete statement, but as a working instrument — "all that activity, living and speaking by which those who know and love Jesus Christ enable others to know and love Him".

Our understanding is that the Gospel is to be expressed and experienced:

- in **personal** commitment and spirituality
- in **congregational** worship and reflection
- in **community** witness and service.

2.1 We believe that personal interaction can motivate and enable local churches to evangelise. Primarily the task is theirs.

2.2 We have launched a developing programme, helping to establish teams within each Province, chosen by the Province. These teams will accept invitations from local churches to help each church, on a mutually agreed basis, to appreciate its opportunities, identify its resources and discover the context and the ways in which God is leading it to share the Gospel.

2.3 A start has been made in the North West, East Midlands and Thames North Provinces. We envisage the extension of this programme to every Province. Concurrently we aim to evaluate what is being done and to shape the development of the programme in the light of the evaluation.

3.1 The working party has in preparation a bookmark carrying a prayer about evangelism which we hope will be used widely in local churches corporately and privately.

3.2 Prayer in the whole life of the Church is a topic which the working party is seeking to raise with every Province and Department. The image of the God to whom Christians pray determines their activity in His name and the expectations they bring to life and the attitudes they adopt to other people.

4.1 Assembly's resolution last year called for supporting material on Evangelism. We believe that, in so far as this material will be on paper, it should be the product of experience wrought out in local situations. We envisage that such URC-created material will emerge out of the experience we shall share with the teams, who for the present, will be made aware of such literature as is currently available from other sources, and will be helped to adapt it to URC use where appropriate.

4.2 The working party is convinced that there is need and scope for a wide variety of approaches, methods and understandings in evangelism. Maintaining this conviction continues to be a constant struggle. As the Church of Christ our agenda includes:

- Community Care
- Social Witness
- Personal Witness
- The quality of our fellowship
- Our commitment to the Gospel
- Our commitment to the world through the world church.

We will go on digging deeper into the theological and human perceptions that create these various starting points and emphases.

4.3 We need to learn from the many experiences made available to us through the world-wide church of communicating the Gospel to the many cultures which are an integral part of our society today.

4.4 Because we are aware that much is already happening we ask every local church to share with us, through the Secretary, stories of evangelism, success stories and failures, discoveries and perplexities.

David E. Marsden, *Chairman*
Donald Elliott, *Secretary*

5. *The Assembly receives the Report for Debate.* **RESOLUTIONS**

- 66 1. The Assembly expresses its sense of unity with the Revd Dr C. M. Kao, still in prison, and Mrs Kao, its thankfulness for their ministry in difficult circumstances, and its fellowship with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in its life and mission.
- 67 2. The Assembly, hearing reports of the BCC visit to the Church in China, is filled with gratitude to God for the life of the Church and its witness, seeks to learn from its experience, and is committed to the growth of ecumenical fellowship and co-operation.
- 68 3. The Assembly expresses thankfulness to God that the Assemblies of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa and the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa have voted in favour of a union of the two Churches, and looks forward to the completion of the negotiations.
- 69 4. The Assembly gives thanks to God for the increasing international sharing in personnel in which the United Reformed Church takes part;
— offers prayer for missionaries both received in this country and sent overseas through the Council for World Mission and other related Churches;
— urges local churches and Districts whenever vacancies occur or Special Ministries are sought to consider the opportunities of receiving ministers from other countries through URC links with European, United States and CWM member Churches.
- 70 5. The Assembly welcomes the prospect of receiving six women from the churches of South Africa as guests of the United Reformed Church over Christmas 1984.
- 71 6. The Assembly, recognising the value in the past of the CWM Prayer Handbook, recommends that from 1986 the URC prepares an annual prayer handbook and invites the other English-speaking Churches of the European Region of CWM to co-operate.
- 72 7. The Assembly encourages the Working Party on Evangelism to continue its work on the basis set out in the Report.
- 73 8. The Assembly records with deep appreciation the services of the Revd David E. Marsden as Chairman of the Missionary and Ecumenical Work At Home Committee from 1978 to 1983, noting his committed and eirenic leadership in ecumenical affairs, especially during the Covenant for Unity debate.
- 74 9. The Assembly thanks God for the work of the Revd Iorwerth L. Thomas as Secretary of the Mission and Other Faiths Committee from 1979 to 1983, and wishes him well in retirement.
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DEPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A.G. Burnham

Secretary: The Revd G.H. Roper

1. This is our final report and therefore we have taken the opportunity to review the whole of the Committee's life. We also mention certain issues that we believe the Assembly will need to deal with in the future.

2. Background

The Committee was set up in 1975 as a result of the acceptance of the reports of the Commission on the Ministry and on the Scheme of Ministerial Remuneration. Previously the distribution of ministry had followed patterns inherited from the parent denominations. Now the Deployment Committee was charged with the responsibility of deciding what proportion of the total ministry should be used for "the needs of new housing schemes and full-time chaplaincies.....(after which) the needs of each Province will be assessed and a quota determined". (GA Reports 1975 p.102) All this was within the context of the Basis of Union's statement, clause 7 (25) that the "Church shall take steps to ensure that as far as possible ordained ministers of the Word and Sacraments are readily available to every local church". The Commission on the Ministry did not propose one pattern for every situation but recommended that District Councils consider a number of possibilities including: Ecumenical partnership, Team ministries, Group Pastorates and Single Pastorates. The Commission recorded its belief that a local church would "have to show special justification for maintaining a single pastorate situation. The justification would not be numerical or financial strength alone". (GA Minutes 1975 p.56)

3. However the most important determining factor in the Committee's life was largely unrecognised at the beginning. Throughout the whole of the period the number of ministers in whole-time pastoral charge has continued to fall; in round figures from 900 (September 1976) to 790 (December 1983).

4. Consultation

The approach of the Committee has been by consultation. Its composition reflected some other interests: Maintenance of the Ministry, MEW at Home, Supplementary Ministries, a Moderator and the General Secretary, together with a chairman, secretary and three others appointed by the Assembly. Every two years the Committee has held a 24 hour meeting to discuss quotas and other relevant matters, with each Province being represented by the Moderator and one other. In considering special ministries the Committee has usually sent members to the Province to enable the strongest case to be heard.

