

THE ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC AGREED STATEMENTS AND THEIR RECEPTION

GEORGE H. TAVARD

Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio

IT IS generally agreed among theologians today that the meaning and the binding value of conciliar decisions cannot be properly assessed without paying attention to their reception in the community of the Church, at the several levels of government, of theology, and of the *sensus fidelium*. Although I would not equate the agreed statements of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission with doctrinal decisions by the great councils, the principle of reception ought to apply to such statements in order to answer the question: Do they truly represent the mind of the two churches concerned? As expressed by the two cochairmen of the Commission in their introduction to the Windsor statement on Eucharistic doctrine (1971), the intent is "to reach a consensus at the level of faith . . ." Clearly, the faith in question is not only that of the members of the Commission; it should be that of the Catholic Church and of the Anglican Communion. The present status of the statements is formulated in the preface to the Canterbury statement on the doctrine of the ministry (1973): "We have submitted the statement . . . to our authorities and, with their authorization, we publish it as a document of the Commission with a view to its discussion." Such a discussion in the two churches and, more particularly, in their theological communities should produce a body of opinion concerning the doctrinal value of these statements and the ecumenical possibilities which may be opened for future relations between Roman Catholics and Anglicans. From these two points of view reception becomes important; but I am not aware of any attempt yet, outside of the Commission itself, to evaluate the ways in which the texts issued so far by the Commission have been received in the churches.

Besides the Windsor and Canterbury statements already mentioned, the Venice statement on authority in the Church was published in 1976. One should also take account of the Malta report (1968), although this was composed by another commission and was never officially released to the public.

Let us briefly review the work of the two Commissions created successively by Paul VI and the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey. The first Commission, called Preparatory, met in January and August-September 1967 (at Gazzada, Italy, and Huntercombe Manor, England) and in January 1968 (in Malta). At this last meeting it wrote a

report to the Pope and the Archbishop, usually called the Malta report.¹ Although never officially released to the public, it was eventually printed. Its purpose had been to explore the problem of relationships between the two churches and to make appropriate recommendations. In keeping with the recommendations of the Malta report, another Commission was created. Originally called Permanent, it eventually preferred the adjective International for the obvious reason that the estrangement between Rome and Canterbury should not be permanent. The purpose of this new Commission, as understood by itself, was "to make a common study"² of matters relating to church and ministry. Its membership was, and remains, notably different from that of the Preparatory Commission: of the Catholic members, only two, among whom the present writer, were reconducted from the Preparatory to the International Commission. The three statements issued so far were officially published by the Commission, authorization being given in each case by Paul VI and Archbishop Ramsey. Far from being automatic authorizations, these were given after careful reading of the text by the Pope and the Archbishop, and presumably after consultation. On the part of Pope Paul, authorization for such a publication of a text for theological discussion was a remarkable departure from canonical precedent. This serves to indicate the importance and uniqueness of the work of ARCIC as conceived by Pope Paul.

THE MALTA REPORT

Some clarification of the Malta perspective may be needed at this point. For the opinion has recently been expressed, by a Catholic member of the Preparatory Commission, that the Holy See and ARCIC³ have deliberately departed from the programme advocated at Malta. Adrian Hastings notes that the Malta report had recommended the establishment of a "Permanent Joint Commission," destined to supervise relationships between the two churches at the several levels of pastoral care.⁴ The ultimate purpose being to arrive at "unity by stages" between Anglicans and Catholics, such a commission would plan and help implement the stages in question. One of these stages would be, at some time,

¹ See Alan Clark and Colin Davey, eds., *Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue: The Work of the Preparatory Commission* (London, 1974). Where I give no reference, my source is the unprinted documentation distributed to the members of ARCIC.

² *The Three Agreed Statements* (London, 1977) 3. The texts of the statements have been published in Washington by the USCC Publications Office, both separately and in the occasional series *Documents on Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations* (ARC-DOC).

³ I will speak indifferently of the International Commission and of ARCIC (Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission). I will use the terms "Catholic" and "Roman Catholic" as identical for the purpose of this article.

⁴ "Malta Ten Years Later," *One in Christ* 14 (1978) 20-29.

“some measure of sacramental intercommunion apart from full visible unity.” And since Leo XIII’s judgment on Anglican orders in *Apostolicae curae* (1896) stands in the way of such intercommunion, possible conditions for repeal of Leo XIII’s negative judgment would have to be studied. Accordingly, the Malta report recommended the formation of two sub-commissions, concerned, one with “the question of intercommunion and related matters of church and ministry,” the other with “the question of authority, its nature, exercise and implications.” This analysis of the intent of the Malta report is undoubtedly correct.

Now it is known, because it was made public (though unofficially), that Cardinal Bea, expressing the opinion of Pope Paul, found fault with the Malta report. In a letter of June 10, 1968, to Archbishop Ramsey, he stated that “in some of its phrases, the formulation seems not quite clear and exact,”⁵ though the Cardinal approved explicitly the substance of the report and many of its suggestions. Which formulations were thus being questioned is not known. Yet I would think that it was precisely the notion of sacramental intercommunion which provoked misgivings: the Cardinal’s letter does not use this term but expresses the fear that the press could misunderstand the nature of the Malta report, should it be made public. The previous history of the Church and ecclesiological reflection have known no communion, full communion, and, in the case of Orthodox-Catholic relations, degrees of communion. But intercommunion, despite the widespread use of the term today, is a concept which has never been theologically investigated, far less accepted, in the Catholic tradition. In these conditions the fact that the International Commission has not been divided into two subcommissions, has not examined at length and in public the question of Anglican orders (about which it has, in fact, talked a good deal at its meetings), and has studied authority after the Eucharist and the ministry rather than, as envisioned at Malta, concurrently, need not indicate that the Malta perspective has been abandoned and its programme discarded. This is Hastings’ judgment. Yet another reading seems to be warranted: the International Commission did not want to tie such an important prospect as reconciliation between Rome and Canterbury to such an unsatisfactory notion as that of intercommunion. It has sensed that another approach to the question of Anglican orders was desirable and possible than repealing *Apostolicae curae*. I am aware, of course, that the advisability of such a repeal has been ably defended, not least by the historian of *Apostolicae curae*, John J. Hughes.⁶ But if the option that was opened by the Malta report has

⁵ Text in Clark-Davey 116-19.

⁶ John J. Hughes, *Absolutely Null and Utterly Void: An Account of the 1896 Papal Condemnation of Anglican Orders* (Washington, 1968); *Stewards of the Lord: A Reappraisal of Anglican Orders* (London, 1970).

not been followed by the International Commission, this means that it can still serve as a backup system, should the way of the International Commission turn out to lead nowhere.

