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ARCIC-II 3/1 (83)

The Archbishop of Canterbury's
Assistant for Ecumenical Affairs

CJH/AFT

Canon
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June 1983

TO ALL MEMBERS OF ARCIC-II

As you know, on June 9th and 10th the Co-Chairmen and Co-Secretaries of ARCIC-II met to discuss preliminary plans for the Commission's work, particularly for its first meeting at Venice from the evening of Tuesday, August 30th until after breakfast on Tuesday, September 6th. These discussions led to some amplification and also some modification of the outline programme (with accompanying notes) drafted at a meeting in Rome last November and already circulated to you.

Clearly the Commission's work must get off to a good start at Venice. The "mandate" given to the new Commission by para. 3 of the Canterbury Common Declaration of May 29th 1982 includes, for all its brevity, a considerable amount of very varied material. Our meeting at Venice will need to survey this and to determine the priorities of its work.

Clearly the plans proposed in this letter will need to be adjusted as the meeting proceeds. In outlining these plans mention will be made of a number of short papers that individual members will be asked to prepare and which will be available at the meeting itself (since shortage of time makes it impossible to circulate such papers in advance, as would be our normal practice).

On the evening of Tuesday, August 30th we hope to have a short business meeting to agree a daily timetable, etc. and to discuss the Commission's pattern of worship during its meetings. (The practice of ARCIC-I was that Anglican and Roman Catholic Eucharists were celebrated on alternate days, with the whole Commission attending). The Secretaries could then give a brief report on reactions received so far to ARCIC-I's Final Report, since we must bear in mind that ARCIC-II's work has to be done "in the light of our respective judgements on the Final Report".

Wednesday, August 31st would start with an hour of recollection and prayer led by the Co-Chairmen as a dedication of our new work to God. Then members would be asked briefly to introduce themselves; time will not permit complete autobiographies, but you are asked to say something of your background and ecumenical experience,

particularly in the field of Anglican/Roman Catholic relations. The remainder of the day would be devoted to an assessment of the overall state of relationships between our two Communions. To this end four members are being invited to speak on salient characteristics and problems of Anglican/Roman Catholic relations in their own areas (North America, East Africa, Australasia, Britain); in preparing these they will be asked to consult other members living in their regions. This is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of world-wide Anglican/Roman Catholic relations, but as a selection of case histories to stimulate discussion. Some members come from other parts of the world; they too will be asked to speak briefly on relations in their own areas before the Commission begins further discussion of the emerging picture which is really the background against which all its work must be done.

Thursday, September 1st will be given to consideration of the first element in our mandate, "outstanding differences". Anglicans have asked for the inclusion of justification in the agenda; many Roman Catholics have spoken of the need for more work on ecclesiology; all seem agreed on the need for discussion of moral issues. Our preliminary discussions have suggested an integral link between these themes. We are therefore inviting two short papers aimed at outlining the questions rather than proposing the solutions - why justification and ecclesiology are seen as important for our discussions.

Friday, September 2nd: we hope for similar discussion of the second element in our mandate: (a) what is involved (in the light of ARCIC-I and of our Churches' responses as they develop) in the mutual recognition/reconciliation of ministries and Churches; (b) how the Commission can approach the study of obstacles to recognition (as called for by the Common Declaration). This day's work will likewise commence with short papers from two members. The experience of our preliminary meeting shows that the ecclesiological questions are likely to recur in this discussion also. For this reason we do not at this stage envisage explicit presentation of the material involved in the third element of our mandate ("to recommend practical steps...."); related questions should arise naturally as discussions proceed.

Saturday, September 3rd. At this stage it will probably be useful to break up into smaller groups to review discussions so far and to make more precise proposals for the Commission's future work and its methods of working. Then, and on the remaining days, the Commission can agree on precise plans, determine its priorities more sharply, and make all the necessary arrangements for papers and other work necessary in preparation for the topic(s) settled on for the Commission's second meeting.

It should be added that a free half-day will be built into the programme and an expedition arranged to enable members to see something of Venice. (Indeed, if any members desire to stay on for a day or two at the Casa Cardinal Piazza, this can probably be arranged; but, should you desire to do so, please inform Mgr. Stewart as soon as possible so that this can be arranged.)

The Co-Secretaries have scrutinized the bibliography of ARCIC-I; a small number of papers prepared at an early stage in that Commission's life treat of themes relevant to our work. Copies will be available at Venice.

Our Venice address will be:

Casa Cardinal Piazza,
Madonna dell' Orto, 3539/A,
30121 VENICE,
Italy.

Telephone: (041) 38368

If you can let us know in advance your flight number and arrival time, it may be possible to have you met at the airport. However, from the airport there is a bus service to the central air terminal in Piazzale Roma (also close to the railway station). From Piazzale Roma a number 5 vaporetto (water bus) will take you to the stop Madonna dell' Orto, which is three or four minutes' walk from the house, by walking to, but not crossing, the small canal called Rio d. Madonna dell' Orto and turning left past the Church till you reach Casa Cardinal Piazza. I enclose a map.

Apologies for the length of this letter - a substantially identical one has been sent by Mgr. Stewart to Roman Catholic members - but it seems the best way of introducing some of our hopes and expectations. As I mentioned at the beginning, the plans for the Venice meeting are subject to revision as the Commission decides, but we hope you will find these proposals useful as you try to envisage what lies ahead.



(Canon) CHRISTOPHER HILL

