

## **February 2, 1993 Anglican Communion leaders Tackle Daunting Agenda of Issues at South Africa Meeting**

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A hundred of the top leaders of the Anglican Communion gathered for two weeks in South Africa to wrestle with a daunting list of issues threatening the peace and unity of both the church and the world.

High on the agenda of the first-ever joint meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) and the Anglican Communion's primates in Cape Town, January 19-30, were the devastating affect of AIDS, the controversial decision by some members of the communion to ordain women, structure and finances, and the tortuous path toward a non-racial democracy in South Africa.

Alluding to the fact that Cape Town was once called the Cape of Storms, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey said there are some people "who think our meeting is going to be a stormy time. They think we are going to have problems with our unity, they think we are going to have a stormy time as we wrestle with all kinds of conflicts."

Carey quickly added that "it is good to remember that we do indeed come to share at a difficult moment and to listen carefully to one another," but also to underscore that "in a real family you can argue, you can disagree, but you can still love one another."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, primate of the Church in the Province of Southern Africa and host for the meeting, said that the "importance of this visit is quite incalculable." Referring to heavy coverage in the South African media, Tutu added that the presence of representatives from the whole Anglican Communion "has raised our morale." He reported that people told him that "Anglicans are walking tall."

While there was some grumbling among participants over the difficulties in getting down to business, ACC delegate Betty Govinden of South Africa observed that the small groups energized the deliberations. "We were, at the end of the day, looking for partnership" on issues of the relationship between laity and ordained orders, between races, between the Anglican Church and other faiths, she said.

### The ordination of women

The recent decision by the Church of England paving the way for the ordination of women to the priesthood -- and recent ordinations in South Africa, Australia and Wales -- led to some tense discussions on how to protect the integrity of those who oppose such developments.

Both supporters and opponents to the ordination of women, for example, found some solace in a resolution approved overwhelmingly that firmly but pastorally dismissed the persistent proposal for a separate ecclesial jurisdiction to serve "traditionalists" opposed to the ordination of women.

First reaffirming "the continuing place in the Anglican Communion both of those who oppose and those who accept the ordination of women," and committing the joint meeting to "maintaining the highest level of communion within the Anglican Communion in the future," the resolution clearly restates the position of a 1988 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops. Lambeth denied the possibility of "parallel" or "non-geographical" jurisdictions.

At the same time, the resolution that called for pastoral provisions to minister to those opposed to women's ordination, specifically through the continuation of Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate, popularly known as the Eames Commission after its chair, Archbishop Robin Eames of Ireland.

While the action of the joint meeting is advisory, its passage by the two bodies meeting together should be seen as "a double whammy," said the Rt. Bishop Mark Dyer of the Diocese of Bethlehem (PA) and a member of the committee that drafted an original form of the resolution. "I would say it closes the door on that issue, with the pastoral door still open."

#### New hope for AIDS projects in African provinces

In a stunning breakthrough, African bishops, who until recently would not even talk about the AIDS crisis in their midst, pledged to set up AIDS programs in their provinces and urged the Anglican Communion to provide strong leadership in addressing the AIDS issue.

Archbishop Yona Okoth of Uganda, one of those who formerly denied the crisis in his country, described the programs he has initiated and his colleagues hailed it as a model for others. Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, for example, praised it as "one of the most imaginative and creative programs I have seen." The Episcopal Church has provided both financial and personnel support for the program, which is organized as a partnership with United States Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) and other relief programs (see ENS October 1, 1992).

#### Archbishop of Canterbury visits political leaders

In an effort to emphasize the Anglican Communion's unflinching support for a new South Africa, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey met with the three men who hold the fate of South Africa in their hands -- President F. W. de Klerk, African National Congress president Nelson Mandela, and Zulu Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi of the Inkatha Freedom Party.

The meeting with de Klerk focused on the economic plight of South Africans but also on "solutions and the hopes that we have for 1993," the president said in a news conference. De Klerk said the international Christian community had already made a great contribution to the South African government's move away from apartheid, but "at some times some of the more aggressive actions delayed change."

While Carey pledged his support to encourage de Klerk's efforts at bringing about a fully democratic government, Tutu stressed the need for continued economic sanctions against South Africa.

"We would want to be among the first to call for the lifting of sanctions," Tutu said, but added that two things stood in the way -- the continuing violence, "especially in the black community," and the "establishment of a transitional government."

Chief Buthelezi publicly chided the churches of South Africa for their complicity in apartheid, charging that "the church was too confused in its thinking to avert the centuries of suffering which mankind has known."

Mandela, on the other hand, said that the Anglican Church has been "one of the most powerful forces" in supporting the movement toward democratic reform in South Africa. "The Anglican Church has been in the front lines when our leaders were in jail," Mandela said to the joint meeting. "It was the Church, the religious groups, that kept these ideas alive."

Calling Archbishop Carey "one of the most powerful friends of the democratic forces in this country," Mandela said the archbishop's visit to South Africa has bolstered "the morale of our people far beyond the borders of the Anglican Church."

