

SUMMARY OF CRITICISMS OF THE
WINDSOR AND CANTERBURY STATEMENTS

Introduction

These pages are offered as a possible useful instrument of work for Chichester.

Christopher Hill and I agreed on a number of points concerning the method to be followed in presenting our papers:

- 1) A brief general introduction indicating
 - a) the amount and kinds of material used;
 - b) some general criticisms spread over the documents rather than assygnable to particular paragraphs.
- 2) A re-presentation of criticisms (many of them already familiar to the commission) in an order following the statements themselves paragraph by paragraph.
- 3) To be as brief as reasonably possible. (This might involve reference to documents like ARCIC 114 already in members' hands).
- 4) Since the Chichester task is, where possible, to meet difficulties, we should not, in principle, retail commendations; though any full report on reactions to our work for consumption outside, especially by the authorities, should obviously embrace favourable comment.

I. The material.

Most of the responses to the statements came within a year or so of their publication and tended to dry up after that.

The most substantial recent addition to Windsor literature that I am aware of is a Gregorian University doctoral thesis of over 500 pages, copiously documented, by Fr. Ravi Santosh, S. J.

On Canterbury only one or two further comments have come in since the report was presented at Grottaferrata ARCIC 114, and none of these would suggest modifying the general observations made in the introduction to that report. The most important new matter is the "Observations" of the Roman Congregation for Doctrine, a copy of which is furnished together with the present report.

General remarks

(I concern myself of course only with Catholic reactions).

1) Language. The explanation we have generally given, that we have avoided the emotive language of past polemics and tried to find a mutually acceptable language, has been more sympathetically received by theologians than by pastors. The explanation is not widely seen as covering everything. Sometimes it is felt that changes are made or traditional language avoided in an exaggerated desire to placate minority susceptibilities. Compromise can also produce rather sybilline passages, examples of which will be quoted in their place.

2) (Connected with 1). There has of course been a good deal said and written (a) about divergent interpretations of the statements (b) about how wide an assent they will command among Anglicans. Here two remarks made at Grottaferrata (see minutes pp. 22-3) have found an echo among the critics: inter-confessional documents are a new literary genre and need a new hermeneutic (Dr. Gassman).

An American Catholic comment on Canterbury "was of significance not so much because of its argument as its reflection of an attitude of confessional rivalry... mutual distrust" (Dean of C. C.)

One would hope for some helpful Anglican comment on the questions about the likely range of assent among Anglicans

3) Three widely different critics of Canterbury (1) adopted the method of making a list of essentials against which to measure the statement. The list differed notably in length and content: the verdicts, whether these essentials are there or not, also differed.

Particular Comments

I. Windsor.

§ 1. Sent. 3: "The Eucharist..." Some few would question this.

Many would wish for a note making clear that there is no intention to prejudice the use of such long accepted terms as "Mass".

Sent. 5: "Our intention..." Some questions have been raised about the definition and circumscription of "the traditions of our common inheritance". Is a clarifying note possible?

§ 3. Sent. 3: "The identity..." This is more than once cited as an example of a needlessly involved and obscure sentence.

§ 5. Most of the difficulties about the statement focus here. There is widespread feeling that, after the quite properly clear and categorical language of the first eight lines, the rest of the paragraph and the note have a rather battle-scarred appearance.

A note offered to sooth some fairly exalted anxieties read: "The whole of § 5 is written to explain how the mass is sacramentally the sacrifice of Christ and hence to give reason why the mass can be called a sacrifice".

This is seen as difficult to reconcile with the oft quoted comment of Mr. Charley, that the first eight lines of § 5 constitute a principle to which the statement conforms by declining to call the eucharist a sacrifice. (2)

Of this comment, Clement Tierney of Manly, Australia, in one of the most sympathetic and discerning essays on the statement, says: "No matter how strongly RC theologians may agree with the statement, one feels that the great majority would disagree (with this comment)..."

It conveys the impression that the very words 'eucharistic sacrifice' tend to obscure a fundamental fact of Christian faith. Roman Catholic theologians... could hardly support such a claim". (3)

It has been suggested that a note on the lines of Bishop Butlers article in the Tablet of Jan 8/72 might help here. (4) (San. 289) though as it stands this would throw into relief afresh the question why, after the firmness of the first eight lines, we have to be content with merely 'implying' a doctrine.