The way of the International Commission has been to proceed from the Eucharist, to ministry and ordination, and then to authority in the Church, leaving other, perhaps more practical, questions of pastoral cooperation and sacramental sharing to a later time or to another, future Commission. This option can itself be debated. Yet, to my knowledge, the only person who has found fault with it in public is Adrian Hastings: "The impression given is that ten years later these questions [i.e., intercommunion and Anglican orders] have never seriously been followed up; the option instead has been towards a generality which has increasingly led to unreality."⁷ Hastings does recognize the intrinsic value of the Windsor and Canterbury statements, although he finds them too vague, focused on general sacramentology rather than on specific Catholic-Anglican issues. But he regrets that they have been followed by the Venice statement on authority and not by recommendations on intercommunion and on steps to be taken in order to overcome *Apostolicae curae*. In actual fact, however, the option of the International Commission has not been for generality over against the particularity of Anglican-Roman Catholic problems. It has been for the way indicated by Vatican II's Decree *Sacrosanctum concilium*, no. 2: it is chiefly by the Eucharist that one recognizes a community to be the Church. Whence the sequence adopted by the Commission: from the Eucharist (Windsor) to ministerial structure at its several levels, priests and bishops first (Canterbury), then the bishop of Rome in the perspective of a universal primacy (Venice). This also corresponds to the Constitution *Lumen gentium*, which goes from the mystery of the Church to the people of God and its ministerial structures. It is in harmony with the Decree *Unitatis redintegratio*, no. 19, where the distinction between *ecclesiae* and *communitates ecclesiales* is inspired by the centrality of the Eucharist in the *ecclesiae* and its less central place in the *communitates ecclesiales*. It is, finally, in keeping with the notion of a "hierarchy of the truths of Catholic doctrine" (*Unitatis redintegratio*, no. 11), some being closer than others to the mystery of Christ, with the implication that the Eucharist is more central than the forms of ministry and the details of canonical relationships between churches and communities.

WINDSOR AND CANTERBURY: OFFICIAL ANGLICAN REACTIONS

The Windsor and Canterbury statements were in general well received (in the ordinary sense of the term) by Anglican readers. Reaction to the Windsor statement was at first rather slow in coming, presumably because

⁷ Hastings, "Malta" 26.

few persons outside of the Commission itself, of the Secretariat for Christian Unity in Rome, and of the entourage of the Archbishop of Canterbury knew what could be expected in the future. As an isolated document, the Windsor statement may be interesting; but only as part of a broader programme does it hold promise for the future. As the International Commission did not explain how far it intended to follow the generous perspective of the Malta report, hesitancy about the scope of its first statement is understandable. Most of the more significant reactions waited until 1973 to appear, when the Canterbury statement was about to be released.

Given the contemporary information process through the mass media, the first contact of most people with the ARCIC statements has been through the press. In England, the *Times*, the *Guardian*, and the *Daily Telegraph* ran early editorials and articles about the Windsor statement, the *Times* giving its article a negative tone by alluding to the Thirty-nine Articles more than to the statement itself. Church journals, like the *Church Times*, the *Church of England Newspaper*, the *Church of Ireland Gazette*, in the U.S.A. the *Living Church* and the *Episcopalian* hailed the Windsor statement, though with cautions on the part of the (Evangelical) *Church of England Newspaper*.

The Anglican Communion being an association of churches in many parts of the world, these churches, besides being informed by the press, also received the ARCIC statements as communicated to each of them by the Anglican Consultative Council. In a report at its meeting in Dublin, July 1973, the Consultative Council expressed its wish generally "to record its satisfaction with the work of ARCIC." Its Resolution 5 welcomed the Windsor statement, recommending it "to the consideration of all member churches" and asking "those churches which have not yet reported their response to the Secretary General so to do." Similar resolutions were adopted later in regard to the Canterbury and Venice statements. Thus the various parts of the Anglican Communion were asked for a response.

In different ways and with some nuances the following churches received the Windsor statement officially (in the technical sense of "receiving," that is, expressing some degree of recognition that the contents of the text constitute a proper expression of doctrine): the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church of the U.S.A. (the statement is welcomed and commended "for study and action at the next General Convention"); the Provincial Standing Committee of the Church of the Province of South Africa (text commended "for study" with a request that "a resolution supporting the statement be placed on the agenda of the Provincial Synod" of November 1973); the General Synod of the Church of the Province of New Zealand (text commended "as a guide to

the meaning of the Eucharist" and referred to a study commission); the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland (text commended for its approach and theological method).

Similar comments and commendations were made after publication of the Canterbury statement in 1973. The text is "welcomed and commended for study" (England, November 1974; Wales, April 1975; U.S.A., October 1974); "welcomed and accepted as agreeable to Anglican teaching" (Canada, June 1975); "welcomed . . . [as representing] a fair and adequate statement of the Anglican position" (Scotland); "welcomed" (Ireland); "welcomed and accepted as putting the problem of Anglican orders into a new context" (South Pacific, 1974); "welcomed and endorsed as adequately expressing the Christian faith" (South Africa, April 1975); "welcomed . . . [as] on the whole congruent with Anglican teaching" (New Zealand). Several synods sent detailed comments and remarks, which at times betrayed a degree of uneasiness about the exact meaning of a rather important passage: ". . . their [i.e., the ordained ministers'] ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit" (no. 13). As we will see, this formulation did occasion a great deal of discussion.

Some of these churches, taking one more step, have officially endorsed the doctrine of the Windsor or/and Canterbury statements, some of them with detailed references to specific doctrinal points: the General Synods of South Africa (Windsor, 1973), of Canada (Windsor and Canterbury, 1975), of Ireland (Windsor, 1976), of New Zealand (Windsor, Canterbury, and Venice, 1977), of Scotland (Windsor, Canterbury, and Venice, 1977), of Wales (Windsor, Canterbury, and Venice, 1978). Reactions from the Church of Australia have been more restrained, perhaps in part on account of the well-known "evangelical" position of the Archbishop of Sydney. Yet even there the reaction was generally positive. The Archbishop of Sydney himself, while warning in November 1972 against "the ambiguities that are bound to result when the parties on each side are inclined to soft-pedal traditional dogma in their quest for a mutually acceptable formula," yet admitted that the Windsor statement "affords great encouragement to biblically-minded Roman Catholics and Protestants alike." Furthermore, two joint Catholic-Anglican meetings were organized in Australia. Chaired by the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, James Freeman, and the Anglican Primate, the Archbishop of Melbourne, Frank Woods, these meetings examined the two statements systematically and reported their favorable findings, with some queries and critiques of details, to the International Commission.