Visit to townships offers firsthand view of high cost of apartheid

Clearly determined to take seriously the meeting's theme, "A Transforming Vision: Suffering and Glory in God's World," participants were offered a first-hand look at the ravages of apartheid during visits to shantytown areas in black townships.

Established by black squatters who defied laws telling them where they could live, inhabitants exist in a gray area of legal limbo. While some sections are being upgraded with water, sewer and electricity, most remain squalid acres of shacks.

Meeting with hundreds of residents at the Khayelitsha camp, an emotionally affected Carey said, "I identify with you. I hate the system that created this township," adding that he was "almost ashamed to have a white skin."

White and black "should stand together to produce a new South Africa," he said. "Hold on to the hope to which you are pressing."

ACC delegate Austin Cooper from the Episcopal Church said that it was an understatement to call the visits "mind-boggling, because that is too mild." Cooper added, "It staggers the imagination and rightly brings shame on all of humanity that people are forced to live as they do."

ACC delegate Muriel Porter of Australia was moved by the tenacity of the inhabitants as they work "patiently and lovingly at making a better society- -and they're doing it themselves, alongside some liberal whites and the churches."

Participants responded with a resolution giving thanks for progress toward a nonracial democracy but expressed shock over "scant evidence of any meaningful improvements in the lives of ordinary South Africans."

Worship undergirded deliberations

Participants found renewal and energy in the daily moments of prayer and services of Eucharist and in two public eucharists attended by thousands. Nearly 3,000 people turned out an opening Eucharist held under a massive tent in the rural town of Malmesbury. And midway through the meeting, a "Day of Celebration" drew more than 10,000 people to the Good Hope Centre in Cape Town.

Calling for a new vision of Africa, Carey said in his sermon at the Good Hope Centre, "We need a new spirit of repentance, a new sense of responsibility, a new determination to express our common humanity by just and fair dealing between our nations."

"Few can be unmoved today by the terrible suffering that afflicts the great continent of Africa," Carey said. "Africa lies wounded and bleeding, and we who live elsewhere must not pass by on the other side. No Christian can be excused from coming to the aid of our African brothers and sisters in need."

#### Financial problems force changes

Finances quickly emerged as a major issue underlying many decisions facing the Anglican Communion and precipitated discussions about its identity. "We've been struggling with this for at least three years, at least since the 1990 ACC meeting in Wales," said Mrs. Pamela Chinnis of Washington D.C., president of the Episcopal Church's House of Deputies and a member of the Inter Anglican Finance Committee.

Chinnis said that she sees the issue as a failure to recognize the financial limitations brought on by the decline in donations to the ACC. Bishop Edward Luscombe of Scotland, who chairs the finance committee, said the 1988 Lambeth Conference had generated a number of new projects with funding requirements and that for a while the funding was able to keep pace.

"Now the ballgame has changed because of the world recession," he said. In a familiar pattern for many dioceses seeking financial support from parishes, "provinces wrote in and said they couldn't meet their allocation."

Several of the major contributors -- including the provinces of Australia, United States, England, Canada and Southern Africa -- have been forced to reduce their contributions because of financial pressure in their churches. Inflation in England and shifts in currency exchange rates also have taken their toll and "for the last three years we've been operating on the knife's edge," Luscombe said.

A report from the conference working group that responded to proposals for an income-driven budget noted that "the result of the gloomy financial picture is a still gloomier strategy for responding to it." The "projected income approach," the report states, is a "reactive strategy of budgeting for the ACC whereby ministry undertaken will be determined by the supply of funds rather than a pro-active stance driven by God's call to the Church."

#### An international communion

At the heart of the issue may be a question of commitment to the international work supported by the ACC staff, Luscombe said. "I think it's still a major problem in the church as a whole to interest

everyone in the doings of the ACC," he added. "If people are reluctant about making their contributions, we must find out why," said Archbishop Carey.

"Some of the provinces need to see the importance of the ACC," said Bishop J. Mark Dyer of Bethlehem (PA). With a new European community emerging, "this is not a time for the ACC to say we need to be more separate," he said. "That's running counter to the flow of human history."

"We are just on the threshold of what it means to be an international communion, and how we can share with one another the resources we have," Dyer contended. "At Lambeth in 1988 we established some very wonderful structures to make that happen. If we are going to be an international communion, it's going to cost something."

If the financial situation does not improve, the Lambeth Conference scheduled for 1998 might be postponed. At an estimated cost of about \$10 million, Luscombe said that some people are suggesting it may be necessary to limit the number of invitations or delay the date. The primates' Standing Committee and the ACC Secretariat were asked to examine options.

"We are an Episcopal Church. If we were to lose this pillar it would put great pressure on the Anglican Communion," said Carey, who has expressed his preference to a Lambeth Conference as scheduled in 1998. "But perhaps we need a reformed Lambeth Conference. We may reach the point of asking if it is moral for us to spend that sort of money on ourselves."

As for future joint meetings of the primate and the ACC, participants said they recognized the "particular circumstances which rightly justified a Joint Primates and ACC Meeting in South Africa this year, but we do not feel that the experiment should form a precedent."

"The most significant aspect of our life together these past two weeks is the unity we've achieved in these elements that make up the diversity of the Anglican Communion," said Archbishop Eames at the end of the meeting.

