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The Problems of Church Relationships facing the Anglican Communion in the coming Lambeth Conference

Anmerkung der Redaktion (vgl. auch S. 79): Im Rahmen des Dies Academicus der Universität Bern verlieh die Christkatholisch-theologische Fakultät am 5. Dezember 1987 dem anglikanischen Bischof von Chichester, Rt. Revd. Eric W. Kemp, D.D., die Würde eines Doktors der Theologie ehrenhalber. Dem Jahresbericht der Universität Bern 1987 ist die Laudatio und die Biographie des Geehrten entnommen:

«Eric Waldram Kemp, dem Förderer des theologischen Dialoges zwischen den anglikanischen und den altkatholischen Kirchen, der sich seit Jahren um die Bewährung und Vertiefung der zwischen ihnen schon bestehenden Gemeinschaft bemüht hat, um diese angesichts von neuen ökumenischen Aufgaben und Herausforderungen in den Dienst eines altkirchlich orientierten Zeugnisses für die Katholizität und Einheit der Kirche zu stellen.»

Eric Waldram Kemp, geboren am 27. April 1915, heimatberechtigt in Grossbritannien, Bischof von Chichester, England.

Nach dem Studium in Oxford war er zwei Jahre lang zuerst als Diakon und dann als Priester in einer Pfarrgemeinde tätig. Von 1941 bis 1946 wirkte er als Bibliothekar des traditionsreichen Pusey House in Oxford. Von 1946 bis 1969 war er University Lecturer für Kanonisches Recht (Exeter College). Seine wissenschaftliche Arbeit galt vor allem mittelalterlich-abendländischem und speziell englischem Kirchenrecht. 1969 wurde er Dekan der Kathedrale von Worcester und 1974 Bischof von Chichester. Schon früh war er ein regelmässiger Teilnehmer an altkatholisch-anglikanischen Theologenkongressen. Seit vielen Jahren ist er auf anglikanischer Seite der Hauptinitiant und Hauptverantwortliche für die Durchführung anglikanisch-altkatholischer theologischer Gespräche. Auf diese Weise, wie auch durch seine sachlichen Beiträge und sein persönliches Engagement bemüht er sich um die Bewährung und Vertiefung der zwischen Anglikanern und Altkatholiken bereits bestehenden Gemeinschaft, damit diese angesichts neuer ökumenischer Aufgaben und Herausforderungen einem am Glauben der alten Kirche orientierten Zeugnis für die Katholizität und Einheit der Kirche dienen kann.

Im Zusammenhang mit der Ehrung hielt Bischof Eric Kemp am 4. Dezember 1987 an der Universität Bern eine Gastvorlesung, deren Text hier wiedergegeben wird.

I begin this lecture by a brief account of what the Lambeth Conferences are and how they came into being. I apologise to any of my listeners who are familiar with this story already but I am sure that there will be many who are not, and the knowledge of it is necessary in order to understand some of the problems to which I shall refer.

The Anglican Communion is a family of some thirty Churches spread throughout the world. I use the word family because there is no constitutional link between the Churches. There is nothing, for example, comparable to the statute which defines the Union of Utrecht by which the Old Catholic Churches are linked. All the Anglican Churches are in communion with the see of Canterbury and on the rare occasions when a dispute has arisen as to whether a particular Church was part of the Anglican Communion it has been the Archbishop of Canterbury who gave the decision.

