



ANGLICAN - REFORMED THEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION

Communiqué 1981

"The initial consultation met in December 1978. Its report was approved by the ACC and the WARC in 1979. A central feature of that report was the accent on a new perspective from which to overcome the seemingly intractable problems in Anglican-Reformed conversations: '... a new perspective which sets the questions of Church unity against the background of the Reign of God inaugurated in the life, death and resurrection of Christ'. In developing this insight the original report stressed, '... all consideration of problems of the Church and its unity must begin with inquiry into the nature of the relationship between Church and Kingdom.' We need to investigate in this connection the Church's relation and mission to the world since the Kingdom of God is the future of Church and world alike.

"In pursuit of this approach the meeting in January 1981 worked through the following presentations:

The Kingdom, the Messiah and the Church's Witness in Latin America. A Latin American Perspective on Christological thinking by Prof. J. Andrew Kirk (Anglican);

The Incarnation and the Unity of the Church, by Prof. George S. Yule (Reformed);

Christ, Kingdom and Church, by Bishop Lesslie Newbigin (Church of South India).

Discussion was stimulated by initial responses prepared by Principal S. Dawne (South Africa) and the Reverend John Nyesi (Kenya).

"Discussion of these papers led to two unanimous convictions. First, the Church is constituted by the free grace of God in Christ; and for this reason Christian churches have to accept each other, since God in Christ has given himself for all, and we are accepted in Christ though unacceptable. Second, this same Church is a provisional expression of the Kingdom and does not fully actualise, in any of its manifestations, the promise of its own life."

At the time of writing the next session will be January 11-16, 1982. The programme of work envisaged as a development of these new directions covers the following: 1. What understanding should Anglican and Reformed Churches have of the unity of the Church? 2. What is the content, context and goal of the Church's mission? 3. To what extent is doing the truth (orthopraxy) as distinct from believing the truth (orthodoxy), a condition of, means or result of Christian unity? (Examples of the critical fields of orthopraxy are action in regard to racism and poverty).

Participants: -

Anglican - The Right Reverend E. J. Tinsley, Bishop of Bristol; the Rev. S. Dwane; the Rev. Canon R. T. Halliday; the Rev. Professor J. A. Kirk; the Rev. Dr. Richard Norris, Jr.; the Rev. John Nyesi; the Rev. Canon Martin Reardon.

Reformed - The Rev. Dr. John Huxtable; the Rev. Prof. Christian Baeta; the Rev. J. Gordon Grant; the Rev. Dr. R. Stuart Loudon (in absentia); the Rt. Rev. Lesslie Newbigin; the Rev. Edwin S. Pons; the Rev. Dr. Roy F. Wilson; the Rev. Prof. George S. Yule.

WCC observer - The Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon

Staff- The Rev. G. B. Braund, Anglican Consultative Council; the Rev. Richmond Smith, World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

We should note that in terms of the original mandate of four meetings, we may expect the final session in 1984 with the report later that year.