Besides these separate responses of Anglican churches, one should note resolution 33 of the Lambeth Conference, 1978: "The Conference . . . recognizes in the three Agreed Statements of this commission a solid

achievement, one in which we can recognize the faith of our Church, and hopes that it will provide a basis for sacramental sharing between our two Communion if and when the finished statements are approved by the respective authorities of our Communion”⁸

OFFICIAL CATHOLIC REACTIONS

In comparison, official reactions in the Catholic Church have been extremely slow. This is, of course, partly due to the differing structures of the two churches. The English parliamentary model, which Anglican bishops have naturally in mind even outside the United Kingdom, has helped the Anglican Communion to “receive” doctrinal or other statements, to commit them to committees for study and observations, to endorse them in part or in whole, and finally to make their own recommendations, if suitable, about improving the texts. By contrast, Roman centralization over the centuries has given Catholic bishops in the several countries a habit of excessive restraint when it comes to expressing their mind as a body on debatable theological questions. The conciliar and postconciliar organization of national or regional conferences of bishops and the open encouragement of Paul VI have begun to overcome this handicap. Yet most Catholic bishops and their national conferences, where they have begun to use new models for doctrinal authority, have veered, as it were naturally, toward the model of conciliar unanimity, which proved its effectiveness at Vatican II. Such conciliar unanimity is difficult to obtain in the larger conferences of bishops. And as doctrine is normally understood by Catholics to be of universal rather than national or regional concern, conciliar unanimity in doctrinal matters is often seen to lie beyond the possibilities of a national conference.

Accordingly, the significant Catholic responses to the ARCIC agreed statements have come from theological or ecumenical commissions rather than from bishops and episcopal conferences. In some cases responses came to the Secretariat for Christian Unity directly from ecumenical commissions. In other cases reports from ecumenical commissions were passed on to the Secretariat by the hierarchies, with or without expressions of endorsement. Besides, due to the widespread ignorance of Anglicanism outside English-speaking countries, the geography of Catholic reactions has been largely limited to the English-speaking world. Here, generally favorable responses to the Windsor statement, some of them with some hesitancy on the doctrines of sacrifice and transubstantiation, have been made by theological commissions in England and Wales, in Canada, in the U.S.A., in Scotland, in the South Pacific (the only place, apparently, where the local ecumenical commission expressed its full

⁸ *The Report of the Lambeth Conference, 1978* (London, 1978) 50.

approval of the statement). Likewise, the Canterbury statement was generally well received by ecumenical commissions, in Argentina (with some reservations), Belgium (with questions, summer 1974), Canada (with criticism on the part of many members, March 1974), England and Wales (with requests for clarification, April 1974), Ireland (with some doubts about its eventual acceptance by evangelical Anglicans, March 1974), Rwanda-Burundi (with expressions of hesitancy), Zambia (with reservations, July 1974). Curiously enough, the note from the U.S.A. was mixed: the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs expressed itself very positively, with some requests for clarification (February 1974); but the Bishops' Committee on Doctrine judged that the Canterbury statement did not express the Catholic doctrine on priesthood.

CRITIQUE OF THE AGREED STATEMENTS

The Principle

As appears from these responses, the reception of the Windsor and Canterbury statements has not gone without some criticisms. Some of these are very detailed, even minute, suggestions for improvement, which can hardly be summarized. I will therefore speak only of the more substantive critiques. But the very fact that detailed remarks, often in the form of amendments, have been sent both to the office of the Councillors for Foreign Relations at Lambeth and to the Secretariat for Christian Unity in Rome, indicates misunderstandings, in some quarters, of the nature of the agreed statements. Amendments and suggestions for rewording a text make sense only if this text is destined to be rewritten in the light of comments received. This, however, has never been a live prospect in the mind of the International Commission. The model has been the conciliar model of the Catholic tradition. A conciliar text remains what it has always been, even after a subsequent council has adopted another text on the same topic. One can still read and study the creed of Nicaea I, even though the creed of Constantinople I is better known and is in current liturgical use. The constitutions of Vatican I have not been abolished, modified, or rewritten by Vatican II, even though historians can study the progress of ecclesiological doctrine between the two councils. All proportions maintained, the International Commission has seen its task in a similar perspective. The agreed statements so far published express its mind. This expression stays what it is, although nothing in the Commission's work can prevent a future commission of Anglicans and Catholics, or, hopefully, a future reunion council of the two churches, from composing further texts of agreements which may well be more refined, more sophisticated, or more acceptable to some or to all theolog-

ical opinions. The impression, which has prevailed here and there,⁹ that after receiving reactions from the constituencies of the churches, the International Commission would rewrite its texts and propose them in an improved version or a second edition, could not derive from anything the Commission said and did, or from what had been suggested in the Malta report. For lack of a better explanation, I believe it arose from the parliamentary-constitutional model of authority which has been at work in the World Council of Churches: here it is not unusual to have successive versions of the same theological statements made available to the public. For instance, a statement on *A Mutually Recognized Ministry (Faith and Order Paper no. 73)*, finalized by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC, grew out of previously published reports (*The Ordained Ministry*, Louvain 1971; *The Ordained Ministry in Ecumenical Perspective*, Marseilles 1973). One may well think that the practice of the WCC is more in harmony with contemporary democratic procedure. But the conciliar model adopted by ARCIC is more in keeping with Catholic practice over the centuries and seems, to me at least, better attuned to the nature of ecclesial processes.

Critique of the Windsor Statement

The problematic of the Windsor statement was simple. The Commission wanted to avoid the polemical languages which have come to us from the Late Middle Ages, the Reformation, and the Counter Reformation. The alternative was to be found in an older, more biblical, and more patristic language. Hence the structure of the Windsor statement: from the Eucharist as mystery to the Eucharist as memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, and from there to the Eucharist as active and multi-form presence of Christ. Hence the successive stresses on promise (no. 3), foretaste of the kingdom (4), memorial as anamnesis (5), presence as tied to the paschal mystery (6), presence as gift through the proclaimed word (7), presence as call to and for faith (8), presence in the communion meal (9), Trinitarian structure of the anaphora (10), eschatological orientation (11). Hence also the two footnotes on the notions of sacrifice and of transubstantiation, in which the Commission briefly explained why past polemics over these terms had to be overcome. The hoped-for cumulative effect of this carefully worded text was to bring back to the forefront of theological and liturgical awareness in our two communions the Eucharistic theology of our common tradition, steeped in the New Testament and in patristic thought, before this tradition was distorted by the

⁹ For instance, P. Staples (Catholic) writes: "Under these circumstances, the best course of action would probably be an attempt to redraft the Venice statement . . ." ("The Venice Statement: An Interim Report," *News from the English Churches* 6, nos. 7-8 [Utrecht, November 1977] 75).

controversies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Unavoidably, any such approach will run afoul of those who, for reasons of theology or of piety or simply of habit of mind, still find deep meaning in the concepts and terms of their own separate traditions, or, more superficially, still disbelieve that the other side can truly overcome its past polemical language and conceptualization. Accordingly, fears were expressed by evangelical Anglicans that the Windsor statement conceded too much to the doctrine of the Mass as a sacrifice (the "sacrifices of Masses" condemned by Article 31) and to the doctrine of transubstantiation understood as an explanation of the how of the Eucharistic presence. Opposite fears were expressed by some Catholics, that the statement does not do justice to these two doctrines¹⁰ or that it lies open to a receptionist view of the sacramental presence. In both cases such critiques were expected: not all theologians in the two churches are yet prepared to think along other lines than those which provoked, or were stiffened by, the polemics of the past.