5. The Committee was not given authority to impose a pattern of ministry on churches. Figure 1 hints that Provinces and District Councils have developed in a variety of different ways. Nor has the Committee ever dealt with individual ministers or been involved with the selection of persons for special ministry posts. At no time has the Committee attempted to enforce a reduction in the total number of ministers, nor have we ever asked 'how many ministers can we afford?'

6. Special Ministries

The Committee set the maximum of *special* ministries at thirty whole-time posts or the equivalent in part-time service. We have kept to this number even though the total of whole-time stipendiary ministers has fallen by 110 (13%). We defined *special* as "those ministries to which ministers are appointed by the District or the Synod, as distinct from those to which ministers are called by local church". Such ministries include Industrial and Educational Chaplaincies, ministers to new housing schemes, special mission situations

FIGURE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF PASTORATES BY NUMBER OF CHURCH MEMBERS PER MINISTERS

		Under 50	51 to 100	101 to 150	151 to 200	201 to 250	251 to 300	301 to 350	over 350	Average Members per Minister	
Northern	Single	3	7	11	8	7	3	3	3	180	165
	Group	1	8	10	3	4	3	0	0	142	
North Western	Single	0	1	7	4	7	3	1	1	201	174
	Group	1	9	20	16	6	3	1	1	162	
Mersey	Single	1	8	13	7	2	3	1	1	152	153
	Group	0	4	8	4	4	0	0	0	156	
Yorkshire	Single	2	7	12	2	2	1	1	1	136	131
	Group	3	5	19	4	1	1	0	0	127	
East Midlands	Single	4	7	3	1	2	1	0	1	128	122
	Group	1	15	20	4	3	0	1	0	120	
West Midlands	Single	0	21	10	5	5	2	1	0	134	137
	Group	0	11	13	5	3	2	1	0	140	

FIGURE 1 (continued)

		Under 50	51 to 100	101 to 150	151 to 200	201 to 250	251 to 300	301 to 350	over 350	Average Members per Minister	
Eastern	Single	2	7	5	6	0	3	1	0	140	134
	Group	2	14	18	6	2	1	1	1	130	
South West	Single	0	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	171	134
	Group	1	15	22	6	0	1	0	0	121	
Wessex	Single	0	15	15	11	5	1	6	1	159	151
	Group	1	8	11	3	3	1	1	0	134	
Thames North	Single	12	21	19	9	6	3	2	3	136	129
	Group	3	7	11	3	0	0	0	0	107	
Southern	Single	3	15	22	19	13	3	2	7	173	159
	Group	3	13	13	3	3	1	1	0	126	
Wales	Single	1	3	6	2	1	1	1	0	139	114
	Group	4	14	16	5	1	0	0	0	104	

The figures are based on the number of members at January 1983 and the deployment of pastorates (whether filled or vacant) at January 1984. A single-church pastorate is one where it appears from the return that the Minister's principal task is the pastoral charge of one congregation, with no other church to care for, however small.

and ecumenical officers. We resolved to keep chaplaincies to about one third of the total. In addition to these, we were aware of the fact that other bodies sometimes advertised for and appointed our ministers in similar chaplaincy work but we had no jurisdiction over their numbers.

7. Applications for the approval of particular ministries have only been considered when made by Provinces. We have normally given approval for periods of not more than five years, or until the minister appointed resigned, if sooner. We have developed procedures for review and, where appropriate, have been ready to extend the approval for further

FIGURE 2

SPECIAL MINISTRIES 1984

	PROJECT	TYPE	SCOPE
Northern	Coulby Newham	new area	whole
North Western	Salford	urban mission	whole
Mersey	Rock	church based	whole
	Central Liverpool	District based	whole
	Runcorn	new area	whole
	Skelmersdale	new area	whole
Yorkshire	Cottingley	new area	half
	Mosborough	new area	whole
	Brackenhall	church based	whole
East Midlands	Lincolnshire	ecumenical officer	whole
	S. Humberside	industrial	whole
	Milton Keynes 1	new area	whole
	Milton Keynes 2	new area	whole
	Milton Keynes 3	new area	whole
West Midlands	Peterborough	new area	whole
	Aston	university	half
South Western	Coventry	industrial	whole
	Bristol	university	half
Wessex	Haydonleigh	new area	half
	Reading	industrial	half
	Sherborne	church based	half
Thames North	Southampton	colleges	whole
	Hemel Hempstead	new area	whole
	Stevenage	industrial	whole
	London	university	whole
	Southall	inter-faith	half
Southern	Newham	employment	three-quarters
	South London	industrial	whole
	Thamesmead	new area	whole
Wales	Penrhys	church based	whole

periods. We believe that in most cases the category of *special* must come to an end at some point. This will usually be because the pastorate has developed sufficiently to be taken into normal quotas, or because it is appropriate for another denomination to take its turn or even because the experiment has failed. Regrettably there have been some instances when, after giving approval, no suitable minister has been found and, after a period of twelve months, the offer has been withdrawn.

8. Since the first approvals in 1977 onwards, there have been some special ministries which, for one reason or another, are not now so recognised:

in new areas Washington, Co. Durham; Lincoln; Roundshaw, Surrey; Broadfield, Sussex; Birchwood, Cheshire; Langney, Sussex; West Leeds; Bar Hill, Cambridge; **industrial mission** based in Scunthorpe; **social work** in Leeds; **university chaplaincy** at Keele and an **urban chaplaincy** at Cardiff. Special ministries which are currently approved by the Committee are listed in Figure 2. We have regarded the five special ministries from overseas as outside the resources of the Committee.

9. Provincial Quotas

Our principal task has been that of sharing the remaining ministers between the Provinces. We have calculated the number of pastorates which could be served by assuming that at any one time ten per cent of pastorates are vacant. Some Provinces, in particular Yorkshire and Wales, have repeatedly taken up fewer pastorates than their quota allowed while some, in particular Thames North and Southern, have taken up more.