At the time of the Reformation the two provinces of Canterbury and York, largely under political pressure, rejected the authority of the pope. The six provinces in Ireland, politically linked with England, took similar action, though in that country adherence to the Roman Catholic Church remained much stronger and more widespread than in England and Wales. In both countries the rejection of papal authority was followed immediately by some changes in forms of worship, leading to the use of the vernacular in place of latin and to the eventual production of the Book of Common Prayer to supersede the Missal, Breviary, and Rituals. At the same time, however, great care was taken to maintain the episcopal succession and the rule of episcopal ordination. The rule of celibacy was, however, abolished and after many years of controversy the position of the two churches (English and Irish) in regard to some of the doctrinal disputes of the time was declared in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

In Scotland things developed somewhat differently because there Calvinism became dominant and a presbyterian church order was imposed. A hundred and fifty years of strife resulted in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland becoming the State religion as it still is. There were, however, many Scots who adhered to the way things had developed in England and succeeded in maintaining the episcopal succession and a form of worship similar to that of the Book of Common Prayer. They were for long a persecuted minority but were recognized by the Church of England as a sister church and eventually officially tolerated in Scotland.

By the end of the seventeenth century, therefore, the Anglican Communion consisted of the Church of England (including Wales), the Church of Ireland and the Scottish Episcopal Church. There had already begun, however, in the wake of English colonisation in North America the setting up of Anglican chaplaincies for the settlers and this example was followed in further colonisation in Australia, Ca-

nada, India, New Zealand and Southern Africa. The Bishop of London was held to have a kind of general responsibility towards the churches overseas, presumably because so much of the traffic went from or into the port of London.

After the American War of Independence Samuel Seabury of Connecticut in the USA was consecrated as the first bishop of the Anglican Communion outside the British Isles. It was not at that stage legally possible for bishops of the Church of England or the Church of Ireland to consecrate a bishop without royal permission so Seabury was consecrated by the Scottish bishops. Early in the nineteenth century the law was modified and bishops were consecrated for India, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The precise legal status of these bishops in relation to the Church of England was for some considerable time confused and it was this confusion which in part led to the first Lambeth Conference which met in 1867.

The first see to be created in Southern Africa was Capetown and the first bishop Robert Gray. Shortly after his appointment other sees were established, one of them being Natal, and so there came into being a kind of embryo province with Gray as metropolitan though not using the title archbishop. The first bishop of Natal was John William Colenso who published a substantial commentary on the Pentateuch and another on the Epistle to the Romans, both of which aroused great controversy. Gray summoned Colenso to appear before him on a charge of heresy and after trial declared him deposed. Colenso appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England which annulled the Cape Town proceedings. There resulted then a schism in South Africa.

These events strengthened moves which had been coming from other quarters in the Anglican Communion for the summoning of a council of bishops. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Longley, was sympathetic and agreed to issue invitations to a gathering in London to be held in 1867. There was opposition from some of the English bishops who feared that what was intended was some kind of synod which would claim to issue authoritative decisions, purporting to bind the various churches of the Communion in such matters as relations with Bishop Colenso and the acceptability of his views. The Archbishop of York and others refused to attend. In spite of the fact that Longley, in his letter of invitation, wrote: "Such a meeting would not be competent to make declarations or lay down definitions on points of doctrine."

Seventy-six bishops attended the Conference which was considered to have been so useful that there were demands for another to be held in due course and these were supported by some who had held aloof in 1867. A second Conference therefore met in 1868 and was attended by a hundred bishops. Further Conferences followed in 1888, 1897, 1908, 1920, 1930, 1948, 1958, 1968, and 1978, the last being attended by just over four hundred bishops. There will probably be more than that number next year.

It has been repeatedly emphasised that the Conference has no binding authority over any part of the Communion. Its resolutions carry only the moral authority of the conclusions of such a gathering of bishops and that of course depends on the extent to which the voting shows them to represent a consensus of opinion.

It is necessary to emphasize this limitation on the authority of the Conference but it must also be recognized that over the last hundred years some of its resolutions and reports have been influential in important ways in the life of the Communion, and as we are concerned to-day with the ecumenical questions before the coming Conference I pick out three of special relevance.

The first comes from the Conference of 1888 and concerns what was then referred to as “Home Reunion” but meant in fact union with the non-episcopal churches. Two years earlier the General Convention of the American Church had listed four things which it was the duty of the Church to preserve as inherent parts of the sacred deposit of Christian faith and order committed by Christ and his apostles to the Church and therefore to be regarded as essential to the restoration of unity. This statement was taken by the Lambeth Conference and expanded as follows in Resolution 11.