Yet more fundamental points were raised by persons who were themselves ecumenically sensitive. The report of an Anglican-Roman Catholic panel discussion which took place at the University of Notre Dame¹¹ formulates other critiques: the statement is not liturgical enough, in the sense that it locates Eucharistic faith in doctrinal formulations rather than in the events of Eucharistic worship; it does not sufficiently emphasize the function of the Church in the sacramental experience of salvation, but tends to see everything as done by God to a passively recipient Church. As I understand it, these two points raise the question of the nature of the Church: Is it an event or an institution? Granted that it is God's creation and gift, what is its purpose? In fact, the point has been made, by Catholics as well as Anglicans, that the text of Windsor seems to presuppose an ecclesiology which is not explained in the document itself. The need for an agreed theology of the Church before any decision can be made in favor of some measure of sacramental sharing between the two communions was voiced by the present Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Basil Hume, when he addressed the General Synod of the Church of England on February 1, 1978. The Cardinal was politely criticizing Archbishop William Coggan's appeal for intercommunion (an appeal made in Rome itself by the Archbishop of Canterbury in April

¹⁰ "As a theological document, I believe, the Windsor statement leaves something to be desired. Even its handling of the two main issues, sacrifice and real presence, is subject to criticism at several points" (Avery Dulles, "Eucharistic Consensus?" *Commonweal* 96 [1972] 450).

¹¹ "The Windsor Statement," *Anglican Theological Review* (1975) 181-203. There are some oddities about this panel. For instance, the Windsor statement was apparently discussed after the Canterbury statement, whereas Canterbury builds on Windsor and needs it to be understood. See n. 13 below.

1977, and again at Westminster Cathedral on January 25, 1978). In defense of Archbishop Coggan, one could say that, from the viewpoint of the analogy of faith, an agreement on Eucharistic doctrine implies a good measure of agreement on the nature of the Church. Yet the International Commission seems to have taken such an implicit ecclesiological agreement for granted, without trying to analyze it openly. The question can well be asked: Is an implicit agreement enough? Or should ARCIC attempt, in the near future, to formulate whatever common ecclesiology may underlie its agreed statements?

As one may see from the Salisbury response to the critique of the Windsor statement, ARCIC chose to answer only the main questions asked in reference to two basic areas, the theology of sacrifice and the Eucharistic presence. A formulation of the common ecclesiology of the two churches requires both more time and some difficult decisions as to the scope and the form of such a formulation. It is my own judgment, in any case, that the method of ARCIC was correct. The Church is not preliminary to the Eucharist. In the words of *Sacrosanctum concilium*, no. 10, the liturgy, and especially the Eucharist, is the *fons* as well as the *culmen* of all the Church's life. A specific theology of the Church should, then, follow rather than precede reflection about the Eucharistic experience. This is the profound truth behind the absurd remark, often made disparagingly or even flippantly, that "there was no real ecclesiology"¹² in the Middle Ages. There was at least the theology of the Church implied in a profound theology of the Eucharist.

It should go without saying that the Canterbury statement on ministry and ordination presupposes the Windsor statement on the Eucharist. In a University of Notre Dame panel about it, a Catholic participant who expressed reservations about the document perceived this well in his own way: "I think that the great virtues and defects of this document come from the agenda . . . whereby they discussed Eucharist, then orders, then authority." He would have preferred "church, then orders, ministry, and authority."¹³ This, of course, brings up again the question of the ecclesiology of ARCIC, a question which is obviously important and quite legitimate. Yet it is most peculiar that in this Anglican-Catholic panel discussion a "narrow view of the Church," supposedly espoused by the International Commission, was attributed to the fact that "this Commission is dominated by theologians that happen to be bishops."¹⁴ The actual ratio of bishops to nonbishops among the Anglican members of ARCIC is 5 to 6, among the Catholics, 2 to 8. I am not aware that the bishops have dominated the meetings of ARCIC, not even the more numerous

¹² Quoted from Aidan Kavanagh, O.S.B., *ibid.* 192.

¹³ "A Colloquium on the Canterbury Statement," *ibid.* 82-95, at 87.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 88.

Anglican bishops.

In fact, the reservations formulated by various commentators seem to represent trends of thought which cut across the two churches rather than differing orientations of Anglicanism and Catholicism. The main critiques have been as follows: (1) The text is not sufficiently open to several ecclesiological models. (2) While it does use biblical images, the text is not adequate to biblical teaching, because it is too theological, not existential enough. (3) It is inconsistent or ambiguous in its use of the concept of *episkopē*: some interpret it as implying that the threefold ministry is of the *esse* of the Church; others not. (4) There is a suspicion among many that problems of "validity" and of Anglican orders have been dodged; yet others, including the Archbishop of Canterbury writing in the *Guardian*, conclude that as a result of this text "Pope Leo XIII will seem less right or wrong than irrelevant"; and a London *Times* editorial was headed "Circumventing the Bull." (5) The text is exclusively concerned with ministry to the Church rather than to the world; yet the *Church of Ireland Gazette* sees ministry to the Church as a high point of the statement.

While some of these critical remarks cancel each other out, one point, which was made emphatically in several quarters, should be regarded as the crux of the Canterbury statement as far as public critique is concerned: the passage of no. 13, already alluded to, on "another realm of the gifts of the Spirit." This expression, with the ensuing discussion, requires some explanation.