10. An Assessment

In retrospect it can be argued that the General Assembly gave the Committee too narrow a brief. The use of the word *deployment* together with the continuous decline in number of ministers has given the impression of a Church in retreat with a ministerial policy to match. The early years of Deployment were marred by misunderstandings on the part of some District Councils, who blamed the policy for effects which were caused by ministerial shortage, and by argument within the Committee as members struggled to work out the details of such a major shift in practice.

11. On the major question of equitable share of ministers among the Provinces, it should be noted that the average number of members per minister varies between 174 in one Province and 114 in another. In considering this wide disparity it must be remembered that there is a limit to the number of members that can be linked with one minister where churches are grouped; also, in some small towns and villages, our local church is the only free church witness. However, at a time when there is great need for ministry, it must be asked whether it is right that 286 (36%) of our stipendiary ministers should be working with fewer than 100 members each, 48 (6%) with fewer than 50.

12. There are, of course, other unsatisfactory aspects including the difficulty of allowing for stipendiary part-time ministries in any equitable sharing; the unsatisfactory spread of ministers over too large groupings; and our lack of knowledge about the effectiveness of new patterns of ministry.

13. On the positive side, it appears as if our ministerial resources are now shared more fairly in terms of need, which is calculated according to the population, the number of our churches and members within a Province, rather than by custom or ability to pay. (See Figure 5). There has been some redistribution in that seven Provinces have increased their share of the total number of pastorates (Northern, East and West Midlands, Eastern, South Western, Southern and Wales).

14. In the 1970s the challenge of new towns and new housing areas was a high priority. However the 1980s have presented us with less glamorous challenges in areas of urban

FIGURE 3

PERFORMANCE OF PROVINCES IN RESPONDING TO DEPLOYMENT QUOTAS

IN 1979, 1981 and 1983, compared.

	Pastorates Sept. 1976	Quota end-79	Pastorates end 1979	Quota end-81	Pastorates end 1981	Quota end-83	Pastorates end 1983
Northern*	80	77	74	71	73½	72	73
North Western	95	87	87	84	82½	82	81
Mersey	71	62	63	58	57½	55	55
Yorkshire	81	74	68½	69	65½	65	59
East Midlands*	70	61	60	60	58	62	62
West Midlands	86	80	78½	77	77	76	76
Eastern	71	64	66½	66	64	64	65
South Western	65	64	60	62	60½	59	58½
Wessex	92	77	85	77	78¼	76	76¼
Thames North	116	93	101½	88	91½	83	88½
Southern	131	111	117	108	116	105	113½
Wales	51	56	53½	56	51¾	56	51½
Total	1009	906	914½	876	876	855	859¼

* The two provinces starred received the most substantial additions through unification with Churches of Christ, which shows first in quotas and pastorates for 1983.

The September 1976 totals were those given by provincial representatives at the Deployment Consultation held at Selly Oak in that month. Fractions in the totals of pastorates arise from counting pastorates 'alternating' between denominations as halves and from ministries divided between Special Ministry and charge of other local churches.

FIGURE 4

SCHEDULE OF PART-TIME MINISTRIES PER PROVINCE AS AT 31.12.83
PERCENTAGE OF WHOLE-TIME

Province	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-75	Total Per Province	W/T Ministry Equivalent
Northern					3		3	1	7	4.46
North			1	1	3				5	2.06
Western										
Mersey									6	2.59
		1*	2	1	2			1	1*	*0.19
Yorkshire			2	1	5		1		9	4.03
East									8	3.25
Midlands			3	1*	5				1*	0.35
West										
Midlands			1	1	4	1		1	8	3.85
				1					13	7.06
Eastern	1*			1*	8	1	2	1	2*	*0.40
									15	6.04
South West		1*	4	5	4		2		1*	*0.15
				1					11	7
Wessex				1*	2		3	5	1*	*0.35
Thames		1*	2	2	7	1	3	4	19	10.28
North			1*						2*	*0.39
Southern		1	2	2	11			2	18	8.31
Wales		1	3		2		1	1	8	3.36
Total	1	2	20	15	58	3	16	16	127	62.29
	1*	3*	1*	3*					8*	*1.86

* + AR Minister or Local Pastor not eligible for the whole-time stipendiary ministry.

deprivation. In many such areas traditional forms of church life have collapsed. Some of our own churches hang on by the skin of their teeth. A church such as ours, with so much strength in suburban areas, could easily fail this call to share in God's universal mission. The fact that a part of the stipend has been switched in recent years to a heating and lighting allowance payable by the local church, has made it more difficult for churches and for Provinces hoping to take new initiatives in such areas.

FIGURE 5

DEPLOYMENT FORMULA

Population	Members	Churches
$\frac{1}{6}$ th	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{3}$ rd

The relative importance of factors are expressed as fractions of the whole.

15. The availability of a pool of posts deployable nationally has enabled the church to meet new challenges at a time when local pastorates could have absorbed all the ministers available to us. Nevertheless there has had to come a time when the Committee, in consultation with the Province and District Council, has had to assess whether or not the special ministry pastorate has become viable and could be provided for from within the quota. Provinces which saw a substantial increase in their population and church membership could look forward to taking a larger share of the total of ministers through the biennial re-calculation of the quota. When a District takes on a maturing new area ministry within its quota, this is a challenge to all existing pastorates to reconsider the overall plan of pastoral coverage.

16. The Future

It is not for the Committee to prepare the agenda for those entrusted with the stewardship of our ministerial resources in the future. However, we believe that there will be a need for:

- i) the knowledge of how many ministers we have and where they are being used, together with sensible predictions about future ~~members;~~ *numbers;*
- ii) the possibility of some ministerial posts being allocated nationally, in order that the church may respond to new challenges;
- iii) some assessment of the effectiveness of different ways of using ministers;
- iv) a study of the effects of the introduction of auxiliary ministry;
- v) an awareness of the increasing difficulty of meeting housing and of other local ministerial costs in areas of special need;
- vi) discussion about the place of chaplaincies in Higher Education and Industry;

vii) talks with other churches about an agreed national policy of sharing ecumenical posts, including chaplaincies; and

viii) in any changes, clear and open consultation with the Provinces and Departments.

