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REPORT ON THE FIRST MEETING OF THE ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

My dear Lord Archbishop,

1. I submit the following report of the Commission's meeting held at St. George's House, Windsor Castle, from Friday 9th January to Thursday 15th January, 1970.

2. Membership

All the appointed members from each side attended with the exception of the Revd. Dr. Kelly (Anglican) who resigned owing to pressure of other commitments, and the Revd. Fr. P. Duprey (Vatican Secretariat for Unity) who was ill and was replaced for the occasion by the Revd. Fr. Stransky.

In addition, the Revd. Fr. Hill, O.P., who jointly presented a paper with the Bishop of Pretoria, was present in the role of consultant. The World Council of Churches' observer, Dr. Günther Gassmann, also took part and was most acceptable to the members of the Commission

4. With regard to the place left vacant by Dr. Kelly's resignation, we would beg leave to suggest that an appointment from Canada would be welcomed. The Anglican members were also agreed that a lay representative would be valuable, although they realise that there may be difficulty in meeting the two requirements.

5. Papers

The following papers, copies of which are enclosed for Your Grace's notice, were circulated and discussed during the twelve sessions of the Commission's work:

Fundamentals of the Faith Held in Common (The Bishop of Pretoria and Fr. Edmund Hill O.P.)

The Church, Intercommunion and the Ministry (Professor A.Vogel).

Another paper of the same title was presented in French by Fr. J.M.R. Tillard, O.P.

Two papers on Authority - Its Nature, Exercise and Implications (Bishop Butler and the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford).

A joint paper by Canon William Purdy and Professor Howard Root on Growing Together - an assessment of the opportunities for collaboration between the two Churches.

A report of progress in Anglican/Roman Catholic relations since the presentation of the Malta Report.

6. Publication of Papers

It was decided that papers tabled before the Commission could be published if the authors agree and provided that the papers are described as questions which are being studied by the Commission. This is to avoid the papers being regarded in any quarter as pronouncements of the Commission.

7. It is hoped, after the September meeting, that the Commission itself will have some material to publish.

8. Publicity

This leads directly to publicity. The critical Press reaction, and in some cases, the lack of reaction to the Commission's press release seems to indicate disappointment on the part of the public. This is of course understandable. While I am certain that no responsible commission just commencing its work should have statements of any value to publish, it seems obvious that something more positive must be produced in September. A definite report on progress, or lack of it, will be expected and without some such report the Commission will lose credibility. To keep the Commission aware of this and to achieve something worth while in the space of a week will not be easy but must be attempted.

9. Programme

There was a Roman Catholic Mass and a Celebration of the Holy Communion each morning and members attended each other's rites, joining daily for evening worship.

10. The discussions were both frank and friendly and certain key-areas for investigation were marked out and handed over to three groups who worked intensively on their subjects for two days, reporting finally to the plenary session of the Commission.

11. The subjects were: The Church and Authority, The Ministry and The Eucharist. The function of these groups was to outline problems and questions under these headings which are to be worked on by three Sub-commissions between now and the next meeting of the Commission in September, 1970. Copies of these outlines as amended by the plenary session are attached to this report.

Sub-commissions

12. The arrangements for the work of the Sub-commissions are as follows:

- 1) The Church and Authority: This Sub-commission is to be based in the United Kingdom with Dr. Chadwick and Bishop Butler as convenors.
- 2) Ministry: this Sub-commission is to be based in the U.S.A. with Professor Vogel and Father Tavad as convenors. They will work in with Bishop Arnott (Australia) and a group there.

3) The Eucharist: this Sub-commission will be based in South Africa with the Bishop of Pretoria as convenor, who will work in with the existing South African Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission. The Revd. J. Charley and Father Tillard will be correspondent members.

13. The convenors will have the right to co-opt help from outside the Commission and to discuss their material. The intention is that drafts should be sent by the Sub-commissions to all members of the International Commission in six months' time. It is then hoped that on these subjects the Commission will have something definite to publish after its September meeting.

14. The Function and Future Work of the Commission

The question of the Commission's function was discussed at the first session at Windsor and it was the hope of all the members that this work should proceed on two levels simultaneously - one level is of course the purely theological and the other, which is not so easily defined, would be to see the function of the Commission as that of a catalyst. It should be in touch with national dialogue and should give guidance when asked and even suggest areas of work which local commissions might undertake. (The South African Commission has already made such a request). The chief function of the Commission must be to find out why the two Churches are not in communion and see if the barriers to this can be identified and reduced. Many members expressed the view that once the Commission has really begun work and discovered its raison d'être, it should say some positive things so that, as one member put it, hierarchies cannot hide behind a smoke screen.

