

ANGLICAN RESPONSE TO WINDSOR AND CANTERBURYINTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper being to facilitate the revision or clarification of the Windsor and Canterbury Statements, little account has been taken of purely laudatory comment. Nor has attention been paid to the criticism of those whose motives appear to be solely polemical and who have vested interest in controversy, for example the Protestant Truth Society. Also ignored are the sincere but misguided correspondents who begin: "Sir, I accuse you of damnable heresy...." (sic).

Serious criticism has been made of the method of the Commission. It has been said that evaluation of the two (earlier) Statements is impossible without reference to the fundamental question of authority in matters of faith. More precisely the sense of the phrase "consonant with biblical teaching and with the tradition(s) of our common inheritance" has been questioned (without recognition of the allusion to the Common Declaration of 1966). The publication of Authority in the Church should go some way to answering such criticism.

It was remarked in the Convocation of Canterbury of May 1973 that the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine had received less detailed attention in the Anglican Communion than in the Roman Catholic Church. This might also be said of the Statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry (but not perhaps of Venice!) This may be due to the fact that the churches of the Anglican Communion are more familiar with the quasi-parliamentary procedure of receiving reports from officially-constituted commissions (and sometimes ignoring their conclusions). It is also true that doctrine is usually taken more seriously by Roman Catholics and Anglicans (in England at least) are hardly used to scrutinizing doctrinal statements in their Synods. (Indeed, the whole question is raised as to how formal ecumenical agreements may be reached.) While there has been recent ferment within the Roman Catholic Church on the subjects of eucharist and ministry, modern Anglican doctrinal theologians have generally pursued other investigations. So it is that, with notable exceptions, Anglican reaction has usually been less precise than Roman Catholic. Evangelicals have been the only body of Anglicans to criticise the two Statements in a serious way, others have been content with the documents and have been happy simply to acclaim or expound them.

Anglican response to Windsor and Canterbury may be divided into three categories: private comment from individual theologians or groups; reaction from official bodies (National ARCs have been included in this category, though not solely Anglican in composition); and Synodal commendation or endorsement. The first and second categories of criticism are summarized without special distinction in the main body of this paper, so special note of the general reaction of some official bodies will be made here. The New Zealand General Synod Commission on the Agreed Statement on

Eucharistic Doctrine produced a carefully-reasoned criticism, as did also the Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales for both Statements. In Australia a full report on Canterbury was drawn up by representative bishops and consultants of both churches. In Great Britain a British Council of Churches Consultation reported on the Canterbury Statement and its comment has been included, though not strictly Anglican. Mention should also be made of the judicious theological comment from the Standing Committee of the Church of Ireland, adopted by General Synod; this is essentially commendation rather than criticism, but a serious question is asked concerning the relation between theological opinion and official teaching in the Roman Catholic Church. Informal action of Synods has been briefly tabulated at the end of the paper; it is worthy of note that Canada and South Africa have officially recognized "their own faith" in the two ARCIC documents.

The first section of the paper gives an impressionistic sketch of the general reaction to the two Agreed Statements. It makes no claim to be exhaustive and particularly where the press and media are concerned necessarily concentrates on England. It is simply a context for the second and third sections which deal with serious detailed criticism of Windsor and Canterbury. A fourth section on Synods concludes.

I

GENERAL REACTION

The publication of the Windsor Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine on the last day of 1971 was given pride of place on the front page of the (London) "Times". Nevertheless the story relied more on quotation from the 39 Articles and press releases than the Agreed Statement itself. The "Daily Telegraph" and the "Guardian" were considerably more positive. The "Church Times" devoted a considerable amount of type space to the publication of the Statement. Its editorial insisted that the Statement was of significance for the Christian-in-the-street and stressed the importance of the Commission's agreement on the Real Presence. It also saw intercommunion as closer providing action was taken upon the agreement. The Anglican Co-Chairman also contributed a theological article on the Agreed Statement. However, the following week an acrimonious letter from Fr. J. Flanagan began a sad correspondence on whether or not the Statement reflected authentic Catholic teaching. The "Church of England Newspaper" was more cautious than the "Church Times" and criticised the Commission for issuing its Statement in a vacuum. It gave prominence to a call for clarification from the Church of England Evangelical Council but also included two discussions with Julian Charley. There was also a broadcast about the Statement on the BBC Radio 3 and mention of the publication on TV News. The "Church of Ireland Gazette" gave good coverage to the Statement but there was considerable scepticism, not to say disbelief, in the correspondence columns. In the United States the "Living Church" and "Episcopalian" welcomed the Statement and there was little critical comment. The same was true of the Anglican press in Canada where the Statement was seen as giving new hope.

