

ConfidentialSUMMARY OF DISCUSSION ON THE FUTURE OF ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS AND OF THE WORK OF A FUTURE ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION: 3RD SEPTEMBER 1979

Bishop Howe invited the views of members of ARCIC on these subjects in the light of the relevant Resolutions of ACC-4 of May 1979.

Resolution 4: Response to ARCIC Statements

Bishop Howe said that the Anglican Consultative Council had already received synodical comments on the work of ARCIC and its Statements from many churches of the Anglican Communion and it was proposed to use this material to draft a single statement conveying in general terms the view of the Anglican Communion as a whole for eventual submission to the Vatican. As the drafting could not be completed until ARCIC had finished its work, it was unlikely that this would be before 1982. He asked for confirmation from the Roman Catholic side that this would be acceptable. All Roman Catholic members were agreeable to this procedure. Mention was also made of the possibility of the Roman Synod of Bishops perhaps considering the work of ARCIC in 1982.

Resolution 7: Full Communion with Other Episcopal Churches

Bishop Howe explained that a competent scholar would probably be asked to produce a broad working paper on the relation of full communion of certain churches with the churches of the Anglican Communion. This would then be sent to all our churches. It would also be sent to a number of Anglican theologians and non-Anglican theologians, including one or two Roman Catholic members of ARCIC. A small group would then be appointed to write a report for submission to ACC-5.

Resolution 5: Future Anglican/Roman Catholic Relations

Bishop Howe said that the procedure for appointment of Anglican members of a new commission was laid down. Members would be named by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Howe after consultation with all the Primates of the Anglican Communion. Assuming that ARCIC would complete its work in 1980 or 81, Bishop Howe invited comments from members of ARCIC on the aims and work of the new Commission. He said that the following had been suggested as possible subjects: the nature of unity, Christian ethics and social responsibility, matters of tradition and pluriformity. The following points were made by members of ARCIC:

1. A new Commission must start work on the basis of approval of work already done by ARCIC. To help ensure continuity and to ensure that the work was taken a stage further, a new commission should contain an adequate representation of members of ARCIC. The terms of reference for the Commission would have to be clearly drawn up and concern was expressed that the phrase "unity we seek" in the ACC-4 Report should not mean going over work already done by ARCIC.

2. It was also stressed that in order that the work of the new Commission should continue the work of ARCIC, it might be necessary to await the reactions of the authorities to the Final Report of ARCIC before finalising the programme of work of its successor.

3. It might be wise for a new commission to be smaller numerically.

4. With reference to the subjects of work for a future commission, it was felt that many of the issues mentioned were more appropriate to national ARCs. This was generally agreed, but it was thought that an international commission would still be necessary to co-ordinate regional and local work. The danger here might be that it might prove necessary to have two international bodies, one for co-ordinating local work and one for pursuing theological topics. Also, with notable exceptions, national ARCs tended not to be influential. In particular on the Roman Catholic side Episcopal Conferences made the decisions.

Attention was drawn to work done at earlier meetings of ARCIC on moral issues which had not been followed up, though it was pointed out that ethical problems are not specific to the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. The special areas of disagreement were felt by some to be dogmatic.

A new commission should not work in isolation from others. There should be close links for example with Anglican/Orthodox and Roman Catholic/Lutheran groups.