The intent of this phrase emerges from the structure of the statement. The text begins by placing the ordained ministry within the context of the many ministries extant in the Church (no. 2); these ministries are described in Christian life in general (3); in the early Church and the apostolic nature of the whole Church (4); in special tasks which, already in the early Church, require "recognition and authorization" (5); in the early double structure of *episkopoi* and *presbyteroi*, from which the later threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon derives (6). The text then focuses on the ordained ministry: this should serve the priesthood of all the faithful for the glory of God (7); it is described in the New Testament with a variety of images (8); oversight (*episkopē*) is an essential element of it (9); it has also responsibility for proclamation of the word (10) and celebration of the sacraments (11), especially for presiding at the Eucharist (12); this Eucharistic function justifies the priestly language applied to the ordained ministry (13). Then the text passes on to ordination: ordination is necessary on account of the corporate nature of this ministry (14); it is a sacramental act, which is described in its main elements (15); it is effected by a bishop, and the meaning of this is carefully explained (16). The conclusion recognizes the limits of the

agreed statement (17).

In this context the phrase "another realm of the gifts of the Spirit," which is evocative of Ephesians 4:11, presupposes that there are two realms of the gifts of the Spirit: the gifts bestowed on the people of God in general (of which all members share in various degrees) and the gifts bestowed on individual persons. The common Christian priesthood pertains to the first, the ordained ministry to the second. This is in keeping with the doctrine of Vatican II, that the common *sacerdotium* of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchic *sacerdotium* "differ in essence and not only in degree" (*Lumen gentium*, no. 10). The difference in language between Vatican II and ARCIC is due to a greater sensitivity to the fact that, in the New Testament, the word *hierateuma* and cognate terms (*hiereus*, *archieus*) are not applied to ministers but to Christ as "archpriest" in heaven and to the people of God as "holy priesthood." This might have been clear to most readers if two members of ARCIC, writing for different constituencies, had not commented on this passage in ways that appeared to be contradictory. In his commentary Bishop Alan Clark, the Catholic chairman, simply identified the doctrine of the statement with that of *Lumen gentium*, no. 10: "essentia, non gradu."¹⁵ The Rev. Julian Charley, the only Anglican member of ARCIC who may be called a conservative evangelical, wrote:

In the strictest terms, this [the ministry of the ordained] is not a 'priesthood' at all, but 'belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit.' To press this point yet further, we find Christian ministers in the New Testament, *not* in the categories of priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but rather in the gifts to the Church of the ascended Lord portrayed in the Epistle to the Ephesians.¹⁶

Attention to the contrast between Clark and Charley was drawn in particular by Gordon Dunstan, editor of the Anglican journal *Theology*, and by Alberic Stacpoole, editor of the Catholic *Ampleforth Journal*. Dom Stacpoole asked for and obtained comments from members of the International Commission and from some theologians outside of it, and concluded: "It remains to the reader to decide."¹⁷ Dunstan, for his part, wondered if the agreement of the Commission was truly genuine.¹⁸ My own judgment at the time was—as it still is—that there was no contradiction between Clark and Charley, although their vocabularies and

¹⁵ Alan C. Clark, *Ministry and Ordination* (London, 1974).

¹⁶ Julian W. Charley, *Agreement on the Doctrine of the Ministry* (Bramcote, Eng., 1973) 23.

¹⁷ "Priesthood: Another Realm of the Gifts of the Spirit," *Ampleforth Journal* 79/3 (Autumn 1974) 16.

¹⁸ Editorial in *Theology* 77 (1974) 57–59.

emphases are distinct.¹⁹

Besides the relations between priesthood of the people of God and ministerial priesthood, which in my opinion loomed much too large in the public discussion of the Canterbury statement, valuable queries were formulated about Anglican orders and *Apostolicae curae*, about ordination of women (left unmentioned in the statement), about the sacramentality of orders and ordination, and (as with the Windsor statement) about the underlying ecclesiology. One may also mention, on the part of some, a disappointment with what seemed to them a weak biblical basis for the statement. Some theologians found in the text a confusion between faith and theology; others thought that the relations between bishops and priests are not sufficiently elucidated; still others did not find in it all the elements of Catholic doctrine necessary to an ecumenical agreement.

ARCIC's Response to Its Critics: Salisbury, January 1979

The *Elucidations* released to the press following on the Salisbury meeting of January 1979²⁰ briefly survey the major critiques and queries so far formulated and provide an answer. They justify the concept of anamnesis as a suitable and traditional category to speak of the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, and the concept of "becoming" as proper to express the relation of bread and wine to the sacramentally present body and blood of Christ. They next emphasize the role of faith in the reception of the Sacrament, and they explain at some length the theology of reservation of the Sacrament, agreeing that differences of devotional practices are compatible with substantial agreement in faith.

In regard to the Canterbury agreement, the *Elucidations* point out that priesthood is an analogical notion applicable to distinct but related realities, briefly refer to what is meant by sacramentality of ordination, and survey the early development of the ordained ministry. They explain that the Commission has not treated the problem of ordination of women because such ordinations do not affect the doctrine of ordination agreed to at Canterbury. And they repeat the Commission's view that the question of Anglican orders has now been placed in a new context, adding, however, that this context calls for a reappraisal of the verdict on Anglican orders in *Apostolicae curae*.

On the whole, the *Elucidations* of Salisbury add little to what ARCIC has already said. They confirm ARCIC's positions on all major points.

¹⁹ See my comment in Stacpoole (n. 17 above) 12-13. An otherwise perceptive Catholic commentator, Luis Bermeja, writing from Poona, India, has no problem with "another realm of the gifts of the Spirit," but contends that the statement does not sufficiently dissociate general priesthood and ministerial priesthood ("Rome and Canterbury on the Ministry," *One in Christ* 11 [1975] 145-81).

²⁰ *Elucidations: Salisbury 1979* (London, 1979).

The Case of the Venice Statement

The Venice statement on authority in the Church (1976) is at this time in a situation by itself. As a report on authority with special attention to the bishop of Rome, it is not complete; for it knowingly leaves out four questions which would have to be considered for a full treatment of the topic: the place of Peter in the New Testament; the meaning of "divine right" language as applied to the bishops of Rome as successors of Peter; the problem of papal infallibility; the notion of universal jurisdiction as qualifying the authority of the bishop of Rome. These four points were listed by the International Commission itself, in no. 24 of its statement, with the implication that they would be studied at the earliest opportunity. The Venice statement is like a first instalment, a second being expected in the not too distant future.

In these conditions the wise thing might have been to abstain from criticism until the complement could be perused in peace and quiet. Yet ARCIC opened itself to discussion and critique by publishing its Venice document and professing to "submit our Statements to our respective authorities to consider whether or not they are judged to express on these central subjects a unity at the level of faith which not only justifies but requires action to bring about a closer sharing between our two Communion in life, worship and mission" (no. 26). It goes without saying that, in the contemporary pattern of authority, such a judgment requires broad discussions at all levels of the churches.

