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DRAFT REPLY TO BISHOP TORRELLA

Thank you very much for your letter of 20th May about the Versailles Consultation. As you will know, I was able to discuss the matter with Fr. Pierre Duprey on 23rd, and the Revd. Christopher Hill was present too.

I think we are agreed that in our two Churches there is not always an identical view of what would be an acceptable course, and therefore we have to find a course that combines accuracy and integrity and is not unnecessarily liable to misinterpretation. An alteration or addition to the signatures on a Joint Report subsequent to the Consultation would not be acceptable from an Anglican point of view. The Statement would cease to be a joint one and grave doubt would be cast as to the value of the Report in Anglican eyes.

I think we are also agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Consultation were exactly those in the "Note" which was compiled by the participants in the Informal Talks in 1975. This was agreed in my correspondence with Fr. Duprey and Mgr. Purdy of March, June and July 1977.

The presentation of the Report on our side is by me to the Churches of the Anglican Communion, which in this case means to the Primates. It will, as you say, be discussed by the bishops at the Lambeth Conference, but the Report is not to the Conference directly.

In the helpful and careful talk we had with Fr. Duprey a course of action was suggested which may enable both of us, while recognising the other's problems, to accomplish what we feel is necessary. With support from subsequent consultation, I believe this would be acceptable to us, and I hope you will consider it achieves what the Secretariat feels is necessary. In brief, the course would be that the Anglican publication of the document for the member Churches would consist of a factual Introduction to the Report, and then the text. This would be sent to Anglican Primates with a covering letter which would refer to the understanding of the Roman Catholic participants of the relationship of Paragraph 6

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to Paragraphs 2 and 3; and would say that Mgr. Purdy would be able to speak about the Report at the Lambeth Conference. I enclose copies of the Introduction and the Covering Letter that we have in mind to use. "It is our sincere hope that this procedure is acceptable to you. The Covering Letter could of course be made use of in any appropriate way by the Secretariat.

I think I should add a note about your third page: "We the undersigned....etc"

Sentence 1. This, if I understand aright, makes the point you feel must be stated and made clear. Our covering letter is intended to do this with an Anglican endorsement that Paragraph 6 should be read in the light of Paragraphs 2 and 3.

Sentence 2. "Transitory", I think, does not correspond with any suggestion in the Statement. More important is "not destined to change". This may not carry the exact nuance of Fr. Congar's original French phrase. It seems open to considerable misunderstanding, with far-reaching implications (for Vatican decisions and statements) far beyond this Consultation in relation to the Roman Catholic Church itself.

Sentence 3. The question of the irrelevancy of the possibility of change to the Terms of Reference seems to me only a reasonable inference, with room for difference of opinion. For the Roman Catholic members (or some of them) to opt subsequently for this inference without consultation with the Anglican members would again discredit the value of the Joint Report in Anglican eyes.