“That, in the opinion of this Conference, the following Articles supply a basis on which approach may be by God’s blessing made towards Home Reunion:

(A) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as ‘containing all things necessary to salvation’, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

(B) The Apostles’ Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

(C) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with unfailing use of Christ’s words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.

(D) The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its

administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.”

This statement which has come to be known as The Lambeth Quadrilateral has been taken as a basis in all subsequent discussions with non-episcopal churches. It is also a good summary of those things, the acceptance of which has hitherto held the Anglican Communion together.

The second thing that I note is the growth of concern about reunion with Rome as seen in the history of the Conferences. It was not until 1908 that the Conference was able to note any signs of encouragement in this field and to place on record its conviction that no projects of union can ever be regarded as satisfactory which deliberately leave out the Churches of the Latin Communion. It was 1930 before Rome appeared for the first time in the Resolutions, in an appreciative reference to the courage and charity of Cardinal Mercier in arranging the Malines Conversations, but coupled with regret that Roman Catholics were forbidden to take part in the World Conference on Faith and Order and similar gatherings. In 1958 the Encyclical Letter referred to the importance of praying and working for unity with Rome and Resolution 38 welcomed the Instruction to Local Ordinaries issued in 1949 giving permission for contacts, discussions and cooperation. The following Conference in 1968 was able to register with joy the great change that had taken place in relationships with Rome as a result of Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council, and approved the setting up of the first Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC).

The third thing of influence that I wish to note is the Lambeth Appeal of 1920. That Conference, meeting shortly after the end of the First World War faced a situation vastly different from that of twelve years earlier. Its Encyclical Letter begins with the theme of fellowship, world-wide, and gave this particular application in an Appeal to all Christian People which was a call to take seriously the vision and hope of a visible unity of the whole Church. In the course of the Appeal the conviction of the Conference of 1888 was reaffirmed that the visible unity of the Church would be found to involve the whole-hearted acceptance of the elements of the Lambeth Quadrilateral.

The fourth element in the Quadrilateral (the Historic Episcopate) was, however, restated as “A ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also the commission of Christ and the authority of the whole body”.

The Appeal went on to say: "May we not reasonably claim that the Episcopate is the one means of providing such a ministry?" Then, referring to the problem of how to bring this about, the Conference said:

"We believe that for all, the truly equitable approach to union is by the way of mutual deference to one another's consciences. To this end, we who send forth this appeal would say that if the authorities of other Communion should so desire, we are persuaded that, terms of union having been otherwise satisfactorily adjusted, Bishops and clergy of our Communion would willingly accept from these authorities a form of commission or recognition which would commend our ministry to their congregations, as having its place in the one family life... It is our hope that the same motive would lead ministers who have not received it to accept a commission through episcopal ordination, as obtaining for them a ministry throughout the whole fellowship."

I believe this to have been a most significant suggestion and offer which has not yet had the influence that its importance deserves.

In the context of our present gathering it is right that I should mention one other feature in the history of the Conferences before I come to the agenda for 1988. One of the Committees of the second Conference, in 1878, had called to its attention the question as to the position which the Anglican Church should assume towards the "Old Catholics" and 'towards other persons on the Continent of Europe who have renounced their allegiance to the Church of Rome, and who are desirous of forming some connection with the Anglican Church, either English or American'. The Committee welcomed the protest that was being made but was understandably cautious in its action at that stage. Ten years later the Encyclical Letter of the Conference was still deprecating any precipitancy of action which would transgress "primitive and established principles of jurisdiction" but entertained the hope that "the time may come when a more formal alliance with some at least of these bodies will be possible." The relevant committee of the Conference summarised the history and position of the Dutch, German and Swiss Old Catholics and expressed the willingness to receive their clergy and laity to Holy Communion. While greatly sympathetic to the Austrian Old Catholics the committee did not think the organization of the Church there sufficiently tried and complete to warrant a more formal relation at that time.

