

The Rev. Kenneth Gunn-Walburg's Response
to The Rev. Herman Hattaway's paper on The One Church

Your Grace, My Lords, friends and colleagues. Thank you, Wally, for your kind introduction.

In responding to Dr. Hattaway's presentation, I wish at the outset to thank him for his focus on oneness in terms of the potential for Anglican unity as envisioned in the Affirmation of St. Louis and embodied briefly in the Anglican Church of North America as we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the Congress of St. Louis.

His paper seems to have three major divisions: firstly Billy Graham and denominationalism; secondly, seeking the sources of our unity; and lastly, how we can achieve a oneness including uniate status with Rome. I will also comment briefly on the interesting talk given at our banquet last evening.

Billy Graham is mentioned twice and denominationalism five times in the opening comments, so let us look at each. After the March on Washington in 1963, Graham said, "Only when Christ comes again, will the little white children of Alabama walk hand in hand with the little black children." Today we have his response to the question, "Will the denominations ever come together?" He responded, "I am afraid it probably won't be until shortly before the second coming."

Seemingly, Dr. Graham, who now at 87 regrets he never attended a seminary, was able to immanentize the eschaton Coptics and Southern Baptists would be one some time before the children in Alabama could walk hand in hand.

More seriously, the acceptance of the concept of denominations is rather pernicious as it is of sectarian, non-conformist origin so, while it may flow freely from the pen of a Presbyterian *cum* Southern Baptist, a Churchman should not use it. We may be fragmented in our common witness either as so-called "continuing" Anglicans or be in impaired communion, but we are not denominations severally or collectively. The term was first conceived by the Puritans in the mid-seventeenth century. It was argued that one particular Christian group is simply a member of the larger church. The cause of Christ thus could not be identified with any one group. Each group could be "denominated" by some shared beliefs or similar characteristics. Following from this was the "Denominationalist Theory," which usurped the concept of apostolic succession by positing that true succession happens in the church not with bishops, but believers. This was the argument advanced at the Westminster Assembly in 1645. Ideas do have consequences, and out of this idea came the martyrdom of Laud, Charles, the English Civil War, and the suppression of the Church of England. In the mid-eighteenth century it was again popularized during the Evangelical Revival and did play a role in the First Americas Civil War of the 1770's.

As for Leadbetter's universalism, I am reminded not only of His Grace's remarks last evening, but in a somewhat different context, also of Nelson Rockefeller always including in his stump speeches at some point "the brotherhood of man, and the fatherhood of God." His aides would await its inevitable appearance, which they referred to as BOMFOG. Interestingly, the Episcopal Church of today would find BOMFOG terribly exclusive and sexist.

Fr. Hattaway states that Anglicans in the USA "compromise only about 1 million or so real members." I assume the reference is to the total membership of the Episcopal Church, but this is not apparent from the designation or context. Perhaps he might explain. Would that it were so!!!!

In his brief summary of what unites us, he gives us a succinct summary of the Affirmation of St. Louis and refers to the Anglican Way. This is a term often used by Dr. Peter Toon, but others including the now retired A.C.C. Archbishop John-Charles. He mentions the source of our divisions, and states that they are primarily "governmental" and "personality clashes," but elaborates on neither. This is perhaps fortunate, especially as to the latter. I would, however, recommend for those of us who have not yet read it, "Divided We Stand: A History of the Continuing Anglican Movement" by Douglas Bess. As for governmental structures or polity, now that the much maligned canons of the A.C.C. are available in an inexpensive paperback format, I would suggest that critics might actually read them now that they are readily obtainable. Also, certainly differences in sacramental theology, ecclesiology, adiaphora, and cultic matters in addition were not insignificant and continue to be so.

As for the proposal of a national congress suggested by Dr. Toon and Dr. Hattaway, and to consist of those following and committed to the rather nebulous Anglican Way both without and within the Episcopal Church, there is so much to recommend such. I would suggest the common denominator for such would and should be the Affirmation of St. Louis – no more, no less – and in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the St. Louis Congress, that such meetings be hosted by the F.C.C. Another possibility would be a series of regional meetings, as has become the practice of the F.C.C. in the off-year between general meetings. Given such criteria, Ms. Smith of last evening would not be invited, nor would Bishop Duncan, who is wobbly on several crucial matters, nor would Anglican Action which is just thoroughly wet. The three faithful bishops of the three faithful dioceses of the Episcopal Church might well be key participants. As for an Archbishop to preside, I would suggest Archbishop Haverland, who has an aristocracy of character, is deliberately educated in the humane Anglican tradition and who concedes nothing to the social gospellers, liberals, latitudinarians, modernists, and post-modernists. John Broadhurst, Bishop of Fulham, might be invited who has rather flinty elbows.