17. Finally, the members of the Committee wish to recommend to the General Assembly that gratitude be expressed to Geoffrey Roper for his careful and diligent service throughout the whole of the Committee's life.

Resolution

75 1. The Assembly receives the final report of the Deployment Committee and thanks all those who have served on it, particularly the present secretary, the Revd. G.H. Roper.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPLIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Edmund Banyard

Secretary: Miss Alma Wade

1. The Committee records its appreciation of the work of the former Secretary, Percy Bush, who retired last summer and welcomes his successor, Alma Wade. The Chairman and two members of the Committee reach the end of their appointments in May 1984 and one Committee member has resigned for personal reasons.
2. In general, the past year has seen further integration of the two former sections and the continuation of our efforts to serve the needs of the central Departments and local churches.
3. The 1983 accounts, first draft, show that departmental costs were only slightly above those for the previous year. Gross profit on sales is down and this is accounted for partly by non-availability of Congregational Praise towards the end of the year and also by an accumulation of out-dated stock, now cleared.

PUBLICATIONS

4. **'Reform':** the glossy cover, whiter paper and some larger type sizes were introduced with the July/August issue and have been well received. It continues to be self-supporting financially although the number of subscribers continues to fall. We think 'Reform' needs new readers and new readers need 'Reform', and it would be good to see the health of the URC reflected in an actual growth in sales. It was necessary to find a new advertising representative when Cheiron Media were obliged to give up due to the ill-health of one of the partners. We expect to announce the name of our new representative at or before Assembly.
5. **Year Book:** we have been glad to welcome to Committee meetings Mr Cyril and Mrs Sheila Lowden, the new editors of the Year Book. Their suggestions and proposed timetable for the next issue — which will be known as the 1984/85 Year Book — were agreed at the January meeting, and we expect it to be available in late September. It is planned to include church addresses this year and the new A4 format will enable this information to be added at minimum extra cost.
6. **Annual Publication:** Bernard Thorogood's book "Our Father's House" was delivered later than we hoped, just before Christmas. We are selling this during 1984 and plan to phase the next publication to be ready for Assembly 1985.
7. **Congregational Praise:** there has been some delay in the binding of pre-printed sheets due to a problem in obtaining the cover material. By the end of this year we shall probably need to consider a complete reprint as reserve stock of printed sheets for some editions will be exhausted.
8. **The Manual:** the updated version, for the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom, has been printed and published.
9. **Prayer Handbook:** whilst Church Life Department have undertaken responsibility for the content of the 1985 insert following consultation with representatives of other Departments, production will be arranged by Communication and Supplies who are working in conjunction with CWM.
10. **In-House Publications:** continued at about the same level as the previous year. Another member of staff has now received offset-litho operator training at the AB Dick School.

DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLIES

11. Evelyn Vaughan, Distribution and Supplies Officer appointed just before last Assembly, has undertaken during her first year a complete review of book stock held and services offered. In October, a small Group set up by the Committee, met to explore further the current role of the shop.

12. Regretfully, they felt obliged to recommend the phasing out of sale-or-return bookstalls to churches. It was clear from the Distribution and Supplies Officer's records that stock was often tied up for quite long periods and, in many cases, had resulted in very few sales to the church; when the stock was returned it was likely to be unsaleable at full price, having deteriorated due to handling, display in dusty conditions, or in transit. This recommendation was agreed by the Committee and we wrote to churches holding bookstalls offering three options for return or retention of the books. Bookstalls for Synods will continue and we shall be happy to consider supplying them for special one- or two-day events at churches.

13. It is suggested that more churches might like to consider becoming registered book agents which would enable them to buy books and URC publications from us at 10% discount.

14. We aim to maintain a good range of Bibles, hymn books, Bible commentaries, and other worship and study material. Selection of new books for stock is being undertaken with care, in line with what we judge to be the needs of the churches, and taking into consideration the suggestions and comments of the Departments. We plan to issue a list of recommended new titles with the catalogue twice a year.

15. Much of the Distribution and Supplies accountancy work formerly carried out manually is now on computer, permitting some reallocation of duties.

16. These changes, together with the clearance of a good deal of old stock, has enabled us to carry out some minor rearrangement of the sales area and create more space.

17. Orders despatched by post during 1983 are nearly 10% up on the previous year, giving an average of 25 mail orders despatched per working day. Although there are occasional mishaps, most orders are despatched within 3 days of receipt of instructions.

PUBLICITY GROUP

18. Much of the work of this Group is reflected in other sections of the report such as those concerned with Local Radio and Video.

19. **Photographic Display Material:** compiled first for the exhibition held in conjunction with the Free Church Federal Council 80th Congress in March, and available for inspection at 1984 General Assembly, the photographs were selected to show the URC at work and are available for loan to Districts and Provinces.

20. **Communications Leaflets:** a leaflet encouraging churches to write for the religious press, and giving names and addresses of suitable publications, was sent out in the July Information Service. Other leaflets are planned with a view to giving churches as much help as possible in their task of communicating.

21. **Church Magazines:** a number of 'Magazine Workshops' have been held in various parts of the country, some of which have received modest grants from the Publicity Group.

URC AND THE MEDIA

22. **Local Radio.** The response to the letter reminding Provinces and Districts of General Assembly 1983's resolution on this subject has been patchy. In some areas there is clearly an excellent relationship between church personnel and local radio stations, and some URC members have for several years been taking part regularly in religious programmes broadcast from local stations.

23. Some described 'Dabbling Days' where church people were able to attend a local radio station for training in the various skills required. This had sometimes been arranged on an ecumenical basis, through the local Council of Churches.

24. Other areas report occasional participation in local religious programmes and it appears that quite large numbers of URC people are involved in local radio to a greater or lesser extent.

25. **Video:** It is clear from the enquiries we have received that more churches are becoming interested in video, and several have asked about sources of suitable pre-recorded

programmes. Whilst we continue to compile information of this type, we usually also refer the church to AVA magazine which, as well as giving a number of useful addresses, carries from time to time reviews of video programmes by the Religious Audio-Visual Reviewing Panel and articles on various aspects of video work.

26. **Church House:** a video recorder and television receiver were purchased during the year and it is expected that increasing use will be made of this equipment by Department Secretaries and others at local church events, conferences, etc. Some programmes may be viewed at Assembly 1984.

