

From: The Rt.Rev. Alan C. Clark
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9th-12th February 1976 - Poringland Meeting

As projected, I convened an 'unofficial', but representative, meeting of some members of the Commission here at Poringland, in order to further the work of the Oxford Plenary Commission Meeting in August/September 1976. Those who attended were:-

Bishop Knapp-Fisher	Fr. Tillard
Fr. Duprey	Fr. Hill
Mr. Charley	Bishop Clark

1. We took as provisionally accepted the ST. KATHARINE'S DOCUMENT and the UNITY SUB-COMMISSION DOCUMENT.
2. Our whole intent was to produce together a further six paragraphs which, taking into account all the points raised in the TRUTH SUB-COMMISSION DOCUMENT (ARCIC 144/1/2) would nevertheless continue in the same style and method as these and bring us to the point where we would need to face directly the issues raised by *i n f a l l i b i l i t y*, particularly with its reference to a personal charism attributed to the Pope.

This would mean that at the Standing Committee Meeting at Hengrave, which begins on Monday, 21st June, work could immediately start on producing a full position paper for Venice.

3. We did not attempt to correct or re-formulate either the ST. KATHARINE'S DOCUMENT or the UNITY SUB-COMMISSION DOCUMENT, but pursued the general lines of argument suggested by the Co-Chairmen in their letter of July 1975 which accompanied the ST. KATHARINE'S DOCUMENT:-

- I The Lordship of Christ and the fundamental authority of the Word of God (paragraphs 1-2)
- II The Authority of the Christian Community (paragraph 3)
- III Authority in the Christian Community
 - (a) the authority of holiness and of special gifts (paragraph 4)
 - (b) the authority of the Ordained Ministry (paragraph 5)
 - (c) The Sensus Fidelium (paragraph 6)
 - (d) the inadequacy of all human authority (paragraph 7)
- IV Authority in the koinonia of local churches
 - (a) koinonia among local churches (paragraph 8)

- (b) expression of the koinonia in councils and in episcopal collegiality (paragraph 9)
- (c) emergence of primacy
- (d) responsibility of the primate (paragraph 11)
- (e) historical pre-eminence of the see of Rome (paragraph 12).

V (Title = Authority in matters of faith in the koinonia of local churches)

The centrality of koinonia in truth (paragraph 13)

- (a) Tradition: the expression of the truth in the memory of the Church (paragraph 14)
- (b) Tradition: the prophetic interpretation of unchanging truth in contemporary terms (paragraph 15)
- (c) The consequential commitment of the Church to decisions of permanent value.

The Church's responsibility as the guardian of the truth (paragraph 16)

The particular responsibility in history of the Bishop of Rome (paragraph 17)

The safeguards of truth (paragraph 18)

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We agreed that we must show in the text that we move from the historical to the theological level in our consideration of primacy and infallibility. This is not immediately apparent as we moved from paragraph 17 to paragraph 18.

We anticipate the possibility of including extensive footnotes about such matters as Sensus Fidelium, indefectibility, 'irreformable dogmas' and 'fundamentals' (cf. paragraph 10: Truth Sub-Commission).

The Poringlanders hope that other members of the Commission will find in both their argumentation and their presentation a coherent development of the work of ARCIC so far on the question of "Authority". Any comments will be most gratefully received and aid the Standing Committee in its proximate meeting. As always, any small group of the Commission owes an immense debt to the work that has gone before.

+ Alan C. Clark