One criticism goes further and says that a passage in the Times of Dec. 31/71 (5) is clearer than § 5.

A common criticism of the last sentence is that there is not enough on the action of the Church in union with Christ, the 'upward movement', though the sentence is recognised as a key one. (6)

A general impression is that 11.11-18 are trying to do too much in too short a space. Hence clarification would be welcome.

Comments which have tried to soothe opposite susceptibilities have not always been clarifying.

Several people have noted the important connection between Windsor (especially § 5) and Canterbury §13, and some even see the latter as improving on the former. We need to comment here.

§ 6.

There is general confidence that we have here "a clear statement of the real presence of Christ" (7)

Hardly anyone resents transubstantiation being relegated to a footnote, but some felt the note could have been better expressed.

A semi-official comment in Rome was "the reference to 'contemporary theology' might obscure the fact that the Church has never intended to canonise any philosophical interpretation of the mirabilis conversio".

§ 7.

From the same source came the comment that the last sentence of this might be usefully expanded. (By means of a note?)

§ 8-10

A note might be useful insisting that these three paras should be taken together, and that the intention of the commission was to exclude receptionism (8) and at the same time to show that communion is essential to the integrity of the eucharistic sacrifice.

§ 10 The question is asked, 'why not some mention of the relation between the conversio and the words of institution and the epiklesis'? Many feel that Canterbury §13, 3 is helpful here and should be pointed to.

"While adoration is not excluded by the statement, some explicit recognition of it as doctrinally sound would be welcome"

This is a moderate form of a comment several times made.

II. Canterbury

The following pages should be used in conjunction with ARCIC 114 from which they are largely though not exclusively quarried.

§ 1, Sent. 1: See the comment of "Observations", § 4.

§ 3: Last sentence alone attracts critical attention. "Instrument" is thought "too weak". "Free instrument" is proposed. Both these critics also think "proclaimed and realised" would be better.

§ 4 "No clear distinction, or relationship, is expressed between the apostolic succession of the whole Church and that of the hierarchical ministry". (Belgian Ep. Conf. referring also to § 16).

"The Holy Trinity is the origin of the apostolate. The Church, and specifically the apostolic ministry, is the terminus ad quem of the mission of the Holy Spirit"(cf. John XX, 21-2). Mention of this would clarify the connection with the succeeding paragraph. (cf. Eph. IV, 11-13).

"The mission received through the apostles should be specified, to proclaim salvation and realise it through the sacraments".

"It is right to note the diversity of the use of 'apostle' in the primitive church. Identifying of the Twelve with the apostles, as in Acts and Luke, is only gradual. The assertion of the first half of § 4 holds only for the Twelve, not for Paul's idea of an apostle: he does not have the notion of reference to the historic Christ. But he has the notion of reconciliation, so prominent in the Canterbury statement (cf. II Cor., 18-25).

'Mission' should lay stress first on that of the risen Christ even though this is rooted in the intra-Trinitarian mission. This primitive, unclear notion of apostle does not limit the later New Testament conviction that the Church is founded on the apostles - the principle of apostolicity. Consider e. g. the attribution of all N. T. writings to an apostle (cf. Eph. 2, 20) The increasing conviction of the apostolicity of the Church should be stressed as the product of self-reflection in the Church - as in § 5 ministry is seen as crystallising. It is good that the two churches agree in recognising this development, fundamental for later times, for the principle of tradition" (Schnackenburg (ARCIC 114) pp. 16-17).