27. **Cable Television:** One Province reports that the Association for Christian Communication, of which the URC is a member, is in touch with Councils of Churches in all the areas where Cable TV licences have been issued. A training course has been offered to enable local churches to make an effective contribution to local community television.

ECUMENICAL INVOLVEMENT

28. In addition to the Religious Audio-Visual reviewing Panel (paragraph 25) and Association for Christian Communication (27), we are represented on the British Churches' Committee on Channel 4. As yet the Channel 4 Committee has not been able to initiate any programmes but it does have a continuing dialogue with the commissioning editor.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Assembly receives this report for debate.
 2. Assembly welcomes the new developments of the Year Book.
 3. Assembly encourages Communication and Supplies Department to continue publication of a book annually.
 4. Assembly appreciates the efforts made by Provinces and Districts to increase their involvement in and to provide training for local radio, television and video, and wishes particularly to encourage those who have not yet taken action on last year's resolution.
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APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Michael B. Stolton

Secretary: The Revd Bernard G. Thorogood

The Committee met four times during the year and reports as follows:

1. ADMISSIONS TO THE ROLL OF MINISTERS

By ordination:

The Revds Martin Ambler, Alfred Thomas Josiah Baker, Hazel Patricia Barkham, Lesley Beale, David Robert Bedford, David Bending, Margaret Olwen Berridge, Michael Thomas Bond, Elizabeth Robertson Brown, John Miller Campbell, Lesley Margaret Charlton, Ann Maureen Cole, Hilary Jane Collinson, Christina Margaret Flashman, David Fox, Andrew Francis, Henry Derek Gardiner, James Gerald Gascoigne, Nigel Mark Goodfellow, James Windsor Gould, Frank Ronald Hall, Michael John Hensman, David Anthony Herbert, Brenda Lilian Hill, Thomas Irvine, Rhona Mitchell Jones, Mary Jean Kenyon, Patrick Edmund James McManus, Michael John Marshall, Sheila Ruth Maxey, Ruth Angela Mealand, Derek James Morrill, Peter Clive Noble, Doreen Jeanne Pells, Alan Pickles, Victor George Ridgewell, Michael Clifford Ryman, Ian Sellers, Geoffrey Howard Sharp, Henry John Walter Smith, Annemarie Stern, Edward Symmons, Patrick Hugh Taylor, Clive Robert Thomson, Harold Edward Ward, Patricia Wardle, Alan Williamson, Christopher Wood.

By induction to the Auxiliary Ministry:

The Revds D. J. Clague, Mrs M. Clague, S. D. Cole, N. Wilfred Georgeson, A. Seward, D. Stevenson, Mrs E. Stevenson, Albert Watson, G. Wood.

By transfer from other Churches:

Revd Peter Brewer	Baptist Union
Revd David Jacques	Baptist Union
Revd Emyr Huw Jones	Union of Welsh Independents
Revd John Stewart	Presbyterian Church of New Zealand
Revd Ronald Herbert Young	Baptist Union

2. MINISTERS OF OTHER CHURCHES SERVING THE URC

The Committee noted the following:

Revd Dr Ferenc Kenez	Reformed Church of Hungary
Revd Einar Michaelsen	United Church of Christ, USA
Revd Hakim Banta Singh Rahi	Church of North India

3. DELETIONS FROM THE ROLL OF MINISTERS

By transfer to other Churches:

Revd D. Burkhalter	Disciples of Christ (USA)
Revd Ian Fraser	Church of Scotland
Revd John Hick	Presbyterian Church (USA)
Revd O. Lloyd Roberts	Congregational Federation
Revd Len Sherratt	Uniting Church of Australia
Revd Peter Clarke	United Church of Christ, USA
Revd John Cribb	Uniting Church of Australia
Revd Faitala Talapusi	Congregational Christian Church of Samoa

By resignation:

Revds A. Bilbey, J. Fancy, D. K. Fowles, M. Hamblett, S. Regis, P. L. Sissons.

4. **Certificates of Eligibility** Certificates were issued to eleven ministers, some of whom are already inducted to a pastorate or in process of seeking a call. The Committee decided that a Certificate will remain valid for three years from the date of issue.

5. **MINISTERS COMING TO THE URC FOR TEMPORARY SERVICE** The Committee agreed a procedure for ministers who come to serve with us for up to two years. The District Council where they are called to serve should inform the Secretary of the Applications Committee who will seek a statement on status from the authorities of the applicant's denomination. If this is in order the Secretary will inform the District Council that the induction can take place and will inform Applications Committee of the action taken. The minister would be listed among those of other Churches serving the URC.

6. **YEAR BOOK LISTING** During the year the Committee has carried out an enquiry with District Councils regarding those ministers listed 'D', and some amendments have been made. Consideration was given to the listing of ministers at present overseas. It was agreed to bring together the eleven names of such ministers now on the main list with the list of CWM missionaries under the heading 'URC Personnel Serving Overseas'. The Applications Committee will regularly review the names which it brings to that list, and no applications procedure would be needed if these ministers should seek a URC pastoral vacancy.

7. **CHURCHES APPLYING TO ENTER THE URC** The Committee considered the cases presented by Provincial Synods and is happy to recommend the acceptance of five churches. One of these is a Congregational church which did not vote in 1972 to join URC, and four are new ventures in which URC is sharing. In the case of Sidemoor Independent Methodist Church (West Midlands), there is work still to be done regarding the possible variation of Trusts, and the Committee therefore offers to Assembly a resolution of welcome but not yet of formal acceptance.

8. **CHURCHES SEEKING TO SECEDE FROM THE URC**

8.1 **Paincastle, Wales Province.** The Provincial Synod recommended that secession be agreed. There was extensive correspondence with the District Council, discussion in the Committee and a personal visit to the church in mid-Wales by two committee members. All ways of restoring fellowship with this small church of five members have been examined. The Committee is persuaded that the root of the problem lies in mis-understandings around 1972 when the officers of the Congregational Church gave to the members expectations which the URC was unable to fulfil. In particular, the offer of ordained ministerial service once a month was not honoured and URC gave no ministry for nine years from 1972, and during that period there was no oversight by or fellowship with any District Council. The Committee recommends in favour of secession.