In addition, there are various groups gearing up for conferences in the wake of General Convention and the F.C.C. should monitor such, and if their objects are consonant with those of the F.C.C. and the Affirmation, or might be persuaded by right reason, the F.C.C. should seek to be represented at such.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Hattaway references the Traditional Anglican Communion and its desire for unity with “the (Roman Catholic) Holy See,” an approach which he states commenced eleven years ago with a ten member bishop delegation visiting Rome and making their desires known to the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity and then renewing their desire every second year since.

This seems, to date, a rather one-way dialogue. Please inform us of the nature of such approaches and the responses. My present opinion is that Rome would not accept an Archbishop who having taken the ferry from Rome would now want a return trip with a small load of passengers and another Archbishop who has a bit of hand luggage to declare in terms of being deposed by the Episcopal Church and summoned to trial by the A.C.C. and also a former Archbishop who was of dubious background. Several questions also arise which should concern us all. Since Rome has rejected the validity of Anglican orders and views Anglicanism itself as a result of the dynastic pretensions of a syphilitic king, why, after 500 years, should it reverse itself? Would Rome accept tripartite synodical forms of government in a Uniate body? Would it accept our historic liturgies and formularies? What of the clergy of the ACA? Would they be adjudicated individually for acceptance or all accepted in orders? Would Rome accept parochial ownership of property?

There is, also, the matter of Fr. Ramsey Williams’ letter to the Christian Challenge March/April 2006 issue, which seemingly spoke for both Archbishops Falk and Hepworth.

In conclusion, I do hope the Archbishop’s talk last evening and the papers presented today might appear in print and/or on the F.C.C. and Christian Challenge websites. As for the former’s address, I am sorry he did not choose Robert Herrick, John Betjeman, and Canon Bernard Iddings Bell on Anglicanism’s A-list. Also, while it was a realistic portrayal of our sad state, it seemed to put us with one foot in the grave and the other not knowing whether to hobble to Rome or Constantinople. Where is there hope? Is there any hope? Well, between the death of Blessed Charles and the enthronement of good Queen Anne, 53 years had elapsed. We have endured only 30 years of true turmoil.

What then of Rome and Orthodoxy? For some Anglicans and indeed some Orthodox, Anglicanism has been seen as Orthodoxy in the West. There is something in such, yet Orthodoxy itself has severe problems today, both East and West. Its liturgy, it is true, has been constant for upwards of a thousand years, and in the era of Soviet imperialism its liturgy was a focus for faith against the atheistic ideology of Marxism. Today, however, Orthodoxy is confronting secularism in the form of encroaching Western materialism in its heartlands.

In the western diaspora, there is question of ethnicity and assimilation. The Roman Catholic Church faces a crisis of vocations, it is riven by scandal, the post-Vatican II rites are plagued by banality and diversity mirrored in the casualness of the semi-faithful. Priests are both over-worked and bored, priding themselves only in the fact they can get from amice to amice on a Saturday evening and communicate five hundred people in 45

minutes. In its historic heartland of continental Europe there are steep demographic declines. Rome itself has dozens of boarded up churches. Neo-paganism, secularism, and the presence of Islam are in the ascendent.

As faithful Anglicans, in contrast, we do have certain factors in our favor. Our North American culture in its essential contours remains British. We have much to contribute to an overdue cultural renewal and reinvigoration.

Beyond North America, there is also the fact that while British imperialism, when the faith followed the flag, lies long dead, the English language now reaches where the flag never flew, as Lord Bragg has so eloquently discussed. Also, we do have the primitive faith of the ancient and undivided church expressed in the lingua franca of the twenty-first century, which is English, and expressed in the sweet, beautiful and classic form of that language.

Any Apostle, any Church Father, any Christian until the crack-up of the 11th century and beyond, if to appear, would understand what is being done in any of our churches on a Sunday morning. This cannot be said of praise and worship services, neo-druidic rites, and other abominations.

As T. S. Eliot said, there are no lost causes because there are no gained causes. Let us be bold, let us of our remnants make whole and seamless cloth; let us reaffirm the vision of St. Louis, and let the rest lie with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.