Good relations continued to develop slowly but in 1908 the Dutch Old Catholic bishops consecrated an Englishman, A.H. Mathew who

had deceived them into thinking that there was an appreciable body of English Roman Catholics who wished to leave Rome and form a separate church. This caused some disturbance to Anglican-Old Catholics relations but the eventual repudiation of Mathew by the Dutch bishops enabled the 1920 Conference to repeat the desire to maintain and strengthen friendly relations. Ten years later the 1930 Conference authorised the setting up of a Doctrinal Commission to discuss points of agreement and difference, and also stated that there is nothing in the Declaration of Utrecht inconsistent with the teaching of the Church of England. The making of the Bonn Agreement and the establishment of Intercommunion between the Churches of the Union of Utrecht and the Church of England followed within the space of three years. When the Lambeth Conference was next able to meet, which was not until 1948, it welcomed the Agreement with great pleasure, commended it as a model in the field of reunion, and received Archbishop Rinkel as a delegate to the Conference from the Old Catholic Churches.

I turn now more specifically to the Lambeth Conference of next year, due to meet in Canterbury from July 16 to August 7. For the last two years at least a thorough preparation has been taking place. Each bishop has been asked to discuss with his diocese the agenda of the Conference as fully as is practicable. This agenda has been divided into four main sections called Mission and Ministry, Dogmatic and Pastoral Concerns, Ecumenical Relations, Christianity and the Social Order. Each bishop has been allocated to one of the sections and I, myself, am in that dealing with Ecumenical Relations. Certain subjects will necessarily be discussed in more than one section. The questions of the Ordination of women and of Authority are examples.

In discussing Ecumenical Relations the Conference will follow the example of some of its predecessors in not limiting this subject to purely ecclesiastical matters. The 1968 Conference, for example, said that the unity of the Church is desirable "in order that the Church may be a better tool than at present in the service of God's purpose for the world". There exists already a unity that we have with one another as human beings and the Ecumenical Movement must be concerned with the whole inhabited world, not just with the institutional unity of the churches. We recognize also that Christian unity is a divinely given reality, rooted in the nature of God the Holy Trinity, and that the Church is called upon ever more faithfully to realize, embody and express that divinely given reality of unity. We do not work for human

convenience or satisfaction but under obedience to discern and to carry out the will of God. The Conference will have to keep these truths prominent in what it has to say, and not least in dealing with the disillusion with what some Christians see as the failure of the ecumenical movement over the last thirty years.

We shall have some solid work to do in drawing together the reactions of the various parts of our Communion to the international dialogues which have been taking place between Anglicans and a number of other churches as well as to the document Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry prepared by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, which I shall refer to for convenience as The Lima Text.

The various provinces of the Anglican Communion have already sent in their responses directly to Geneva on this. So far as can be seen at the moment these responses are generally favourable and show that the Lima Text is widely regarded as a document of great importance and giving real encouragement to the churches which are embarked on the path to unity. It is a particular encouragement that the Roman Catholic Church has recently given its support to the document officially.

The reservations felt by some sections of the Anglican Communion about the texts on Eucharist and Ministry are similar to those felt by the same sections on the corresponding ARCIC Final Report and I will deal with them there. For the text on Baptism there is general approval. The practical problems noted in it are also problems within the Anglican Communion, the most important of them being, perhaps, the interposition of Confirmation between Baptism and Communion and the explanation of that. In some parts of the Anglican Communion there is quite strong pressure for the admission of children to Holy Communion before Confirmation and this is one of the subjects that the Conference will have to consider. Some of our provinces have noted the absence of any explicit ecclesiology from the Lima Text. It has been argued that different baptismal practices in fact represent different ecclesiologies.