8.2 **Belvedere and Erith, Southern Province.** The Provincial Synod recommended that secession be agreed. The Committee has examined fully the reasons given for secession. They focus on the feeling that the Church Meeting has been devalued in the URC, and that the local church might be pressured into joining a local union against its wishes. There is no complaint against the District Council or the Synod, which have been active in all the consultation, and in which the local church participates. There is no evidence of bad personal relationships. The Synod states that those who wish to leave us should be enabled to do so, but the Committee's view is that there are no adequate grounds yet shown for recommending the extreme action of secession. There is some hope that, at a later date, the local church might have a different view. The Committee therefore recommends that secession be not approved.

8.3 **Ramsey, Isle of Man, Mersey Province.** The Committee noted that the request of this church had not been supported by the Provincial Synod and that the Elders' Meeting of the Church was appealing directly to the General Assembly.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report for debate
2. The Assembly warmly receives the local churches known as
Radstock Church, Lower Earley, Reading (Wessex Province)
Bowthorpe, Norwich (Eastern Province)
Kings Hedges, Cambridge (Eastern Province)
East Hill, Wandsworth (Southern Province)
Perton, Wolverhampton (West Midlands Province)
as local churches of the United Reformed Church.

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3. The Assembly
- (1) welcomes the application of the Sidemoor Independent Methodist Church;
 - (2) resolves in principle that if satisfactory legal arrangements with regard to trusts can be made, the church will thereafter be received as a local church of the URC;
 - (3) empowers the Executive Committee, if that Committee is satisfied that satisfactory legal arrangements have been made, to receive the church.
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4. The Assembly agrees that Painscastle Church, Wales Province, be permitted to secede.
- 84
5. The Assembly declines to permit the secession of Belvedere and Erith Church, Southern Province.
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ASSEMBLY PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A. L. Macarthur, OBE

Secretary: The General Secretary

1. The Committee, which was set up by Assembly in 1983, has met three times since September 1983 and is beginning to formulate methods of work. It is clear that in some cases lengthy consideration and caring is vital, and the Committee is grateful for expert help.
2. The cases of six ministers have been brought by District Councils or Synod Pastoral Committees for consideration, and four of these remain as current concerns in March 1984.

85. *The Assembly receives the Report.*

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr R. O. Latham

Secretary: Mr C. M. Frank

1. The Budget Committee wishes to record its appreciation of the fine effort made by the churches throughout the country in response to the challenge of the Unified Appeal. 10 Provinces provided 100% or more of the target accepted, and the other 2 came close, so that the final total of £1,077,026 was 97.91% of the target figure.

2. This result has enabled the Church to maintain its wide and varied programme which includes Mission at home, and overseas through CWM; Social Responsibility, and ecumenical activities within the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches; Ministerial Training and Recruitment; a progressive Education and Youth Service, including work among children; and the developing area of Supplementary Ministries. In addition the administrative and financial affairs of the Church are included and the whole sphere of Information and Communication. All these are forms of service for, and to, and on behalf of, the local churches of the URC. The encouraging response to the Unified Appeal signifies your approval and support. For all this, the giving, the witness, the work, and for those who are called to serve the Church in these forms we give thanks to the Lord of the Church in whose Name we serve.

3. The Budget for 1985 which is now before the Assembly contains that same range of activities, modified here and there after careful review, with an inflation factor increase of 5% over 1984. In addition we have sought to respond to the decisions of the 1983 Assembly in the following particulars:-

- a) Support for Church Related Community Workers. £20,000 as a topping-up reserve of local resources, plus £5,000 for training grants.
- b) Increased resources for Mission in Britain by £5,000.
- c) Additional support for the Pilot Organisation — £6,000.
- d) Funds to enable URC representatives to serve on World Council of Churches committees — £2,000.
- e) Provision for underwriting a Residential Assembly if the 1984 Assembly so decides — £10,000.
- f) Provision for the Windermere Project Appeal, again if Assembly so decides — £4,000.
- g) A number of smaller items which have been carefully scrutinized by the Department committees.

4. On the other side of the account the Finance Department have recommended that an estimate of £80,000 from the interest receivable be included in the Budget rather than the £40,000 which featured in the 1984 Budget. This still leaves £1,290,000 to be raised by the Unified Appeal, which is 11.5% over the amount asked for in 1984.

5. The Provincial Treasurers have examined this budget and accepted it as a reasonable challenge in 1985.

6. The Budget Committee requests the Assembly to approve this budget with the additional implied challenge to our churches, arising out of increases directly related to the resolutions of Assembly.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report of the Budget Committee.
2. Assembly approves the Budget for 1985 which provides for an expenditure of £1,435,000.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 1983

1. The 1983 Annual Meeting was held in Brighton, on 24th May when members of Central Free Church gave a dramatic reading of the history of Dissent in the Brighton area from 1662 to 1850, which was much appreciated by members and friends. The Annual Lecture entitled, "Bishops and Non-Conformity in the Seventeenth Century" was delivered by the Revd Dr Buick Knox at the Society's Study Day at the Congregational College, Manchester on 29th October. A further paper was given by Dr Clyde Binfield and a visit was made to the Fairfield Moravian Settlement, before members were entertained to tea by Grosvenor St Aidan's URC, Didsbury. All who attended found it a stimulating and enjoyable day.
 2. Plans were formed during the year for an Annual Meeting in Newcastle in 1st May 1984, and a Study Week-end at Ponteland, Newcastle 7-9 September 1984, both of which are open to members and friends of the Society.
 3. Our volunteer helpers in the Library continue to accomplish a great deal with slender resources. In addition to answering 169 new enquiries during the year they have checked all the stock for duplicates and carried through a withdrawals programme to create shelf-space for accessions. The surplus stock has been transferred partly to Dr William's library, partly to Westminster College Library, and the remainder is being disposed of to members and the trade. We have been grateful to receive a gift of books from the library of the late Revd Dr Lovell Cocks which will add to our holdings of Congregational material.
 4. We have continued to remove member's names from the lists when their subscriptions have been unpaid for two years or more. Of our present 395 members 92 subscriptions are in the name of local churches. A further 100 copies of the Journal are sold to libraries and other institutions, or exchanged with kindred societies. For the fourth year running income exceeded expenditure on the General Account, and we are confident that we can maintain our present services to members without increasing subscriptions more than the rate of inflation. This is entirely due to the dedication of the volunteers who serve the Society at no cost to the membership or the United Reformed Church except their travel expenses, and the generosity of those who send us more than the minimum subscription.
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SCHOOLS LINKED WITH THE URC