Source: [http://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/ENS/ENSpress\\_release.pl?pr\\_number=93014](http://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/ENS/ENSpress_release.pl?pr_number=93014)

## **February 2, 1993      ACC and Primates Reject Separate Structure for Traditionalists**

Episcopal News Service

A resolution approved overwhelmingly on January 28 by the joint meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) and the Anglican Communion's primates rejected a push for a separate ecclesial jurisdiction to serve parishes opposed to the ordination of women.

In the wake of the recent decision by the Church of England and other Anglican provinces to allow the ordination of women to the priesthood, members of the joint meeting grappled once again with the difficult task of holding the communion together despite differences on the subject.

After reaffirming "the continuing place in the Anglican Communion both of those who oppose and those who accept the ordination of women," and committing the joint meeting to "maintaining the highest level of communion within the Anglican Communion in the future," the resolution clearly restated the position of a 1988 Lambeth Conference action that denied the possibility of "parallel" or "nongeographical" jurisdictions.

Bishops sought separate structure

Prior to the meeting, two groups of bishops -- an International Bishops' Conference on Faith and Order, a group of about 50 bishops who met in London in June 1992, and five bishops who are members of the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA) in the United States -- wrote to Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey to seek some form of separate structure for traditionalists in the Anglican Communion.

The ESA request, drafted in December 1992, expressed fear that the Rev. Jack Iker would not receive consent to be consecrated a bishop in the Episcopal Church because he opposed the ordination of women to the priesthood. The ESA bishops said that they felt compelled to "seek some form of ecclesial community which will enable us to remain true to the historic faith and practice as expressed in our Anglican heritage."

"Is there going to be a place for people who oppose the majority viewpoint?" asked the Rt. Rev. Paul Richardson, bishop of Aipo Rongo, Papua New Guinea. This was the main issue raised by the Faith and Order bishops and other traditionalists.

Traditionalists looking for assurance they belong

Parishioners, Richardson said, need to feel "relatively in sympathy with their bishop. They should not feel they are scorned or despised." A "non-geographic diocese," he argued, is a perfectly reasonable solution.

"I think we're still very much hung up on the idea of geographic dioceses," Richardson contended, and added, "I think there's a little bit of paranoia about people invading their dioceses."

The Rt. Rev. Colin James, bishop of Winchester, England, said that his concern is to maintain "interim arrangements to help people live side by side." Traditionalists opposed to women's ordination have seen increasing signs of a "new orthodoxy test," James said. "Unless you consent to the ordination of women, you can't be considered to become a bishop."

What was being sought at this meeting, James said, "is a significant signal from here that we hear what you're saying," and that traditionalists are "still regarded as loyal Anglicans in good standing, that our position is an acceptable theological position to hold."

Women priests not 'going away'

Women priests are "not going to go away," no matter what the opposition from traditionalists, said the Rev. Barbara Clay, rector of St. Laurence Anglican Church in British Columbia, Canada, and the only woman priest on the ACC. She urged traditionalists to feel more hopeful about their future, pointing out that "those of us in the minority for years have survived."

Clay added, "I really, really wish that we as a church could spend as much time talking about what we do and not about who is going to do it."

Women and men who approve of women's ordination can also form "a very isolated minority" in dioceses that oppose it, noted Dr. Muriel Porter of Victoria, Australia. She pleaded that bishops of such dioceses be pastoral to their needs as well, even to the point of inviting women priests to minister to them. She also expressed desire that women be included on the new Eames Commission.

Archbishop of Cape Town Desmond Tutu and Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey both stressed the importance of finding ways to live together. "We agree on too many other issues to allow ourselves to be separated," Tutu said. The wider church must "clearly, genuinely respect the integrity of those opposed to the ordination of women," he said. "If they are diminished, whether or not we like it, we are diminished." Carey played the peacemaker in the debate, urging each side to approach the arguments in a spirit of generosity.

Reaffirmation for diocesan boundaries

In the end, participants reaffirmed the position adopted at former Lambeth Conferences that it is "inappropriate behavior for any bishop or priest of this Communion to exercise episcopal or pastoral ministry within a diocese without first obtaining the permission and invitation of the ecclesial authority thereof." At the same time, participants called for pastoral provisions to minister to those opposed to women's ordination, specifically through the continuation of the archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate, otherwise known as the Eames Commission after its chair, Archbishop Robert Eames, primate of Ireland.

The resolution also "calls upon the bishops of the Anglican Communion to be scrupulously fair in the exercise of pastoral care to those who oppose and those who accept the ordination of women."

Will traditionalists leave?

Bishop Mark Dyer of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a member of the Eames Commission and the ACC, predicted that ESA bishops would be disappointed with the joint conference's resolution, but probably would not leave the Anglican fold. "What [they are] asking for in all of the documentation I've seen through the years is an extra-territorial and even extra-provincial jurisdiction for those with doctrinal objections to the ordination of women," Dyer said.

Although the action of the joint meeting is advisory, its passage should be seen as "a double whammy," Dyer concluded. "I would say it closes the door on that issue [a separate jurisdiction], with the pastoral door still open with the Eames Commission."

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