

THE STANDING COMMISSION ON WORLD MISSION
An Interim Body of General Convention

MINUTES OF MEETING
4-11 October 2002 in Havana, Cuba

The fall meeting of the commission was held at the Hotel Copacabana in Havana, Cuba. Most commission members arrived on Friday, 4 October.

Members present were: The Very Rev. Dr. Titus Presler, chair; the Rev. Canon Kate Cullinane, vice-chair, Mrs. Nancy Broadwell secretary; Mrs. Joan Hermon, Ms. Helena Mbele-Mbong, the Rt. Rev. William Skilton, Ms. Diana Dillenberger-Frade, Mr. Willis Jenkins, and the Rt. Rev. Wilfredo Ramos-Orench (arrived on Monday). Members unable to attend were Mr. Dennis Case, the Rev. Harold Lewis, and the Rt. Rev. James Folts.

Representing the Anglican and Global Relations Cluster was the Rev. Canon Patrick Mauney, director. Representing Executive Council was Ms. Carole Jan Lee, liaison. The Rev. Philip Wadham of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Metropolitan Council for Cuba, present for the consultation on the proposed incorporation into ECUSA of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela was invited to join the group.

The generous hospitality of the Episcopal Diocese of Cuba included an opportunity to see something of the city of Havana and tour the cathedral complex on Saturday. At the cathedral the group had discussions with ecumenical students who study theology in a large lay program that uses the cathedral facilities. The tour ended with a time for refreshment and conversation at the Bp. Perera's residence.

There were two opportunities for worship on Sunday. One group attended La Santa Cruz del Norte, where Bp. Orlando Guerrero of Venezuela, a consultation participant, was the celebrant. A larger group attended Catedral de La Santisima Trinidad, where commissioner Bp. William Skilton of South Carolina had been invited to preach, he having grown up in that parish as the child of an expatriate American family. The group at the cathedral was introduced to the congregation and heard about ministries that take place at the cathedral and throughout the diocese. Both groups were able to speak with members of the cathedral congregation at a reception following the service.

Commission members convened on Sunday afternoon and began by hearing from one another about personal, professional and missional events that occurred since the April meeting with EPGM at Camp St. Christopher in South Carolina.

European Convocation News

Helena Mbele-Mbong included in her update news of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe. As a result of a Partners in Mission Consultation, the missions in France and Germany are growing and there is a widening vision for mission. A mission congregation is now meeting

in St. Petersburg, Russia. These missions are being initiated by local people with support from the Convocation. There will soon be a fulltime youth minister in the Convocation. Bp. Skilton will attend the annual convention of the Convocation to be held in November 2002 in Geneva.

Background for Incorporation Consultation

The agenda for the Consultation on the Proposed Incorporation of the Dioceses of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela into ECUSA and the agenda for the time that the commission was to meet alone were discussed and agreed to by the commission. The consultation with the representatives of the dioceses was scheduled for all day Monday, Tuesday morning, and a portion of Wednesday. A visit to El Seminario Evangelico de Teologia at Matanzas was arranged for Tuesday afternoon. This visit included hospitality, a tour of the seminary and an opportunity to have considerable conversation with a group of Episcopal, Presbyterian and Methodist students.

Pat Mauney reviewed some of the history of how each of the three dioceses has been in relationship with the church in the US over the years. The Diocese of Cuba in the mid-1960's was a missionary diocese under the jurisdiction of the House of Bishops. The death of the bishop of Cuba and the reluctance of the House of Bishops to appoint a bishop to replace him in the context of the USA-Cuba political tensions led to Cuba being designated extra-provincial and the transfer of authority to the Metropolitan Council, which is chaired by the Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada and which includes the Primate of the Province of the West Indies and the President of Province IX of ECUSA.

While earlier all of ECUSA's Province IX was expected to become one autonomous Anglican province, in 1984 Province IX was divided into regions for the purpose of working toward autonomy for each region. Puerto Rico became extra-provincial at that time with the idea that such status would be a temporary step on the way to joining the projected Province of the Caribbean. The Diocese of Venezuela was at one time part of the Province of the West Indies. The diocese later became extra-provincial, but with the Synod of Province IX as its metropolitan authority.