The Lima Text is particularly important in the setting of the Lambeth Conference because it will remind us that there is only one ecumenical movement and that the bi-lateral dialogues whose reports we shall be considering must always be seen as complementary parts of a great whole.

I take next the Final Report of the first Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). This consists of three main parts

– an agreed text on the Eucharist, an agreed text on the Ministry and Ordination, and two texts on Authority which do not register the same extent of agreement. The first two texts, Eucharist and Ministry have been given special importance in a letter addressed by Cardinal Willebrands to the co-chairmen of the second, that is the current, ARCIC. In it he suggests that if the Anglican Communion as a whole is able to acknowledge what is contained in those texts as consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicanism this will provide a solid basis for the reconsideration by the Roman Catholic Church of its attitude to Anglican Orders which were declared by Pope Leo XIII to be null and void. Whatever other reservations there may be about the authority of the Lambeth Conference it seems to be accepted that on this matter it will be for the Conference to give the answer on behalf of the Anglican Communion. These texts have been discussed throughout the Communion and so far responses have been sent in by twenty-four of the provinces. There are some reservations about points in the Eucharist statement from Ireland, that part of South America which is called The Southern Cone, parts of Australia and parts of East Africa. Those are the more conservatively evangelical sections of the communion and their reservations relate to the parts of the Agreed Statement which deal with the Presence of Christ in the Eucharistic elements and with the use of the concept of anamnesis to express the eucharistic sacrifice. These are, as I said, similar to the reservations from the same quarters about the Lima Text. It is clear, however, that the two Statements on Eucharist and Ministry have received the support of much the greater part of the Communion and that it is likely that they will be approved by the large majority of the bishops at the Conference.

The attitude to the Authority Statements is somewhat more varied. While many parts of the Communion accept the need for a Universal Primate in a united church, and that the natural choice for that post is the Bishop of Rome, there is much disquiet about the way that office is exercised in the Church of Rome to-day, and also much insistence that a proper place must be found for the expression of the views of the laity. All parts of the Anglican Communion have synods in which there is a house or chamber of laity and regard this as an important element in the life of the Church.

The second ARCIC has already issued another Agreed Statement called Salvation and the Church. This has been prepared in response to a call from evangelicals that there be explicit consideration of the doctrine of Justification by Faith. The Statement has on the whole

been well received but it remains to be seen how far it will have quietened evangelical anxieties on this subject.

There are, of course, other issues which the second ARCIC has been asked to consider. One I have already mentioned, the question of the validity of Anglican Orders. Another is a problem present in most countries where the Roman Catholic church and other churches exist side by side, namely mixed marriages. A third is the whole range of sexual ethics on which there are both agreements and differences. The one which is likely to loom largest in the immediate future is the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate.

Both Pope Paul VI and the present Pope have written to successive Archbishops of Canterbury to express their concern about this matter and it has been explicitly referred to ARCIC II. ARCIC I felt able to deal the questions of ministry and ordination without entering on this subject but later comment has shown that it cannot be set aside so easily. The present position in the Anglican Communion is that four provinces have authorised the ordination of women to the priesthood and also one diocese, that of Hong Kong. Other provinces have either not decided or have rejected the proposal. Most if not all of those which do not have women priests also do not allow those ordained in other provinces to minister as priests. To that extent the issue of the ordination of women has already impaired the unity of the Anglican Communion and made the relationship between the provinces less than that of full communion with complete interchangeability of ministers. It has also led in North America to the suspension of communion between the Polish National Catholic Church, which is part of the Union of Utrecht, and the two Anglican Provinces there.