of Canterbury

The Archbishop/expressed the hope that the Windsor Statement would be widely read and believed that it would "be valued, not only as an ecumenical essay, but also as a simple guide for practical teaching on the meaning of the Sacrament". However, the Archbishop of Sydney spoke of the ambiguities found to result from the 'soft-peddalling' of traditional dogma in the quest for a mutually acceptable formula. The Agreed Statement was welcomed by the Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain on the Orthodox side (and became a study text for the Anglican/Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions). Commentaries have been produced by Julian Charley, Donald Allchin (devotional), and Roger Beckwith (critical), and a study pamphlet by English ARC and US ARC. In 1975 SPCK published A Critique of Eucharistic Agreement (edited by Sir John Lawrence) as a sequel to Ecumenical Documents on the Eucharist. There has been some ecumenical comment in journals, including warm praise from the Methodist Geoffrey Wainwright in the "Clergy Review". The Windsor and Canterbury Statements have been appended to the English version of The Common Catechism.

The Canterbury Statement on Ministry and Ordination was published on 13th December 1973. The "Times" editorial was

headed "Circumventing the Bull" and indeed the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote in the "Guardian": "Pope Leo XIII will seem less right or wrong than irrelevant". Nevertheless the "Times" also spoke of "some sense of anti-climax" and the "Church Times" believed the nettle of Anglican Orders to have been ungrasped. The "Church of England Newspaper" was more positive and gave coverage to a warm welcome for the Statement from Geoffrey Lampe. Evangelicals at the Islington Conference also welcomed the Statement. On the other hand F.W. Dillistone criticised the Commission for its concern with ministry to the Church rather than to the world. The "Church of Ireland Gazette" welcomed the document because of its relevance to the mission of the Church. In other parts of the Anglican Communion there was also a good reception. In the U.S.A. the Presiding Bishop and Presiding Bishop-elect described the Agreement as "a second major milestone in the long journey towards reconciliation" and there was excellent T.V. reportage and discussion.

In February 1974 the Editor of "Theology", Gordon Dunstan, raised a serious question as to the nature of the consensus claimed. Was this a common faith, two faiths set down together, or a form of words which could have different meanings? He illustrated this by reference to the commentaries of Bishop Clark and Julian Charley on the phrase "another realm of the gifts of the Spirit". The church press immediately took up the question and it was also pursued in a more learned way in the "Ampleforth Journal" and "Faith and Unity".

The British Council of Churches showed great interest in the Agreed Statement and set up a Consultation accordingly, and several member churches also made individual responses. In general there was a criticism of the ambiguity of the Commission's descriptive method (was it also prescriptive?), but a warm welcome for the stress on episcopate rather than the episcopate. On the contrary Geoffrey Wainwright, in the "Clergy Review", thought the Statement implied that the three-fold ministry was of the esse of the Church. There was a letter of welcome to the Statement in the "Times" from the General Secretaries of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches in England and from the Orthodox viewpoint there was also a welcome from John Meyendorf in the U.S.A. Perhaps the most moving response to the work of the Commission was the standing ovation given to Bishop Clark when he spoke to the General Synod of the Church of England on the occasion of the commendation of the two Statements in November 1975.

DETAILED CRITICISM - WINDSOR

Paragraph 1:

Objection to the assertion that 'eucharist' is the most universally accepted term.

