

being reported to the Standing Committee at its next meeting prior to being referred back to the Governing Body for detailed approval.

This part of the proceedings having been concluded, the Archbishop drew members' attention to the fact that this was the final occasion when Mr Parkinson would present and introduce the Representative Body's report as he was due to retire as Chairman of the Representative Body at the end of September, having discharged these onerous responsibilities for the last ten years. The Governing Body responded warmly to the Archbishop's tribute to Mr Parkinson, to whom it had fallen to guide the Representative Body through difficult financial times, and wished him and Mrs Parkinson well for the future.

The second day's business was concerned principally with the committee stage and the vote on the Bill to provide for the authorisation of an Ecumenical Bishop for the Local Ecumenical Projects in East Cardiff. This was the Bill for which the presentation in April had been an introduction. By its nature the Bill was one which allowed little scope for detailed amendment and most of the discussion came on the motion that the Bill be passed. A great many speeches were made during this part of the debate. In a subject on which inevitably strong feelings were held respectively in favour of and against the proposal, the debate was notable for an atmosphere of respect for the opposing views. In the end the Bill failed to obtain the requisite majority and was lost.

The remainder of the day was taken up with a presentation of proposals for an alternative calendar, lectionary and collect and a number of reports. Proceedings closed with a presentation led by the Bishop of Llandaff and the Chairman of the Standing Committee to the Archbishop and Mrs Williams, this having been the last meeting of the Governing Body over which the Archbishop would preside prior to his translation to Canterbury.

THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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A Eucharist set the Synod in motion, the preacher being the Bishop of Manicaland, Zimbabwe. A formal welcome by the Primus followed, in which he encouraged the Synod, since conflict was intrinsic to human experience, to engage in it creatively and in a way which would enliven the mission of the Church. The good wishes of the Synod were then sent to Her Majesty the Queen in this her golden jubilee year. A break ensued for lunch before the Synod pursued its agenda.

Business started off on a low key, with the Reports of various committees. There was a non-contentious motion on the Middle East situation, expressing the deep concern of the Synod on the escalating violence and its wish that this concern be conveyed to the Governments of Israel and the United States and to the Leaders of the Palestine People. The Church's Theological Institute had been the subject of considerable criticism throughout the year, particularly in respect of the unhappy working relationships. A new director had been appointed to oversee the operation and management of the Institute (who is to report in three months' time on the effectiveness of the new staffing and structures), and this led to the debate being short. In response to a question it was reported that there had been thirteen students in the last year, and that in the coming year the body of students would be between eight and ten. The first day's proceedings ended with the perennial matter of Inter-Church Relations, with some advances made but no breakthrough in prospect. The best that could be expected was that slow progress might be made, and that the financial distresses from which all Churches were suffering might encourage a move to greater co-operation.

Even before the Synod met, the Press had forecast that the canonical change to provide for the ordination of women to the Episcopate would be carried, and had even suggested the name of the first female priest to hold the office. On the second day this was the opening topic. A Green Paper had been presented to, and accepted by, the Synod last year so that the ground had been fully explored, and during the year the dioceses had had a chance of discussing it. All had expressed views in favour of the proposal. The theology and pastoral and practical issues had been set out in the Green Paper, and among the pastoral provisions which the College of Bishops had declared would operate was that no-one would be rejected as a candidate for ordination to the priesthood because of his or her attitude to women in the priesthood. The Bishops had also declared that no congregation or individual member of the Church, lay or clerical, would be required to accept the sacramental ministries of women bishops, those ordained by them, or women priests.

In the diocesan discussions fears had been voiced about abandoning traditions and relations with other Churches; concern had also been expressed that there might be positive discrimination in favour of women candidates. No substantial theological reason had been found for resisting the resolution, and though it might cause hurt to some worshippers, it was thought right to resist the tyranny of the minority. Such opposition as emerged at the meeting came from women, and the resolution was duly passed for the first time.

After such an emotional proposal little discussion took place on the second canon to come up for the first time. This provided for the retiral of clergy at the age of 65. After that age no-one in future shall be appointed to a stipendiary office, and anyone appointed to such office after 1 October 2003 shall vacate office on attaining that age. Those holding a stipendiary office on 30 September 2003 could be forced to retire on becoming 70, and anyone who

held a stipendiary office on 15 July 1991 would not be subject to compulsory retirement on account of age while they held that office. The canon was duly passed for the first time.