As a matter of fact, the Venice statement received immediate, extensive, and unexpectedly violent reactions. This was apparently due to its topic. Discussion of the bishop of Rome still seems to excite more interest in ecclesiastical and theological circles among Anglicans than quiet reflections on the Eucharist and on the ministry. Yet because one should still wait for a treatment of the four points left in abeyance at Venice in order to have a fuller picture of ARCIC's conceptions and proposals about the shape of authority, the present survey will be necessarily incomplete and inconclusive.

The problematic of the Venice statement may be briefly recalled. After an initial remark on the Lordship of Christ, which establishes the ultimate locus of authority (no. 1), the text describes the essential nature of Christian authority as related to Christ and the Spirit and as located in the whole community (2, 3). It then looks at the several ways in which this authority can be manifested in each Christian community: in the spiritual quality of one's life (4), in the Spirit-bestowed gifts of each and all, including the prophetic gifts "which entitle them to speak and be heeded," and all the pastoral gifts useful to the "integrity of the *koinonia*" (5), in the interrelationships between "all who live faithfully within the *koinonia*," the community itself, and the ordained ministers (6). The text

reminds us that the purpose of these different aspects and forms of authority is to "keep the Church under the Lordship of Christ" (7). It examines authority as manifested, no longer within each church but in the communion of local churches together (Part III): above the local church with its bishop (no. 8) there is a *koinonia* of local churches and bishops gathered together in councils (9), with wider responsibilities historically entrusted to "the bishops of prominent sees" and the episcopal coresponsibility of all the bishops of a region (10-11), and finally with the more extended responsibilities historically attributed to the bishop of Rome in a universal communion of all the churches (12). In its Part IV, the Venice statement examines authority in matters of faith, looking successively at the traditional importance of professing a common faith (no. 13), at the two aspects of faith as assent and as life, and at the corresponding role of creeds (14), at the transmission of faith in space and in time through proclamation, interpretation, reformulation (15), at the conciliar mode of this transmission, in which decision and reception are dialectically related (16), at the historical role of "the principal sees" and especially of Rome in the conciliar process (17), at the occasional necessity "to make declarations in matters of faith" and the special responsibility of bishops in this regard (18). Part VI focuses on conciliar and primatial authority. It formulates the traditional self-understanding of ecumenical councils as "excluding what is erroneous," but this is carefully limited to "the central truths of salvation" (no. 19). It explains that while bishops are collectively responsible for the faith, one of them may speak for others (20): this is the task of a primate, at whatever level of primacy (21). Primacy and conciliarity are complementary (22), and there is need for such a primacy at the universal level (23). Part VII fixes the limits of this agreement by listing the four points, already mentioned, which relate specifically to the primacy of the bishop of Rome (24-25). A short conclusion places this statement in the perspective, opened by the Malta report, of "unity by stages" (26).

Much good has been said from many sides about the Venice statement. Yet the level of acrimony in the language of some of its critics has surprised me considerably. For the Anglican editor of *Theology*, John Drury, the text "confuses what ought to be with what is"; it is "grandiloquent" and marked by "a somewhat cloying institutional solipsism"; "its Christ is not the one of the gospels"; ARCIC operates in "the fog of a world in which what is said is by no means quite what is meant and it is not certain exactly what it is all about anyway."²¹ Hugh Montefiore, Anglican Bishop of Birmingham, has "grave reservations about the theological inadequacy of the Report," which "describes a perfected Church, not the *corpus permixtum* of saints and sinners"; it is "ambigu-

²¹ "Authority in the Church" *Theology* 80 (1977) 162.

ous"; it ignores the Anglican view of "disseminated authority" and contradicts Vatican Council I on whether the pope "could speak independently of his fellow bishops." Rather than go through the painstaking task of agreement-building attempted at Venice, it would be much simpler to have "immediate intercommunion between Rome and Canterbury."²² For Prof. Geoffrey Lampe, who would have preferred a statement on revelation and its relationship to doctrine, the Venice document is not about authority but about who exercises authority; it is "unhistorical and pre-critical" in its view of councils; and there remains "a formidable residue of unfinished business," which is all the more formidable, in his eyes, as, contrary to the International Commission, he does not believe that the Church is indefectible (a point that may be gathered from Lampe's rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity in his Bampton lectures for 1976).²³ For Canon Pawley, the Venice statement "is little short of the miraculous," yet "it was made too soon and it leaves too much unsaid. It does not begin to provide a framework on which any practical solution can be built."²⁴ It is not only from some Anglicans that the Venice statement has received bitter criticism. For Adrian Hastings, the Venice statement has "effectively abandoned" the strategy devised at Malta; it is "a profoundly unsatisfactory document"; it has "subtly devalued its predecessors"; it is an exercise in "profound unreality."²⁵

This is not, of course, the whole picture. Abundant praises have been forthcoming, not least in the course of an extensive debate about the Venice statement at the General Synod of the Church of England (February 1977), concerning which John Trillo, Bishop of Chelmsford and chairman of the General Synod Committee for Roman Catholic Relations, has said: "I think that this has been one of the best theological debates I have ever heard in the Synod." The full text of the resolution adopted by the General Synod is worth quoting:

That this Synod, noting the willingness of both Churches to develop their understanding of ways in which the authority of Christ as Lord is transmitted in his Church,

- (i) welcomes the recent publication by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission of the agreed statement on Authority;
- (ii) commends it for study and discussion in the dioceses, especially in smallish groups where unhurried discussion can take place; and
- (iii) endorsing the view that this statement (together with those on the Eucharist

²² "Authority in the Church," *ibid.* 163-70. See Henry Chadwick's response, "A Brief Apology for 'Authority in the Church' (Venice 1976)," *ibid.* 324-31.

²³ From Geoffrey Lampe's address to the General Synod of the Church of England February 1977, printed *ibid.* 362-65. The Bampton lectures have been published as *God as Spirit* (Oxford, 1977).

²⁴ "Canterbury and Rome: Where Do We Stand?" *Faith and Unity* 21 (1977) 47-48.

²⁵ See n. 4 above.

and Ministry) 'not only justifies but requires action to bring about a closer sharing between our two communions in life, worship and mission', respectfully requests their Graces to seek ways and means to implement such action.