1. The Heads and Governors representative of the Five Schools have met twice during the year.
2. Silcoates hosted the annual Conference of representatives in May 1983. The Joint Committee also met in London in December, as usual, when Dr C. D. Waller, the new Headmaster of Eltham, was welcomed and good wishes were given to Miss E. B. Davies on her retirement as Headmistress of Walthamstow Hall.
3. The Five Schools were most grateful for the grant of £10,000 which the URC have allotted for them out of the 1983 income of the Memorial Hall Trust, and which in principle, the URC hope to continue in 1984 and subsequent years. This will be used for the education of the children of Ministers and Missionaries.
4. Milton Mount Foundation continues to give valuable help to Ministers' children, except that the Foundation has had to discontinue for the time being assistance for new Ministers' sons. The Schools are, however, still ready and willing to make up the loss of Foundation grants for new entrants.
5. The number of Ministers' and Missionaries' children in September 1983 were:- Caterham 15, Eltham 3, Silcoates 11, Walthamstow Hall 9, Wentworth Milton Mount 13.

Caterham School

6. In 1984 we are celebrating the Centenary of the School's move from Lewisham to Caterham. The Moderator of the URC, the Rt Revd Alasdair Walker and the Chairman of Surrey County Council, Mr John Whitfield, brought greetings to the School at the Centenary Launching Party in January. On this occasion, the Chairman of the Governors, Mr Roger Deayton, presented a leather-bound copy of the book "A Century at Caterham" to Mr Ernest Blomfield, the author.
7. BBC Radio 4 broadcast live the Sunday morning School Service in February when the preacher was Mr Barrie Scopes, the General Secretary of CWM and a former master at the School.
8. The School has grown from 114 boarders in 1884 to a record number of 695 pupils in the Main and Preparatory Schools in 1984, of which one third are boarders. This includes 28 day girls in the Sixth Form of 172.
9. On the academic side, the A-level results were the best on record and nine Oxbridge places were gained.
10. The School has taken part in the local Arts Festival where the dramatic, musical and photographic entries have all been successful.
11. Mr K. M. Kirby has retired from the Board of Governors after 42 years' distinguished service, including 9 years as Chairman. He has also been Secretary of the Five Schools Committee.

Eltham College

12. The end of the Summer Term was marked by a special service in the School Chapel, by Prize Day and by numerous other gatherings at which the retirement of Mr C. Porteous, together with Mrs Porteous, after 24 years as the Headmaster of the school was particularly mentioned. Mr Porteous was thanked for his long and devoted service to the school; the national standing and academic reputation of Eltham had greatly benefited from his efforts over a quarter of a century.
13. The new Headmaster and Mrs Waller joined the school in September. Dr Waller has been engaged in teaching and in school administration in a number of schools and has had experience of University teaching.
14. The school's record of awards at Oxford and Cambridge was well maintained during Dr Waller's first term — six pupils gained awards at Cambridge and a further four were admitted to Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

15. Drama has long been a feature of the school's activities, and in December Dylan Thomas's "Under Milk Wood" was presented to full houses on four evenings.

16. The Junior and Senior Schools' Carol Services in the School Chapel were well attended and worshipful. The Senior School Service concluded with Vaughan Williams's "Fantasia on Christmas Carol".

17. A new feature of school life which has emerged during the past two years is "The Eltham College Community Orchestra", which gave three public concerts during the year, one of which was conducted by the Rt Hon Edward Heath. In the summer the Orchestra went on tour in Switzerland, and during the year has contributed to Chapel services. The next concert will be in the Fairfield's Hall, Croydon.

18. We give thanks to God for another varied and worthwhile year.

Silcoates School

19. In May the second conference of schools linked with the URC took place at Silcoates, to which Eltham and Walthamstow Hall sent representatives for the first time. The two principal speakers were John Mott, Director of the Bloxham Project, on "Moral Education" and Dr J. S. Munro, Medical Officer of Durham University, whose subject was "The Problems that face Young People Today". Other subjects which were discussed included the political threat and the economic and social pressures which affect denominational schools today.

20. The new Chairman of the Board of Governors is Dr J. C. C. Binfield, the representative of the General Assembly. A new representative of the Yorkshire Province on the Board is Mr Douglas Thacker.

21. The School has appointed its first full time Chaplain, the Revd A. J. L. Jones, a minister of the URC, previously Head of Religious Studies at Banbury School.

22. Good use is being made of the extensive additions to the School's facilities which formed part of the recent Development Programme. A school orchestra has been formed, the range of sporting activities is now much wider, and much development has taken place in the areas of community service and outdoor pursuits. The Upper Sixth achieved the best A-level results on record and encouraging numbers proceeded to Colleges, Polytechnics and Universities of their first choice.

Walthamstow Hall

23. In the summer of 1983 we welcomed back Anna Plommer, the previous year's Head of Boarding, after her year in India teaching with the British and Foreign Schools Society and in December bade farewell to last year's head Girl, Susan Berry, as she set out for Japan where she is doing a stint of teaching with the Overseas Missionary Fellowship before going up to Cambridge.

24. Walthamstow Hall was pleased to provide hospitality for the Southern Province's Synod meeting.

25. Advanced and Ordinary level results were good.

26. The boarders excelled with a production of "Me and My Girl" and the school play was Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus". During the Autumn concert the choir sang a setting of the prayer "Lord Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace" by Michael Hurd which had been commissioned on the occasion of Miss Davies' retirement.

27. Through the generosity of friends of the school and the Old Girls one of the boarders' common rooms has been made much more comfortable. A new Sixth Form common room is in the process of being completed.