- §§ 4-6 does not everywhere reflect the only possible biblical interpretation. It is astonishing to find no patristic argumentation - the ministry question cannot be settled from Scripture alone. The principle proclaimed at the end of § 6 should be better reflected in the text. (Medina)
- § 5 The remarks quoted in ARCIC 114 from Vagaggini and Schnackenburg 16-17 and the CDF document § 6 should be looked at and compared.
- sent. 6: Suggestion of addition (note?) about imposition of hands (see ARCIC 114)
- § 6 sent. 1: Vagaggini: This seems to mean assertion of divine origin.
last two sentences: Schnackenburg and the Belgian E. C. both say "we should agree that the process is irreversible".
Thyssen would add 'led by the Holy Spirit'.
- § 7 The Belgian E. C. thinks the rather 'sociological' flavour of the argument of 11 11-14 might be less if it was linked more clearly with § 6. The South African E. C. thinks there is too much about coordination and not enough about representing the headship of Christ". (Venice?)
- § 8 A lack of the Trinitarian element is noted in this and the two next paras.
- § 9 11. 5-8 imply a too rigid derivation of presbyter from bishop
- § 9 and 11 both speak a little indistinctly of the bishop. (Congar)
Evasive about the inability of the layman to preside at the Eucharist (?)
1. 3 "involves" is weak. No hint of disciplinary power attached to responsibility.
The relation of presbyter and deacon to bishop and the power of the presbyter to preside and absolve should be more clearly set down as a realisation of legitimate process within the Church - this is surely a shared Anglican/RC conviction. (Schnackenburg).
- § 10. 1.5 to "recorded in the Holy Scripture" should be added "and lived by the Church" (Vagaggini).
Here and § 11 the words "Bible" and 'Word of God' are apparently interchangeable while Vat. II (cf. Dei Verbum 9 and 10) join Scripture and Tradition in the ministry of the word as foundation of the magisterium of ordained ministry. (Lanne-Marot).
- § 11 last sent.: why no reference for this authority? - e. g. John XX, 21-3
- § 12 sent. 3: attracts much attention:
Vagaggini comments: This idea, now a common point of departure in ecumenical dialogue, seems theologically sound, provided 'presidency' is understood in the traditional way, so that the anaphora and the capital words of institution (or epiklesis for orientals) are pronounced only by him and any concelebrants.
Thyssen asks: does not what follows in § 13 justify something less "external" than 'hence it is right'?
- C. D. F. Observations: "not merely 'right' but necessary".

Sentence 4: Vagaggini would prefer "at least in those communities which had an individual bishop he because he exercised this oversight..."

Lanne-Marot: Didaché 14, 15 and I Clem. 44 could be cited.

§ 13

The ambiguity of the word hieréis should be denounced!

(Le Maître). The paragraph is generally praised.

Medina says: it allows of a priest being thought of as a kind of sacrament of Christ - very Catholic! From this might develop a better explanation of the minister as representative of the community not by delegation but by ministerial participation in the role of Christ (cf. also Schnackenburg ad loc.) Bavard sees 'sacerdotal language, showing a sense of the Eucharist', and a comment from Papua/NG, comparing the § with Windsor, says it reflects further growth of consensus on Eucharistic doctrine.

C. D. F. "Observations" para 7 last sentence and 8, should be looked at carefully, also Schnackenburg in ARCIC 114, p. 18.

The South African Ep. Conf. comments: 'there is need for more study and forthrightness about the Church's role in the abiding offering of Christ'.

§ 14

Medina finds here a description of the rite of ordination but it is factual, not normative, and description of the form is very vague.

C. D. F. "Observations" para 10 applies here and in § 15.

§ 15

Vagaggini and Medina find the first word, "In" unsatisfactory. Does it imply that ordination is merely the 'external' occasion of what follows?

Vagaggini also suggests (ARCIC 114) an improvement of the last 2 sentences.

"Observations" and the Belgian E. C. both see 'ambiguity' in the note (4).

§ 16 Sent. 2:

is found unclear by several critics. Does it mean that the commissions of bishop and presbyter are co-extensive?

Vagaggini remarks here that Hippolytus, "Traditio..." 8 is difficult to interpret.

On the second part, beginning at "Moreover..." Vagaggini says: "If this means that plurality of consecrators alone assures apostolic succession, I would be doubtful. This validity supposes substantial observance of the rite and an intention - which in its term supposes perseverance in the Catholic faith in the sacrament of order at least in the community and confession concerned. In other words, the account is acceptable only if it presupposes that the ordination is valid".

The Belgian E. C. reiterates its comment on § 4: there is no clear distinction or relationship between the apostolic succession of the whole Church and that of the hierarchical ministry.

"Observations": The conclusion expressed in the last sentence is "too optimistic" (see its para 11).

§ 17

The comment of Fr. Pasty, S. J. and of Lanne-Marot on the first three sentences "The practical question of succession/orders is now urgent" is echoed by increasing numbers.

