

The Anglican Consultative Council

GENESIS

1968 Lambeth recommended, subject to the adoption by the then 24 autonomous Churches of the Anglican Communion, the formation of the Anglican Consultative Council. It would be relatively *small*, with only three representatives from the largest constituent Churches, two from middle-size, and one from the small churches. (Its membership has not yet exceeded 60 persons.) It would be a *continuing* body under the *permanent* presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, but with an elected chairman, vice-chairman, and Standing Committee; in this it differs from Lambeth which exists only for the duration of a conference, and is held only on the initiative of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who decides who shall be invited. Its executive officer would be the Secretary-General, sometimes called the Anglican Officer, presently the Rt. Rev. John A.M. Howe. Lambeth further stipulated the *Terms of Reference* of this body; Americans would probably use a term like charter, or functions, or duties. These are appended to this report, and deserve careful study.

In reading these Terms of Reference it is important to note carefully the infinitives with which each begins: to share, to advise, to develop, to serve as needed, to keep before, to encourage and guide, to keep in review. The accent in ACC is on the middle word of the title: *consultative*. Like Lambeth itself, ACC is not a legislative body, cannot impose any decision on any member Province or on the Communion as a whole.

Houston, 1970, voted to adopt the ACC recommendation from Lambeth, and elected our first three representatives to it. Following assigned terms to insure rotation, Bishop Hines was elected for two years, the Rev. G. Henson Jacobs of Brooklyn for four, and Mrs. Harold C. Kelleran of Alexandria for six. The By-laws have since been changed to state that the term of office is for three meetings of the Council, normally held at intervals of two to three years. We have been fully represented at each of the four meetings of ACC, and copies of the Reports of the meetings have been sent promptly to all diocesan bishops. Your representatives appreciate this opportunity to report to the Church at large, through elected deputies to the General Convention.

THE OPERATION OF ACC

The central office is at 14 Great Peter Street, London, a stone's throw from the Westminster Abbey in one direction and Lambeth Palace in another. But ACC is *not* part of the Church of England, which from its point of view is just one — albeit an important one — of the now 26 autonomous Churches, correctly called Provinces, which make up the Anglican Communion. Bishop Howe, the Secretary-General, is an Englishman who is a Scottish bishop, a man of wisdom, integrity, boundless energy and humor. He is at home in every one of the Provinces, belonging equally to all.

Our staff is miniscule. Many people will have met the Rev. David Chaplin, for several years Bishop Howe's Principal Assistant, in charge of the World Mission work largely coordinated under the title *Partners in Mission*. The Administrative Undersecretary, a chartered accountant named Michael Sams, is a friend to all who must deal in several currencies each affected by inflation and depreciation. A third staff member has joined in June 1979, Mr. John K. Martin, of Australia, who will be the Communications man for the Council — meaning real communication, not just publicity and P.R., valuable as these are. Mr. Chaplin has moved to a new post, and has not yet been replaced. We hope for a Third World representative for the World Mission post. Two enormously able secretaries complete this staff.

APPENDICES

SOME HISTORY

Four meetings, roughly two years apart but sometimes as long as two years, eight months, have been held — at Limuru, Kenya (1971), Dublin (1973), Trinidad (1976) and Huron, Canada (May 1979).

Your representatives to these 12-day meetings testify to a unique experience of the world Church, and of the Church in widely differing worlds of thought and action. We have learned that the words *Anglican Communion* should not allow us to think white, or western, or affluent, or untroubled. Nor should we think un-related, or English, or Commonwealth. Any of these specific words is a very partial description of the Council and its member churches. Our 65 million Anglicans, not a large group in world population terms, are still more widely scattered over the globe than any other body except the Roman Catholic Church. Their roots are deep in ancient civilizations of the East, in the stratified tribal societies of Africa, in cultures and societies we scarcely know. ACC, with its residential meetings — a practice adopted by Lambeth 1978 to its great benefit — gives mealtimes, a few free hours of afternoon or evening, for opportunities to meet with other races, colors, orders, sexes — all in the bond of Christ's Church. This fellowship in Christ, the breaking down of stereotypes and the acquisition of new perspectives on the world we share, may be, as at Lambeth, the single greatest value of the meetings. These are certainly basic to joint action, to understanding the reasons for activities of one Church which would seem foreign to others. The will to live and act together in spite of our diversities comes from this fellowship.