R.Beckwith - Christ's Presence and Sacrifice, Church Book Room Press.

Request for grounding of diversity of terms in New Testament.

C. Sykes - Commentary on an Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine. Catholic League.

No definition of "tradition of our common inheritance".

R.Beckwith - op.cit;
Bishop of Truro - A Critique of Eucharistic Agreement, SPCK
C. Sykes - op. cit.

Paragraph 3:

Request for definition of 'Mystery'.

C.Sykes - op. cit.

Request for clarification of "identity"

New Zealand General Synod Commission on the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine.

Paragraph 4:

Did the final sentence imply that separated tables are in fact one Lord's table?

New Zealand General Synod Commission

Request for para. 11 to follow 4.

C. Sykes - op. cit.

Paragraph 5:

Objection to the suggestion in the opening sentence that the Resurrection was a past event of history.

D.Gregg - Anamnesis in the Eucharist, Grove Books.

Paragraph 5 (Contd.)

Question as to whether "Proclaimed and made effective in the life of the Church" means 'made present'.

C.Hickling - Theology, May 1977, SPCK.

Question as to the meaning of "the making effective in the present of an event in the past".

New Zealand General Synod Commission

and Church of England Evangelical Council

Inexact exegesis in interpretation of the Passover at the time of Christ.

C.Hickling op.cit. and also in

Liturgical Review IV.2.1974

Criticism of a reliance on the theology of Odo Casel and Gregory Dix.

R.Beckwith, op.cit.

Criticism of a reliance on a disputed theology of anamnesis -

Bishop of Truro - op.cit.

Criticism of the translation of anamnesis by memorial.

R.Beckwith - op. cit.

and D.Gregg - op. cit.

Criticism of the identification of eucharist and anamnesis and the plural in "effectual proclamation of God's mighty acts".

D.Gregg - op. cit.

Criticism of a participation in Christ's benefits in "the eucharistic prayer" without communion.

R.Beckwith - op. cit.

Request for a more comprehensive treatment of the notion of eucharistic sacrifice by an elaboration of the concluding sentence.

New Zealand General Synod Commission
and USA ARC

Request for elucidation of the relation of the Eucharist to Christ's sacrifice.

Second National Evangelical Anglican Congress, Nottingham 1977

Request for an emphasis on the relation between the Resurrection and the eucharistic sacrifice, the heavenly sacrifice, and on the positive share of the Christian in offering the sacrifice.

Scottish ARC
(see also Ecclesial Nature of the Eucharist)

An inadequate treatment of the heavenly intercession of the Risen and Ascended Christ, by which his self-offering finds continuing and efficacious expression.

Welsh ARC

Request for an expansion of the paragraph due to unclarity as to whom the memorial is being made.

Bishop of Truro - op. cit.

and Church of England Evangelical Council.

Criticism of the absence of any statement that the memorial is affected in a sacramental way.

Bishop of Truro - op. cit.

Paragraph 6

Possible confusion in the use of sign and effective sign in the whole document illustrated in "effectively signified".

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales

"In this mystery" needs further explanation. Some members question the meaning of "really", "become", and "mysterious and radical change."

New Zealand General Synod Commission

Serious ambiguity in "become" and in the whole footnote on 'transubstantiation'.

Church of England Evangelical Council

Request for further 'unpacking' of "become" and "radical change" (footnote)

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales

Assertion that the first sentence and footnote teach transubstantiation or consubstantiation.

R.Beckwith, op. cit.

Dissatisfaction with paragraph 6 and its footnote, as excluding the view that 'the real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not.... to be sought for in the sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the sacrament' (Hooker)

An open letter on relations between the Anglican Churches and the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Old Catholic and Ancient Oriental Churches: to the Archbishop and Diocesan Bishops of the Anglican Communion, 1977.

Request for greater clarity in the opening sentence to avoid an unduly materialistic understanding of the real presence.

US ARC

Unspecified ambiguities in discussion of the eucharistic presence.