28. The Squash Courts' Appeal has gone well and the building improves a neglected corner of the grounds and extends the provision for sport here.

Wentworth Milton Mount

29. The school has, with the encouragement of the Revd J. MacKelvie, taken responsibility for two services at Richmond Hill URC during the year. In February girls in years 4-6 planned

and led the entire service on FURY Sunday. More recently staff and girls, including the senior and junior choirs and instrumentalists, led worship on Advent Sunday. The senior choir has also sung at other local churches.

30. At Speech Day 1983 our guest of honour was Mrs Rosalind Goodfellow, who had just completed her year as Moderator.

31. Academic results have been generally pleasing. 6th Form leavers proceeded to a variety of courses including Medicine, Nursing, Physical Education, Bilingual Secretarial, European Studies, Law, Geography, English/History, Modern Languages — this last at Balliol College, Oxford.

32. Two much valued members of staff retired in July — Miss M. Okey, Senior Mistress and Head of Mathematics, who was educated at the school and spent her entire teaching career here, and Miss A. Foster, Head of Geography. They both served the school with exemplary dedication.

33. The school has extended by one year its support of Peter Ndichu to give him the opportunity to complete his accountancy training in Nairobi. Service to the local community has included our annual Christmas Party for members of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

STANDING ORDERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

1. The Agenda of the Assembly

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

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

- (i) resolutions of the Department or Committee of which due notice has been given,
- (ii) any relevant Synod resolutions,
- (iii) duly seconded resolutions submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

If notice has been given of two or more resolutions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same resolution, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the General Secretary.

2. Presentation of Business

- 2a. All reports of Departments and Committees, together with the draft resolutions 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 should 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 Chairman of the Business 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 thought fit, 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 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 Business Committee which shall advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.

3. Resolutions

- 3a. When a report has been presented to the Assembly the first motion on the report shall be "That this Report be received for debate". On this being passed, and before any consequent recommendations are proposed, any member may speak to a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion. It shall not be in order to move an amendment or a reference back motion to this motion. The passing of

this motion shall not be deemed to commit the Assembly to the acceptance of any matter contained in the report.

- 3b. During a meeting of the Assembly and on the report of a Department or a Committee, notice (including the names of proposer and seconder) shall be given to the General Secretary of any new resolutions which arise from the material of the report, and of any amendments which affect the substance of resolutions already presented. The Moderator shall decide whether such resolution or amendment requires to be circulated in writing to members before it is discussed by the Assembly. During the course of a 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 resolutions presented on behalf of a Department or Standing Committee, of which printed notice has been given, do not need to be seconded.
- 3d. A seconder may, if he/she then declares the intention of doing so, reserve his/her speech until a later period in the debate.
- 3e. It shall not be in order to move a resolution or amendment which:
- contravenes any part of the Basis of Union, or
 - involves the Church in expenditure without prior consideration by the appropriate committee, or
 - pre-empts discussion of a matter to be considered later in the agenda, or
 - infringes a decision reached by the Assembly within the preceding two years, or
 - is not related to the report of a Department or Committee and has not been subject of 21 days' notice under 2d.
- The decision of the Moderator on the application of this Standing Order shall be final.
- 3f. An amendment shall be either to omit words or to insert words or to do both, but no amendment shall be in order which has the effect of introducing an irrelevant proposal or of negating the motion.
- 3g. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved. If an amendment is rejected a further amendment not to the like effect may be moved.
- 3h. An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved, but notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.
- 3i. The mover may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter a motion or amendment he/she has proposed.
- 3j. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly. Any such consent shall be signified without discussion. It shall not be competent for any member to speak upon it after the proposer has asked permission to withdraw unless such permission shall have been refused.

4. Speeches

- 4a. Speeches made in presentation of the report and resolutions of any Department and its committees shall not in aggregate exceed 45 minutes, and speeches made in support of the report and resolutions of any other non-departmental committee having direct access to the Assembly shall not in aggregate exceed 20 minutes, save by the prior agreement of the Business Committee. The proposers of any other motion of

which due notice has been given shall be allowed an aggregate of 10 minutes, unless a longer period be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator. Each subsequent speaker in the debate shall be allowed 5 minutes unless the Moderator shall determine otherwise.

- 4b. When a speech is made on behalf of a Department or Committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by stating his name and accreditation to the Assembly.
- 4c. Secretaries of Standing Committees and full-time officers of Departments who are not members of the Assembly may speak on the report of the Department when requested by the Chairman 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 of reply, but must strictly confine himself/herself 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.

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 resolution takes precedence of every motion before the Assembly and as soon as the member has explained his/her reasons for proposing it, and it has been seconded, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that such a motion is an unfair use of the rules of the Assembly. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately end and the Assembly proceed to the next business.
- 5b. In the course of any discussion, it is competent for any member to move that the question be now put. This is sometimes described as "the closure motion". Unless it appears to the Moderator that this motion is an abuse of the rules of the Assembly, 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. The resolutions described in Standing Orders 5a. and 5b. 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.

6. Voting

- 6a. Voting on any resolution 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 9(5)(xi) of the Basis of Union (cf. The Manual).
- 6b. Unless the Assembly decides that there shall be a ballot, every other question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Assembly present and voting as indicated by a show of hands.
- 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 that is necessary, the Nominations Committee shall appoint Tellers for each Assembly.

7. Questions

- 7a. A member may, if two clear days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Chairman of any Department or 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 in his/her place and call attention to a point of order, and immediately on his/her doing so 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 the censure of the Assembly.
- 8b. A member feeling that some material part of a former speech by him/her at the same meeting has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may rise in his/her place 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 him/her to fall within the provisions of paragraph 7(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 Chairman of the Business 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 manner as the Executive 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. The minutes of the closing day of the Assembly shall normally be submitted at the close of the business and, after any necessary correction, approved.

- 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 business at such a meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of Assembly present and voting shall so decide.
 - 12b. Resolutions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Business Committee for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or in case of urgency, by the Executive Committee). The Business Committee may itself from time to time suggest amendments to the Standing Orders, which shall be subject to decision by the Assembly.
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