On the Roman Catholic side of the debate, the most comprehensive examination of the Venice statement was made by Fr. Christopher Dumont. The statement "produces a most favorable impression: that of a fine and vigorous theological synthesis . . ." Yet Dumont points out that "both because of its method, little known in Catholic theology, and because of some of its assertions, the document is likely at first reading to provoke some astonishment." The method in question is "inductive" and avoids "the technical language of the schools." Dumont is not sure that this method "answered entirely, in principle or in application, to the demands of the problem: authority in the Church." His main difficulty with the contents lies with the four points mentioned in no. 24: their treatment is insufficient. Clearly, Dumont did not discern ARCIC's intention to examine these points at greater length in the future. He also has a basic difficulty with the attempt to provide a theological rationale which, starting from the Lordship of Christ and the widely shared authority of the Christian community as *koinonia*, leads up "inductively" (I would not have used this term, but I understand its use by Dumont) to the primacy of the bishop in his church, to regional or wider primacies, and final to a universal primacy. Here I ought to quote Dumont, since my own disagreement with his theology of the primacy might lead me to misrepresent his thought:

The Catholic affirmation [of the universal primacy] rests on *intimate conviction* that the authority of the Lord of the Church himself has been entrusted to the apostolic college, and within it by a special title to Peter, to continue to be exercised visibly and ministerially by their successors with the indefectible light and prompting of the Holy Spirit. This is not, for the Roman Catholic Church, the expression or conclusion of a particular theology (even if a particular theology has been worked out about it and is for that reason open to objective criticism) but an *intimate and immediate conviction of faith*.²⁶

As has been noted by Henry Chadwick, Dean of Christ Church and an Anglican member of ARCIC, this amounts to "saying that Roman Catholics are Roman Catholics are Roman Catholics; i.e. that there is a mysterious circle of faith within which the truth of papal primacy is simply received together with the wonderful and sacred mystery of the Church itself . . ." Chadwick adds: "I deeply respect this statement, but

²⁶ "Critical Analysis of the ARCIC Statement on Authority in the Church," *Information Service, Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity*, no. 32 (1976/III) 7-12. For my view of the matter, see the article "Is the Papacy an Object of Faith?" *One in Christ* 13 (1977) 220-28.

submit that it looks like a conversation-stopper."²⁷ It is clear at this point that some Catholic understandings of the papacy can scarcely recognize themselves in the Venice statement. The problematic adopted at Venice does not deduce the authority of the bishop of Rome from the Petrine texts of the New Testament. It does not exactly conclude to the universal primacy by induction, as Dumont suggests. Rather, it sees authority as exercised at different levels, local, regional, universal, with corresponding levels of primacy, beginning with that of the bishop in his diocese. This happens to correspond to the emergence of these successive authorities in history, local bishops being in evidence before regional primates, who themselves precede patriarchs; and there was agreement on patriarchal authority before the not-yet-reached agreement on the universal primacy of the bishop of Rome. On the whole, the more momentous question asked by the Venice statement is addressed not to Anglicans but to Catholics: Can a Roman primacy which simply emerges from historical developments, but is not, even implicitly, taught in the Scriptures, do justice to the role of the popes in the transmission of faith and to the doctrines of the two Vatican Councils?

Several points made by critics may now be mentioned for the sake of completeness. The Venice statement uses "koinonia" in the sense of community, whereas it really means participation (Geoffrey Lampe); to which one should, of course, reply that it uses koinonia as this word appears in the New Testament (e.g., Acts 2:42). The text, it is asserted, leaves no room for the authority of prophets (the Methodist Geoffrey Wainwright²⁸ and the Catholic P. Staples, who speaks of a "prophetic hiatus in the Venice statement"). This is indeed a surprising opinion, in view of the definition of authority as essentially prophetic: "This is Christian authority: when Christians so act and speak, men perceive the authoritative word of Christ" (no. 3). For Wainwright also, the text fails to mention the authority of conscience. For Lampe, it does not speak about authority but about who exercises it; but can one speak about authority in the abstract, without adverting to its exercise? For some, the Venice text ignores the contemporary crisis of authority (Wainwright and others).

Of more import is the questioning of conciliar authority. Is it correct in Anglican theology to say that "when the Church meets in ecumenical council, its decisions on fundamental matters of faith exclude what is erroneous" (no. 19)? This is challenged by the Methodist Wainwright and by several Anglicans; and it seems clear that diverging theologies of councils have been held in Anglicanism. The Venice text has been read

²⁷ "A Brief Apology" 324.

²⁸ "The Agreed Statement on Authority: A Methodist Comment," *One in Christ* 13 (1977) 195-200.

by some as teaching the inerrancy of ecumenical councils (Lampe, Anthony Hanson, John Drury), in spite of the systematic avoidance of this expression in the text. At any rate, the International Commission so worded its statement that it would not, in its judgment, contradict Article 23: "General councils . . . (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God) may err and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore, things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." This is a point, admittedly, where one can understand the Anglican Andrew Louth's impression that there is "a studied ambiguity" in the statement. In regard to primacy, several commentators have discerned a "leap of faith" in the Venice statement between the local and the universal level, a leap which would leave out of consideration patriarchal authority and the quasi-patriarchal authority of the archbishop of Canterbury.²⁹ This also is a surprising remark, since no. 10 of the statement speaks precisely of such middle levels of primatial authority.

Despite these discussions, the most recent meeting of the General Synod of the Church of England (February 1979) included the Venice text in a broad endorsement of the three agreed statements as "sufficiently congruent with Anglican teaching to provide a theological basis for further dialogue." The General Synod added to this a request that the International Commission's attention be drawn to "comments and requests for clarification" made by its Faith and Order Advisory Group. It further requested that ARCIC "initiate a joint study of the doctrine of the Church with a view to producing an agreed statement, in order to provide an overall context to its three previous agreed statements on Eucharist, Ministry and Authority." It finally expressed its conviction that the two communions should now proceed "to the implementation of the stage-by-stage progression to full communion recommended by the 1968 Malta report,"³⁰ particularly through the appointment of (another) joint commission for continuing oversight and development of relations.

It is clear that requests for clarification and for an explanation of the

²⁹ Lampe (n. 23 above); the Orthodox Kallistos Ware, "The ARCIC Agreed Statement on Authority: An Orthodox Comment," *One in Christ*. 14 (1978) 198-206.

³⁰ Quoted from the *Tablet*, March 3, 1979, 221. Among other recent positive reactions to the three statements, I should mention the *Detroit Report*, made by a National Ecumenical Consultation of the Episcopal Church, Nov. 5-9, 1978. The text is published in the *Ecumenical Bulletin, Executive Council of the Episcopal Church*, no. 33, Jan.-Feb. 1979. The report asks for investigation by ARCIC of what it calls the two deficiencies of the exercise of authority in the Roman Catholic Church: "(1) lack of discernible lay voice for proper discernment of the Spirit by and for the whole people of God; (2) lack of clear synodical form of Church decision-making which would implement the collegiality of the episcopate as affirmed by the Second Vatican Council."

ecclesiology of ARCIC have put on the Commission a certain pressure which in my judgment may be distracting it from its main task. This task is to finish its assigned programme. Answers to requests for further elucidation of what has been done so far—as in the Salisbury responses—while they well may have clarified some minor points, have also delayed the handling by ARCIC of remaining major problems relating to the papacy. A further answer regarding ecclesiology could add several years to the life span of the Commission if it were approached with a thoroughness commensurate to the topic. And the right moment and nature of such an answer are questionable. Should a consensus on the Church's nature be a step to union? Should it not be rather the crowning point of all Anglican-Catholic relations, coinciding with becoming one communion again?