Scottish ARC

Query as to whether the static language of 'becoming' is meaningful. The suggestion that this is not entirely consonant with the dynamic tone of the remainder of the Agreed Statement.

R.P.C.Hanson - A Critique of Eucharistic Agreement, SPCK.

Paragraph 9

First sentence questions reservation and its associated cultus.

C. Sykes, op.cit.

What is the meaning of "mere signs" and the repeated use of "really".

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales.

Question as to the omission of reference to cup in opening sentence. Some members dissatisfied with "become really present and are really given".

New Zealand General Synod Commission

Paragraph 10

Reversion to the idea of a moment of consecration? Some members dissatisfied with "become the body and blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit."

New Zealand General Synod Commission

Paragraph 11

The treatment of eschatology felt to be inadequate.

Welsh ARC

The paragraph felt better attached to paragraph 4.

C. Sykes, op. cit.

Omissions:

A treatment of the administration of both consecrated elements.

New Zealand General Synod Commission

A treatment of the questions of reservation and veneration of the sacrament.

R.Beckwith - op. cit.

C. Sykes - op cit.

and Church of England Evangelical Council

A treatment of the eucharist as the 'meal of the community'.

Papua New Guinea ARC

III

DETAILED CRITICISM - CANTERBURY

Paragraph 1: Request for explanation of "the traditions of our common inheritance".

Church of England Evangelical Council

Question as to whether "common inheritance" means present common tradition or tradition stemming from the common past but interpreted differently today.

Report to ARCIC by Representative Bishops and Consultants of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches in Australia.

Paragraph 3: Criticism of the use of koinonia as community, rather than participation.

A. Louth - Commentary on an Agreed Statement on Ministry and Ordination, Catholic League.

Request for clarification of "the Church".

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia

Question as to whether "all Christian ministry" refers to the total ministry of the Church and doubt that its purpose is always to build up the community.

J. Munro - Critique of Ministry and Ordination Statement for Missionary and Ecumenical Affairs Commission of General Synod of Church of England in Australia.

Paragraph 4 Question as to whether the first sentence is a statement of fact or significance. Criticism of the limitation of apostolicity only to the original apostolate and the whole Church.

A. Louth - op. cit.

Suggestion that "All Christian apostolate..." should open the paragraph.

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia.

Paragraph 5 Criticism of confusion of the ministries of the Holy Spirit and the ministry as Christ's gift to the Church (in Ephesians 4.11-13 ref.)

A. Louth - op. cit.

Paragraph 5
(continued)

Criticism of "some form of recognition and authorization is already required" as too universal.

British Council of Churches Consultation

Request for a clearer distinction between what the Church's ministry as a whole is to the community, and how in the economy of its development various forms arose.

J. Munro - op. cit.

Paragraph 6

Suggestion of 'ministerial function' for "ministerial office". Criticism of the normative nature of the analogy drawn between the emergence of the New Testament Canon and the threefold ministry. Criticism of the over simplification of the last sentence in relation to the earlier part of the paragraph, the primitive church, and the experience of non-episcopal churches.

B.C.C. Consultation

Request for a re-examination of "essential" and "normative" in the light of "considerable diversity".

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia

Note of a distinction in U.S. terminology between 'Ministry' and 'ministry'.

US ARC

Paragraph 7

Criticism that the minister's role of co-ordination, promotion, and discernment is stated in isolation from the share of the laity in the corporate responsibility of the whole Church.

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales

Suggestion of "The ordained ministry serves..." rather than "The goal of the ordained ministry..."

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia

Paragraph 9

Criticism of an over reliance on the concept of episcope.

G.Lampe - Church of England Newspaper,
December 14th 1973

Request for explanation of "absolution" and a more positive treatment of deacons.

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia.

Criticism of prescription of episcope and description of the Episcopate, presbyterate and deaconate.

A Louth - op. cit.

Paragraph 9
(continued)

Note that collegiality can include those not ordained.

B.C.C. Consultation

Paragraph 10

Note of tautology in "a true faith calls for beliefs that are correct".

