



# COMBATING INFLATION

*(A statement of the Seventh General Convention of The American Lutheran Church adopted October 11, 1974, by action GC74.11.23, as a partial response to President Ford's appeal to this Church for its help in the fight against inflation, addressed as a statement of comment and counsel to the members of the congregations of The American Lutheran Church to aid them in their decisions and actions. The vote was 731 delegates voting for and 25 delegates voting against adoption of the statement.)*

1. The American Lutheran Church recognizes that the rate of inflation has reached such proportions that it threatens the American economy and endangers our democratic institutions. Rapidly rising costs pose severe problems for a majority of people. Inflation today is clearly a global problem.

2. As a church we are concerned because many persons are being deprived even of the basic necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. Inflation also limits the financial ability of the church to carry out its God-given mission and ministry throughout the world.

3. We must have widespread discussions seeking solutions to the problem. Inflation is an intricately complex problem that defies easy solution by government fiat. Remedies will require government and corporate leadership of wisdom, honesty, and integrity. Most certainly cooperation and sacrifice will be required at every level of society. We underscore our insistence that any proposed remedies

a. Have every reasonable probability of correcting rather than aggravating the malady;

b. Be fair and just to all parties and interests affected by the proposed action;

c. Assign burdens and costs in proportion to the ability of the different segments of society to bear them;

d. Reckon realistically with our global interdependence.

4. We urge the members of our congregations to face frankly the fact that our life styles, our consumption patterns, and the standards by which we set our expectations must change. Shortages, scarcities, and hard choices among priorities appear likely to dominate our economic life. Economic considerations compel changes throughout our society.

5. Recognizing their complexity we nonetheless suggest that economic structures must fulfill at least the following functions:

- a. Focus mankind's exercise of its stewardship over the earth;
  - b. Provide equitable means for exchanging the goods and services that result from the investment of time, energy, and resources;
  - c. Encourage the production of food, shelter, clothing, civic services, and other necessities;
  - d. Assure the care and conservation of the earth and its resources.
6. We believe that our inflationary ills stem largely from human self-centeredness, greed, covetousness, and poor stewardship. Any effective remedies must address the fact of human sinfulness. We ask the congregations of The American Lutheran Church, their members, and the units of this church, to:
- a. Distinguish between wants and needs, between comforts and essentials;
  - b. Practice good stewardship of the natural resources of air, water, soil, forests, minerals, fuels, and the like;
  - c. Be careful consumers, buying wisely only what they need, neither squandering nor hoarding;
  - d. Apply energy and ingenuity to the more efficient production of needed goods and services;
  - e. Share abundantly of their time, energies, and goods in thoughtfulness, helpfulness, and service to others;
  - f. Cooperate in civic duties to assure a community sensitive and responsive to human needs;
  - g. Exercise citizenship influence to keep units of government focused on needed priorities in services and expenditures;
  - h. Insist on the urgency of developing alternate sources of energy to replace our dependence on fossil fuels;
  - i. Heed our interdependence as human beings and the global implications of actions taken within the United States;
  - j. Examine their own consciences and practices to review how pleasing to God may be their own management of the resources entrusted to their care.
7. Combating inflation calls for more than self-discipline and belt-tightening. It will bring hurts, disruptions, and dislocations. Christians individually and through their churches must be sensitive to these hurts and need to share the burdens that fall on others. They remember St. John's words "Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

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