The Problem of Evangelical Anglicans

The reactions of evangelical Anglicans to the agreed statements are in a class of their own. Unlike most Anglican theologians, who look to the Church Fathers and the Caroline divines (seventeenth century) for the correct interpretation of Scripture and liturgy, the evangelicals look to the Continental Reformation. The two poles of justification by faith and *scriptura sola* are for them normative of all genuine Christian faith, life, and polity. This sort of Anglican theology is not represented in the various dialogue commissions in proportion to its theological importance, even if it is, as some would think, overrepresented in regard to its numerical weight.

In July 1977 the Church of England Evangelical Council addressed an open letter to all Anglican bishops. The letter, signed by 130 evangelicals, surveyed the present state of relations with the "nonreformed" Churches, "Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Old Catholics and Ancient Oriental Churches." The tone was open and the text expressed gratification for the three agreed statements. But the letter concluded that there is need "for more discussion, and deeper agreement than yet exists, in at least four fields," namely, "Scripture and Tradition, Justification, Church and Ministry, the Holy Communion." These points evidently correspond to the main areas of polemics in the sixteenth century. The reasons for this stance, carefully explained in a booklet issued in December 1977,³¹ amount to one point: evangelical Anglicans are not convinced that Catholic theology, teaching, and practice have learned the lessons of the Reformation. Until they do, no prospect of reunion can be even remotely contemplated. Catholics must join the Reformation on these four points.

Such a stance effectively rejects the strategy recommended at Malta

³¹ R. T. Beckwith, G. E. Duffield, and J. I. Parker, *Across the Divide* (London, 1977).

and adopted by ARCIC: to overcome the polemics of the past. It also implies a doubt that Vatican Council II marks an advance on the theology of the Council of Trent. Incomprehensible as this may seem to ecumenically-minded Catholics, this position must be taken most seriously, even if the evangelical rationale in this instance is marred by a triumphalistic understanding of justification by faith, presented as the only true expression of the Christian message, as though the Epistle to the Romans with Luther's own paraphrase and commentary were the only book in the New Testament. The basic contention of the open letter has to be met as long as there remain Anglicans who believe that the Catholic Church functions and thinks according to a system of justification by works. This is not the sole issue here, but it is a major one.

CONCLUSION

It is too early to judge the final status of the three agreed statements in the dogmatics of Anglicanism and Catholicism, not least because the promised complement of the Venice statement is not yet forthcoming. Yet the process of reception seems to be, at this time, further advanced in the Anglican Communion than in the Catholic Church. Undoubtedly, the differing structures of the two churches are in part responsible for this; for despite the closely related threefold structure of ministry found in these two traditions, notable differences of organization are not without effect on the way in which the *sensus fidelium* is shaped and the ultimate decisions are reached. The Anglican Communion is in fact an association of sister churches united by a common liturgy and a common ethos, but each one with its own independent decision-making system. Furthermore, these decision-making systems have been largely shaped by the parliamentary model of government of the British Commonwealth of Nations. This has influenced the present stage of reception of the three agreed statements in the Anglican Communion. In the first place, given their size and the numbers of their constituents, it is relatively easy for one province or church (the two words are practically identical) of the Anglican Communion to reach a decision. Compared to this, the still largely centralized Catholic Church finds it difficult to endorse new doctrinal texts, except when such a decision is so obvious that it can be made from the top without any danger of being rejected at large. The unfortunate experience of Pope Paul with the Encyclical *Humanae vitae* has precisely shown the possibility of such a rejection. In the second place, the decisions so far made in the Anglican Communion concerning the three agreed statements are not of a kind that would commit the churches of that communion irrevocably, for their model is not the dogmatic model of, say, the Council of Chalcedon endorsing the *Tome* of Leo; it is that of a parliament accepting a text at the level of relevant

commissions with the more or less remote eventuality of its being left dormant or, as the case may be, rejected or enforced at the legislative level.³²

In these conditions the proper course of action at this time would be to hasten the process of discussion of these texts in the Catholic community. Very little, in fact, has been heard from the sections of the Church that may not feel directly concerned because Anglicans are scarce among them. It has been suggested at times that the Catholic side of the International Commission is not fully representative, since none of its members represents the Hispanic heritage. Unlike the Preparatory Commission, none belongs to the churches of Africa, Asia, or the South Pacific. I do not think this is the right time, between the Venice statement and its follow-up, to alter the membership. Yet ways should be found to have the three agreed statements discussed broadly—at the level of seminary and university faculties, to begin with—outside the English-speaking world.

Yet more should also be done in relation to the agreed statements in the English-speaking world. One can well ask: When is a doctrinal text really accepted? The real test of acceptance is not in declarations by ecumenical commissions or even by bishops and their national conferences. It is rather when a doctrinal text has become part of the teaching media in use for the theological formation of priests and seminarians. The crucial question then becomes: What is the attitude of seminaries? Do they use the agreed statements in courses on the sacraments and on ecclesiology? Do they bring these texts to the attention of students? At a lower level of expectation, one may perhaps even wonder if the agreed statements have been read by all professors for whose courses they could be relevant.

But it does not belong to the International Commission to provide the necessary impetus for such a broad discussion and use of the agreed statements. ARCIC was conceived as a theological commission. Its task has been to discuss traditionally-debated points in the doctrines of the two communions. One may venture the opinion that the Commission, created by Pope Paul on his own initiative, reflects his conception of ecumenical dialogue, which was itself expressed personally in *Ecclesiam suam* and conciliarly in Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism. Whenever ARCIC fulfils its present programme, the time may be ripe for Pope John Paul II to take further ecumenical initiatives along new lines.³³

³² On the structure of authority in Anglicanism, see the little book by Henry McAdoo, Archbishop of Dublin, cochairman of ARCIC, *Being an Anglican* (Dublin, 1977).

³³ One major development has taken place since the present paper was written. In Denver, Colorado, September 1979, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church endorsed a resolution which "affirms that the documents on *Eucharistic Doctrine* and

Ministry and Ordination provide a statement of the faith of this Church in the matters concerned and form a basis upon which to proceed in furthering the growth towards unity of the Episcopal Church with the Catholic Church." This is the first endorsement of its kind.