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales

Criticism of the excellent cosmic reference in "the whole of creation" being defined as "the service of humanity".

A Louth - op. cit.

Paragraph 11

Request for the role of all Christians in the forgiveness of sins to be noted.

B.C.C. Consultation

Paragraph 12

Request for clarification as to whether "right" meant 'fitting' or 'proper'.

Paragraph 13

Criticism of the use of "memorial" without adequate explanation. Assertion that the minister stands only in a relation to what Christ did at the Supper.

Church of England Evangelical Council

Difficulty found over "to stand in a sacramental relation to what Christ himself did..." and "Christ, who through the minister presides at the Lord's Supper." Priest held to be inappropriate.

B.C.C. Consultation

Suggestion of "not a mere extension of the common Christian priesthood." Elucidation required of "belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit".

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales

"Extension" found to be difficult and "another realm" ambiguous.

B.C.C. Consultation and Church of England Evangelical Council.

Note that the minister is a priest only by analogy, but that this does not impugn the reality of such a priesthood. Suggestion of 'Although they share in the common priesthood, nevertheless their ministry is not that of the common priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit'.

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia

Paragraph 13
(continued)

Question as to whether "common Christian priesthood" meant hierateuma of Exodus 19. Request for clarification and for a more adequate expression of the vital relationship that exists between the ordained ministry and the common Christian priesthood.

US ARC

Question as to the nature of the claimed consensus on the basis of the divergent interpretation given to the penultimate sentence by Bishop Clark and Julian Charley.

G. Dunstan - Theology, Feb. 1974, SPCK.

and

P. Toon - Church of England Newspaper, February 15th 1974.

Request for clarification of the penultimate sentence.

Open Letter on Relations between the Anglican Churches and the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Old Catholic and Ancient Oriental Churches.

Call for clarification of the important issues in this paragraph, especially the relation of 'order' to 'function'.

Doctrinal Commission of the Church in Wales.

Paragraph 15

Some expression of uneasiness about "In this sacramental act" and the analogy drawn between "the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" and "ordination is unrepeatable".

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia

Paragraph 16

The sentence "Moreover,....felt to go beyond historical evidence"

Bishops and Consultants ARC Australia

Request for a clearer affirmation that the bishop and presbyter's commission is not co-extensive. Question as to where "Here are comprised the essential features" refers to (paras. 14-16 or 16 alone)

US ARC

Paragraph 16
(continued)

Criticism of an institutional emphasis in this paragraph . Apostolic succession is not automatically ensured by historical continuity.

Church of England Evangelical Council

Paragraph 17

Question as to what is meant by "essential matters".

Church of England Evangelical Council

and

US ARC

Omissions:

A treatment of apostolic succession in the context of the Communion of Saints, a bishop being ordained into the apostolate of the total Church.

A. Louth - op.cit.

A treatment of other successions of an apostolic nature retained in non-episcopal traditions.

IV

SYNODICAL RESPONSE

- Canada: Welcomed and accepted as agreeable to Anglican teaching. (W. and C.).
- England: Welcomed and commended for study. (W., C. and V.).
- Ireland: Welcomed and commented upon in detail to ACC. (W.).
- New Zealand: Welcomed and commented upon in detail to ACC, and commended for study (W.)
- South Africa: Welcomed and endorsed as adequately expressing the Christian faith (W. and C.)
- South Pacific: Welcomed and accepted as putting the problem of Anglican Orders into a new context (W. and C.)
- U.S.A.: Welcomed and commended for study (W. and C.). Bishops recognised their own faith and faith of the Church (W. and C.).
- Wales: Welcomed, commented upon in detail to ACC and commended for study. (W. and C.).

Note

New Zealand is expected to welcome C. for study this year.

South Africa has also passed a resolution seeing the Roman See as the centre of unity in a united church and calling for a consequent increase in the exercise of collegiality.

Scotland is expected to endorse W. and C. as agreeable to Anglican doctrine this year.

CHRISTOPHER HILL