Those two Provinces, the United States and Canada, complain very bitterly about the refusal of the Church of England to allow their women priests to function as priests when in England. They are also both anxious to have women bishops. That question was discussed at the 1978 Conference and a Resolution was passed which in effect asked all Provinces to be very cautious about pursuing that subject. Since then it has become a much more urgent question and it was feared at one stage that a woman bishop might have been chosen and consecrated before the Lambeth Conference. If that had happened and she was present at the Conference it is certain that a number of other bishops would have refused to attend. It is difficult to see how the consecration of a woman bishop, if it takes place, can do other than divide the Anglican Communion to an extent that has not oc-

curred before. She would not be recognized as a bishop by many other bishops, so that the episcopate would cease to be a sign and instrument of unity. Many bishops, clergy and lay people would feel unable to recognize all ordinations, both of men and women, performed by her. It is plain, therefore, that such a development would have a profound effect on the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue as well as on other dialogues.

Turning now to the Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue one is dealing with something that has a much longer history than that of ARCIC. Expressions of hope of closer relations with the Orthodox go back as far as the 1888 Conference and in the half century between 1920 and 1970 there were conferences between representatives of the Church of England and various of the Orthodox Churches which held out real promise of agreement. Some of the Orthodox Churches gave a degree of recognition of the validity of Anglican Orders. All this was shattered in 1978 by the ordination of women in certain provinces and the Orthodox Chairman of the Joint Doctrinal Discussions argued that they could now only continue as an academic and informative exercise and no longer as an ecclesial endeavour aiming at the union of the two churches. Things did not develop quite in that way. The Dialogue has continued but with great difficulty. The failure of most of the Western Churches to remove the Filioque clause from the Creed is still a stumbling block and likely to continue such so long as the principle stated by the Church of Scotland is accepted, that "whatever the Western Churches decide to do they should do it together." It is not easy to see how this particular Dialogue will be affected by the Lambeth Conference but the omens are not good.

The Conference will have to consider three Reports concerning the Lutheran Churches. One is from the International Dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation, another is from a European Dialogue and a third from a Dialogue in the United States of America. In that country a form of what is called "Interim Eucharistic sharing" has been agreed. This goes further than intercommunion and involves ministers of both churches standing together at the altar during the Eucharistic Prayer. The documents published suggest that there is some difference of understanding between the two sides as to what is happening. For the Lutherans it is definitely not a form of concelebration while for some Anglicans it is.

The other Dialogues show a good deal of doctrinal agreement between Lutherans and Anglicans but difficulties exist over the ministry.

The fact that many Lutheran Churches have ministers who are called bishops does not mean that there is agreement over what a bishop is, and indeed the Lutheran insistence that there is basically only one order of ministry is difficult to reconcile with historic Anglicanism. It is possible that some of these issues may be clarified in the discussions now taking place between representatives of the Church of England and of the Protestant Churches of East and West Germany, a Report on which is expected to be available to the Conference.

One of the most important Reports which will be before the Conference is that called *God's Reign and our Unity*, which comes from the Anglican-Reformed Dialogue. Although it makes no recommendations it is theologically of a very high standard and contains a number of passages which will be relevant in other contexts. It does also suggest that if the ordination of women is a stumbling block for the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox the refusal to ordain women is also a stumbling block for the Reformed. One of the questions raised by this is the nature of ministerial priesthood and whether attitudes to the ordination of women are affected by differences between Catholic and Protestant views of the ministry.

Two other areas of Church relations must be mentioned as coming before the Conference. One is of what are called the Oriental Orthodox Churches, or sometimes the pre-Chalcedonian Churches. The Anglican Communion has long had contacts with most of these and there are good relations which have not been affected by the issue of the ordination of women to the same degree as those with the Orthodox.

The other area is of what are called comprehensively New Churches. This term includes Pentecostals, House Churches and Black-led Churches, with all of which we are now familiar in England. It also includes Churches in Africa and South America which have been formed usually round some particular individual or group. Difficulties arise here because some of these bodies, notably the House Churches, do not perceive the need for a comprehensive church or any visible structure of unity.

This survey of the various Dialogues will, I hope, have given some idea of the range of matters with which the Ecumenical Relations section of the Lambeth Conference will be dealing. I will conclude with some comments on a few issues which arise out of these Dialogues.

