

- 7.5.1.2. To recommend to the churches in the federation to receive visitors from the GGRCNTT in the knowledge that these churches adhere to the Three Forms of Unity;
- 7.5.2. To approve the following budget for the period 2004-2007
- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| ICRC fees         | \$ 5,000        |
| Meeting ICRC 2005 | \$ 4,000        |
| Travel            | \$ 3,500        |
| Miscellaneous     | <u>\$ 2,000</u> |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>\$14,500</b> |
- 7.5.3. To give the CRCA the following general mandate:
- 7.5.3.1. To investigate diligently all the requests received for entering into Ecclesiastical Fellowship outside the Americas;
- 7.5.3.2. To respond, if possible and feasible, to specific requests made to attend Assemblies, Synods, or meetings of other churches outside the Americas;
- 7.5.3.3. To serve Synod 2007 with a report with suitable Recommendations, to be sent to the churches six months prior to the next General Synod.
- 7.5.4. To appoint one new member to serve on the CRCA for a nine year term (till 2013).

### **Addendum to the Report of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad Re: The Netherlands and CRCA Budget**

Esteemed Brothers:

Since the Report on our activities, as mandated by Synod Neerlandia 2001 was sent to the printer in June 2003, a number of items have come to our attention that warrants a brief supplement. This supplement contains both some further information as well as a request.

*Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Liberated) (GKN) Report pages 21-31.*

Firstly, we wish to update you on the developments in the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands where a number of people "liberated" themselves. Rather than rely on the press, we inquired from the Dutch deputies about the situation. They responded as follows:

*Earlier this year an organized group of members within the GKN(v) issued a 'Call to Reformation' via an open letter in the daily, Nederlands Dagblad. The concerned brothers and sisters objected to several decisions taken by the GKN(v) assembled in general synod at Zuidhorn 2002. In the months thereafter the official acts of GS Zuidhorn were available via internet and could be ratified by the local churches. In the course of this process some of those who objected to the decisions and saw the church councils of the churches where they are members ratify the synod decisions chose to liberate from the GKN(v). For that purpose an 'Act of Liberation' has been drawn up. To date such seceding has taken place in a handful of local churches concentrated especially around Rotterdam and Zwolle. At this stage the number of*

*people thus leaving the GKN(v) is roughly one hundred. To our knowledge there are no ministers involved with the exception of the emeritus Rev. P. van Gurp. In general, church leaders argue that the 'liberation' is premature if indeed it should ever be necessary, for the decisions of GS Zuidhorn 2002 do not mark the end of the agreed upon path of appeal.*

Please be assured that we will continue to monitor the situation. At this time, we do not see a need to make additional recommendations with respect to our Report (p. 31 ).

Secondly, the Dutch deputies took issue with the the Report on the visit made to Synod Zuidhorn by Rev. J. Huijgen and Rev. C.J. Vandervelde (see Report 44-48), and submitted a rebuttal for publication in *Clarion* (see *Clarion*, July 18, 2003, p. 357-359). When made aware of this situation, we requested *Clarion* to publish the following statement:

*The CRCA was informed only after the article had been submitted to Clarion and accepted for publication. The CRCA regrets that the Dutch deputies took this course of action. First, it does not reckon with the fact that the report on the visit was not submitted under personal title but on behalf of the CRCA. Second, committees appointed by their respective Church federations conduct their discussion not in the public press but by directly addressing each other.*

There has been some communication with the Dutch deputies about their approach. We see no need for interaction with the article of the Dutch deputies. We consider the matter finished. As for our Report on the Dutch Churches, we maintain the evaluation and recommendations.

#### *Inquiries Regarding Ecclesiastical Fellowship*

The CRCA has received two new inquiries from churches in the southern hemisphere about establishing Ecclesiastical Fellowship. The first comes from the Reformed Churches in Indonesia (Gereja Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia) in the Province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (GGRI-NTT). The GGRI-NTT, established through the missionary activities of our Dutch sister churches, is to be distinguished from the Calvinist Reformed Churches (Gereja Gereja Reformasi Calvinis) in East Nusa Tenggara (GGRC- NTT), a younger federation, which only recently adopted the Three Forms of Unity and the Reformed Church Order. The GGRI-NTT at present has Ecclesiastical Fellowship with both the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKN).

The second request comes from the Reformed Churches in New Zealand. Synod Zuidhorn 2002 decided to accept the invitation of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand to enter into Ecclesiastical Fellowship. While the Free Reformed Churches of Australia at present do not have formal relations with the RCNZ, they did not object to the Dutch churches entering into such a relationship.

With the information available to us at this time, the Committee feels it is premature to recommend entering into Ecclesiastical Fellowship. Synod needs to be provided with more comprehensive information. This information should also be available to the churches.

*Request*

If we are to be able to fulfill our task as Committee and make informed and proper recommendations, it would be best not to rely merely on correspondence, but to evaluate the situation through personal contact. A formal visit should be made by two Committee members. The itinerary would incorporate meeting representatives of the GGRC-NTT, which has sought contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches for some time (see CRCA report to Synod Chatham, p. 35 (7.4.1) and p. 37 (7.5.1), as well as visiting New Zealand, to interact with members of the RCNZ. Such a visit, however, is not possible within the funds as recommended in our Report (see p. 38). It should be noted that \$9000.00 of that budget has to do with the ICRC, and only \$5500.00 has been allotted for all other expenses.

The Committee therefore requests Synod to increase the budget of the CRCA by \$6000.00, to allow two members of the Committee to visit Indonesia and New Zealand, enabling the Committee to make appropriate recommendations to the next General Synod.

On behalf of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad,  
Rev. Eric Kampen (convener)