We have learned a good bit about other churches as well as about our own. Our General Convention is the oldest synodical government (representative, requiring joint action by three orders) in the Communion. The decision of the Church at the time of the American Revolution to elect bishops by ballot of clergy and laity marked an approach new since the time of Constantine. The decision that metropolitan authority is vested in both Houses and all orders was a radically new decision. Much of the very essence of our church life, and some of its tensions, are in these three facts of our history. It is also true that we share with the Episcopal Church of Scotland, both insisting on a continuing relationship with the See of Canterbury though unable to remain in the Church of England, responsibility for the development of what we now know as the Anglican Communion.

We are asked, politely, and sometimes ask ourselves, some questions. Though the oldest synodical government, we are perhaps the least changed or reformed. We are the only Anglican Province which maintains a House of Bishops separate from that of clerical and lay deputies; *all* the others are unicameral. We are alone among Anglicans in having other than diocesans seated or voting in our House of Bishops. We are gradually working out, and this Convention will do more in this direction, our relation with 'our' missionary dioceses that may help to save us from the charge of colonialism.

As Americans we have been treated with admiration, respect, and gratitude for the quality of leadership, the planning, and the money this Church has for generations given to other Anglican Churches. In the new relation of brother and sister Churches, with a high respect for each others' national and cultural integrity and an equally high respect for our common obedience to and our common mission under Christ, a new way of working is developing. For this the ACC is grateful, and thanks this Convention for the trust it evinced in support of our common cause in the Anglican world.

Now look at the Terms of Reference. You will see that 4, 5, and 6 deal with ecumenical affairs and developments, as this Convention will. Numbers 1 and 7 are related to the essential communication between these widely scattered autonomous churches. Items 2 and 8 refer to order and discipline in the Communion, such items as metro-

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political authority, what holds us together, Anglican comprehensiveness, new provinces — again a Convention concern. Item 3 relates to the coordinating of policy and programs of World Mission all across these churches. What we have done in these areas, all of them, is set forth in those printed booklets which are our Report. Best way to catch up on these is to read carefully the current Report, off the press this summer. We hope your imagination will be fired, your hearts lifted, and your minds stretched by the vision of a world Church, and by its actuality.

Bishop Hines has been succeeded by Bishop Allin, who made a major contribution of leadership at ACC IV. The Rev. Mr. Jacobs gave way to the Rev. Mr. Kimsey of Eastern Oregon, whose term goes through ACC V (Probably 1981). Mrs. Kelleran's term expired in 1977, but as she has been elected Chairman, she continues as an Additional Member of the Council. Her successor, subject to the confirmation of this Convention, is Mrs. Carter Chinnis of the Diocese of Washington. Mrs. Chinnis attended ACC IV in May 1979 in Canada, and was elected to the Standing Committee of the Council. Her term will normally go through ACC VI, probably in 1983.

Bishop Howe will be visiting General Convention during its first week. Our other representatives will be around too, glad to answer questions and fill in details.

Marian Kelleran, *Chairman*

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Resolution 69 of the Lambeth Conference, 1968, assigned to the Anglican Consultative Council these functions:

1. To share information about developments in one or more Provinces with the other parts of the Communion and to serve as needed as an instrument of common action.
2. To advise on inter-Anglican, provincial, and diocesan relationships, including the division of Provinces, the formation of new Provinces and of Regional Councils, and the problems of extra-provincial Dioceses.
3. To develop as far as possible agreed Anglican policies in the World Mission of the Church and to encourage national and regional Churches to engage together in developing and implementing such policies by sharing their resources of manpower, money, and experience to the best advantage of all.
4. To keep before national and regional Churches the importance of the fullest possible Anglican collaboration with other Christian Churches.
5. To encourage and guide Anglican participation in the Ecumenical Movement and the ecumenical organizations; to cooperate with the World Council of Churches and the world confessional bodies on behalf of the Anglican Communion; and to make arrangements for the conduct of pan-Anglican conversations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, and other Churches.
6. To advise, on matters arising out of national or regional Church Union negotiations or conversations and on subsequent relations with united Churches.
7. To advise on problems of inter-Anglican communication and to help in the dissemination of Anglican and ecumenical information.
8. To keep in review the needs that may arise for further study and, where necessary, to promote inquiry and research.