The first is that of the Recognition of Ministries. This arises whenever any two churches try to come together. I have mentioned it al-

ready in relation to the Anglican–Roman Catholic Dialogue. The problem is a long-standing one in relations between the Anglican Churches and the non-episcopal Churches. As I have already pointed out it led the 1888 Conference to adopt the Lambeth Quadrilateral and the 1920 Conference to restate the Quadrilateral and make a remarkable offer and appeal. Since then two different patterns have emerged one in the South India Scheme of union and the other in the North India Scheme. In the one all existing ministers were accepted as equally presbyters in the united Church which was from that moment on to be episcopally ordered. They were accepted without any form of ordination. This caused great difficulty to the rest of the Anglican Communion which was unable to recognize as priests those of the presbyters of the United Church who had not been episcopally ordained. In the North Indian pattern the inaugural services contained a rite which the Anglican Communion was able to recognize as conferring episcopal ordination on those who had not previously received it.

In England both the Anglican-Methodist Unity Scheme and the Covenant failed on this issue and so have other schemes overseas. My own conviction is that the proposals of the 1920 Conference and what was done in North India offer the only satisfactory answer.

A second issue is that of the meaning of “Full Communion”. This term as used in former years was held to imply not only the exchange in principle of communicants but also the interchangeability of ministers and in that sense it applied to the relationship between the different parts of the Anglican Communion as well as to the relations entered into with the Churches of the Union of Utrecht, the Philippine Independent Church and some others. The question has been raised several times before and is now stated as an issue for the Conference that to be in communion with another Church should involve much more spiritual sharing than just interchangeability of ministers and sacraments. What more should be involved? Presumably there should be interchange of ideas, mutual consultation about problems which arise in the life of the Church to-day, about theological and moral questions. It is necessary then to ask what instruments are needed to enable this to take place.

This leads to a third issue, that of Authority in the Church. As I have shown, the question of Authority has dogged the Lambeth Conference from the start. There is no recognized organ of authority whose decisions are accepted by every part of the Anglican Communion. Further, as the Anglican Communion has never claimed to be

more than a part of the Holy Catholic Church the question arises of what decisions can properly be taken by only a part. This is seen most acutely over the ordination of women where the two largest parts of the Church, Orthodoxy and Rome, which together form about two third of the whole, do not accept the ordination of women as a legitimate development. The question of Authority came very much to the fore in the 1978 Lambeth Conference and special study of it was urged. It cannot be said that we have made much progress in that field. The problem remains as acute for 1988 as for 1978 and 1867.

Lastly there is the question of whether unity can be achieved by stages. Given the complexities and the differences that exist in the area of church relationships it would seem inevitable that changes can only come step by step. A meeting of Anglican ecumenical officers in 1981 delineated four possible stages as:

Fellowship in Faith and Mission

Limited Eucharistic sharing

Full Communion

Organic Union

Each of these suggested stages will require careful examination by the Conference but of course Anglicans cannot decide by themselves. There seems to be little difficulty about Fellowship in Faith and Mission as a first stage now, but it remains to be seen whether Orthodoxy and Rome can envisage anything short of Organic Union.

Much of what I have been saying will, I know, seem very tiresome and tedious to some people. Many, both clerical and lay, are impatient of the theological dialogues and want to get on with being Christians together, but there are real difficulties to be faced, and our experience in England is that those who do come close together in what we call Local Ecumenical Projects sooner or later raise questions which can only be settled by theological agreement between the Churches. It is difficult for there to be a real sharing in the Eucharist if there are big differences about the nature of ordination and the status of the celebrant. That is to give just one example. I would say from my experience over a good many years that those who come together in the Dialogues are as acutely sensitive to the pain of separation as those who are working together at the local level. We have always in mind the high priestly prayer of our Lord recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St John's Gospel, but we are aware that that prayer is not simply that his disciples may be one. He prays that they be one in holiness and in truth, and that involves faith, order and morals.