Notes

- (1) Congar, Medina, Hamilton. cf. ARCIC 114, p. 6, p. 9, p. 12
- (2) cf. J. Charley "The Anglican/RC Agreement on the Eucharist" 1971, pp. 16-17
- (3) Dr. Clement Tierney of St. Patrick's, Manly, Sydney in an unpublished (?) position paper on the Agreed Statement. Dr. Tierney does quote the further comment of Mr. Charley: "It is not that sacrificial language is wholly out of place in eucharistic theology, but that an unguarded use of it has tended to suggest a denial of the finality of the atonement". This, he says, "would be more acceptable but would still give rise to mixed feelings". Fr. Santosh thinks the passage from Charley, hardly justifies leaving the word 'sacrifice' out of Windsor § 5, since after the first sentences of the paragraph no use of the word here could be described as 'unguarded'! cf. Convergence on the Eucharist (Rome 1977) p. 288
- (4) "The Statement does not make any reference to the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Yes the word is not found in the statement. This is avoided because of the prejudices of the Evangelical Anglicanism. But the doctrine is implied in the section on Eucharist as "Anamnesis" making effective in the present, of the totality of God's reconciling action in Christ. This reconciling action of God is summed up in the cross, and from the New Testament times the event of the cross has been regarded as a sacrifice. To make that sacrifice effective in an anamnesis (memorial) is to represent it, and in the Eucharist "the members of Christ united with God and with one another enter into the movement of his self-offering. It should be borne in mind that the eucharistic anamnesis takes place within a context (anaphora) canon of the Mass, or Great Prayer, which is addressed not to the congregation but to the Father."
- (5) "Christ established the memorial to make present and real his historic sacrifice each time the Eucharist is celebrated. Through the prayer of the Eucharist, the worshipper becomes actively involved in Christ's sacrifice; He is offered with Christ and the peace and reconciliation won by Christ becomes his..."
- (6) cf. the interesting comment of R. Moloney, S.J. in 'Doctrine and Life' Febr. 1972, p. 101
"It must be admitted that the whole document is reticent on the question of sacrifice in the Eucharist itself, even more so than the comparable Lutheran/Roman Catholic agreement in America. In the light of this I think special importance attaches to the phrase, 'we enter into the movement of Christ's self-offering', for here the balance is somewhat restored.
Perhaps some understanding of the reasons behind this reticence will be found in recalling the problems that surrounded the recision of the Anglican Communion Service some years ago. At that time

evangelical Anglicans found much difficulty with the notion of the Eucharist as oblation, particularly within the context of the eucharistic prayer. At one stage the proposed text for the anamnesis read, 'We offer unto thee this bread and cup', but this phrase failed to find sufficient support and did not reach the final text. Inevitably this kind of difficulty must have been in the minds of the members of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission. The problem here is ultimately one in the theology of grace. To what extent do we actively co-operate in our own redemption? Certainly we are not active apart from Christ, but as making one mysterious body with him. Yet this concept of grace and of the Church is essential Roman Catholic doctrine, and the notion of sacrifice is the way it comes to expression in the context of the Eucharist. Given the reticence in the agreed statement concerning eucharistic sacrifice, this phrase about entering into the movement of Christ's self-offering is a key one for doing justice to this aspect of the Roman Catholic view."

(7) Santosh, op. cit. p. 295

(8) A comment of Mr. Charley's might be seen as quieting misgivings about interpretation here:

"The only other thing I want to mention is the realist language in the Eucharist document. The New Testament uses realist language: "This is my body; this is my blood"; such language was never feared by Reformed theologians like Calvin or Richard Baxter. Sometimes we reach a point when we wish that the New Testament had not really put like that, but it did! You are dealing with the mystery of how in some sense we are feeding on the body and blood of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. At heart this is a mystery, but the old divide of whether Christ is really present in the consecrated elements or in the believer's heart can be overcome if you recognize "two moments" in the Eucharist (logical and temporal). One is scene-setting, which is the Prayer of Thanksgiving and the other is reception. As long as there is dynamic movement linking those two things together, I believe you can overcome the difficulties that have bedevilled this debate." The Oxford Conference 1975 (London: Church Book Room Press) pp. 47-8.