Some of the future work of the Commission has been already referred to in connection with the work of the Sub-committees. It is also intended that at the September meeting (20th to 28th September, 1970) the Commission should move on to an active consideration of the Malta Report, paragraph 23, which reads as follows: 'We also recommend joint studies of moral theology to determine similarities and differences in our teaching and practice in this field.' To this end it is intended that there should be four papers on two subjects at this meeting. The first subject would be that of the general approach to moral theology, an area in which modern trends show numerous convergences, and secondly, a specific paper dealing with the relationship between men and women. This will include such matters as married life and family planning.

16. Consultants

The Commission decided that, whenever an expert in some particular field is invited to prepare a paper for the Commission,

Consultants (contd.)

he should also be invited to attend the meeting of the Commission and to take part in the discussion of his work. Such consultant would not, of course, have any voting rights, nor would they take part in any decisions made by the Commission.

17. General Comments

Running through the discussions of the Commission were certain matters of importance which tended to recur in different areas and they indicated points at which there are differences to be reckoned with. These matters are:-

18. A) Fundamentals: This arose in connection with discussion on a common declaration of Faith, in connection with the idea of doctrinal development and in connection with the idea of Authority. Basically the Anglicans tended to insist that the fundamentals are in the Creeds, though most of them will, of course, add the Eucharist, and to regard the criterion always as being Scripture (Article 6). Anglicans thought in terms of the finality of the Faith which allowed for development in theological interpretations but not in terms of the content of the Faith. For example, the question of the Assumption was raised and some Roman Catholics considered it to be a fundamental, while others denied this but regarded it as an explication. (cp. "The Hierarchy of Truths", in the Decree on Ecumenism). The question of doctrinal development arose out of this and will need further study.

19. B) Authority: This linked up with 'A' on the question of the seat of Authority. Roman Catholics tended to ask who decides whether a doctrine is Scriptural or not, - the answer pointing of course to Papal infallibility. Anglicans maintained that the fundamentals were self evident and that, as the Articles point out, the Church has authority to decide controversies. They also ask the question, for what is a central Authority needed? Has it any doctrinal or dogmatic function when the fundamentals are already there? The fact that (apparently) the only infallible doctrinal pronouncement so far, is the dogma of the Assumption connects up with the foregoing questions. The way in which Authority is exercised was also seen to be a difference between the two Churches. The whole question evoked a general inquiry as to, who are the Church? If communion with the Roman See is in any way constitutive, what about the limited communicatio in sacris now promoted with the Orthodox? Hans Küng's attitude on this question was noted.

20. C) The Church and Anglican Orders: Here Anglicans, by and large, in the discussion saw the Church as constituted by continuity of doctrine and succession and it was interesting to notice that on the subject of Anglican Orders, the historical approach did not

(c) The Church and Anglican Orders (contd.)

appear to be favoured by many on either side. The consensus appeared to be equally positive from both sides, on the necessity for agreeing first on Eucharistic faith. The question then came up for discussion, In what way can communion be restored? Here there was an interesting reaction which was not on denominational lines. Many favoured a reconciliation service which would commission priests in each other's respective communions. Conditional re-ordination was also mentioned and it is of interest that it was turned down by several Roman Catholic speakers. The point of view was freely expressed that some sort of official recognition of each other's Ministry would be necessary and two Roman Catholic reactions were that a concrete verification was needed, either a reconciliation service or some arrangement for conditional reordination. It was generally felt that preliminary agreement on the Church and on the Ministry was required and then, to quote one Roman Catholic speaker "as to whether a given Ministry adds up to what is needed, it is possible to have a genuine disagreement as to historical facts. Then each party should agree to accept whatever process is required by others to make their Ministry 'reliable'."

21. In this discussion there was a forward looking emphasis in that the participants tried to think more in terms of the Church of the future than of the Reformation. The question was asked, What is the basic structure which enables a Church to recognise itself in the ministrations of another? Organic unity was accepted as the ultimate goal but the question was also asked, With what lesser goal can we be temporarily satisfied? The question of Uniat status came in for general discussion. It was pointed out that there was a good deal of new thinking on the Ministry in Roman Catholic circles which gave a helpful context for the discussion of the problem. The Church of England "Series II" and the Anglican/Methodist Ordinal came in for much favourable comment as being both most helpful for convergence on the Ministry and on the Eucharist. It is worth commenting that one Roman Catholic member stated that the Spirit, the Eucharist and the Pope constituted the Roman Catholic Church, and asked what happens when you have a Church with the Spirit and the Eucharist working under episcopal oversight. Does this make for partial communion with Anglicans?

From this brief comment it will be clear why the Commission decided that additional work on the Church and Authority, the Ministry and the Eucharist was urgently required. It is hoped that this work will enable the Commission to report more factually

and positively on specific matters in September. It should also be added that the question of mixed marriages was quite frankly discussed and the possibility of a 'hard line' decision being made and an Anglican pointed out that this would be an additional obstacle in the work of reconciliation.

(The Rt.Revd.H.R.McAdoo, Bishop of
Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin)
Anglican Co-chairman

Report submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury in January 1970