Canon 64 came up for a second reading. It provides for clergy who become incapacitated to be referred to a medical review panel. Since the first reading, at which concern had been expressed for proper financial provision being made for such clergy and their families, a draft scheme had been prepared based on that in use in the Church of England; this was incorporated in the Digest of Resolutions (a form of legislation which is more flexible as requiring only to be passed once by a simple majority of those present and voting, without separating into Houses). A further Resolution relating to the Canon provided for reasonable expenses of the Canon's Assessment and Appeal Panels being met by the General Synod and also the reasonable expenses of the cleric in the way of professional fees and travelling expenses. The passing of the new Canon necessitated the repeal of the old Canon 13, which dealt inadequately with the same situation.

The only other canonical change reduced the period for which a cleric could be away from his charge without the bishop's consent from nine to six weeks.

The Liturgical Committee had drawn up a new Marriage Liturgy, and this was quietly approved for use in congregations for an experimental period of three years.

The Green Paper on Membership, however, evoked greater discussion. This had been instructed in 1999 in an attempt to ease the restrictions on admission to Holy Communion (particularly for members of other denominations) and to make it easier for such worshippers to join the Episcopal Church. The present position was thought to be confused and to lack coherence. It was also thought desirable to lay down the procedure for a person to become a formal member of a congregation—both so that in the event of a vote being taken it is clear who is on the Electoral Roll, and also to know who would be liable to meet the Church's obligations in the event of a disputed claim. Helpfully the committee had appended to this report a suggested Electoral Roll application form for completion by a constituent member of the congregation which, if completed, would entitle him to speak and vote at meetings and to hold office. The paper was welcomed by the Primus, and the Synod recommended that it be sent down to dioceses for comment so that it could be brought back for further discussion next year.

A second Green Paper came up for consideration on the standardisation of congregational status. This had been instructed in June 2000 on the request of the Clergy Personnel Commission. The Canons Commission had been asked to present alternative models of security for clergy, and the bishops had added to the remit the consideration of canonical changes required to assimilate stipendiary and non-stipendiary or self-supporting ministries into a common regulatory framework.

The Green Paper suggested a flexible framework in which ministry as part of Mission be developed to meet the needs of the 21st century. For consideration of clergy tenure four options have been put forward: (a) qualified security of tenure, (b) appointment for a term of years with provision for renewal, (c) appointment subject to notice, or (d) appointment as provincial or diocesan clergy, with consequent security. The provisions of secular law had also to be kept in mind. The Green Paper recommended that the Synod:-

1. approve the proposal that all Charges should be subject to regular review and finance;
2. invite dioceses to consider the options for clergy service outlined and to make recommendations as to the preferred model for the ordained stipendiary ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church;
3. approve the associated principle of standardised status of congregations; and
4. charge the Standing Committee to instruct the relevant bodies to bring forward appropriate amendments to the Code of Canons, the Digest of Resolutions and the Model Constitution of a change to implement such changes, including the proviso that these should take effect as and when Charges fall vacant, without prejudice to the existing rights of present incumbents.

Discussion of the Paper included reference to the joys of diversity, fears of centralisation, the possibility of retention of the status quo, the lack of provision for team ministry, and the impact some of the options would have on the relationship of a rector to his congregation. The report containing the Green Paper was received and the Paper was remitted to dioceses to consider. They were instructed to respond with their comments not later than March 2003.

The Synod discussed at length the steps required to satisfy legislation on Child Protection and adopted the Code of Practice for Registered Persons of Disclosure Information for protecting the vulnerable by safer recruitment. (A document published by the Scottish Ministers).

And finally Accounts and Budgets were accepted and Quota for the coming year fixed. A motion was passed acknowledging the desirability of a more flexible budgetary process, with the specific proposals to be formulated in time for next year's Synod. Under the existing system there was no money available for new initiatives to be taken on. In future all income, quota and investment would be placed in a central income pool, and from there allocated to Boards.

Thus steps forward were taken. Changes were made, mainly by the irresistible pressure of events and only secondarily by the slow undermining of old prejudices and the advancing of modern theological issues. It remains to be seen if the Green Papers, which contain some far-reaching proposals, are supported by dioceses and lead to legislation next year.