Pat Mauney had met with David Beers, the Presiding Bishop's Chancellor, who stated that he believed there are no canonical obstacles to the incorporation of the three dioceses. Pat said he would consult with a contact person at the US Treasury Department to clarify how financial and travel matters related to the Diocese of Cuba could be handled in view of US Government restrictions. Pat noted that prior to the separation the Diocese of Cuba received more money from ECUSA than any other diocese and that some support has continued over the years until today.

AGR Report

The SCWM meeting time resumed on Wednesday morning with a continuation of the report by Pat Mauney.

The first joint appointment of a missionary with the ECLA has been made in Taiwan. A Lutheran pastor from Chicago is serving as rector of an Episcopal parish, in the company of his wife and two young daughters; his commissioning in Chicago included the local Lutheran bishop and the Rt. Rev. Christopher Epting, deputy ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church. Here in the USA, work has begun to minister with Nigerians who are exiled from their country.

In AGR staff news, the Rev. Benjamin Musoke-Lubega, the recently appointed AGR Officer for Africa, traveled with a delegation from Church World Service and Witness to Africa. Reflecting the growing ecumenical commitments of AGR staff, Mission Networks and Interpretation Officer Margaret Larom is chairing the Education for Mission Commission of the National Council of Churches. In May and June Mission Personnel Officer Jane Butterfield traveled extensively to visit missionaries in India, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and South Africa. United Thank Offering Coordinator Joanne Chapman accompanied her on what was Joanne's first visit to Africa. Sara Savvedra, assistant to Partnerships Officer Juan Marquez is leaving AGR to be married and move to Florida; the commission will send a resolution thanking her for her service to the commission. Pat noted that the program work of the Episcopal Church Center was affected by the fact that Sonia Francis, the Presiding Bishop's deputy for program, was ill and on a leave of absence.

Budget Process

Pat Mauney reported that Executive Council set five primary goals as guides for budget planning: partnerships with Anglican provinces; youth and young adult ministry; proclamation of the gospel; revitalization and transformation of congregations; and diversity, justice, and reaching out to the marginalized. Recommendations from the staff were to be presented to the October meeting of Executive Council. Recommendations will go to Program, Budget and Finance and be returned to Council at its January meeting. Investment income is down because of the current stock market decline, and for the first time since 1994 less money will be available. A \$9 million shortfall is projected over the next triennium, 2004-06. The staff of each department had to look at its own budget and set priorities in light of the Executive Council guidelines. AGR identified \$350,000 which could be freed from current AGR commitments and recommended that it be used to enhance the Young Adult Service Corps and to enhance partnerships with Anglican provinces in Africa.

The question was raised whether and how the SCWM vision statement which is being prepared — *Companions in Mission: The Episcopal Church's World Mission in a New Century* — can have an impact on the budgetary process. Pat stated that he has been able to measure and share with senior staff at the Episcopal Church Center the decline in General Convention/DFMS resources assigned to the global church over the last several decades. The historical period of the covenant process will come to an end over the next 10-20 years, which should free up funds presently committed to supporting provinces that were formerly part of ECUSA (e.g., the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, la Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico. la Iglesia Anglicana de la Region Centrale de America). The vision statement could chart new ways of doing mission that can use re-directed resources.

Funding levels for overseas dioceses will be determined later in the budget process, after more data is available. There may be some reassignment in view of the misappropriation scandals unfolding in dioceses in Mexico and Ecuador, which are now being addressed by Executive Council, the Presiding Bishop, and the Treasurer's Office.

There was consensus that SCWM needs to take a strong stand on the issues of financial accountability and covenant review in order that the misappropriation scandals not affect negatively ECUSA's international mission work and the efforts of the commission to build it up. It was noted that trusting the leaders of newly autonomous provinces has been a major emphasis historically and that this concern has detracted from efforts to monitor the stewardship of funds contributed.

[Pat Mauney and Bp. Alvarez departed Wednesday afternoon.]

Vision Statement Review

Participants from Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela were given a copy of the draft document prepared by the commission's Vision Subcommittee that had been sent to commissioners prior to the meeting. All were invited to participate in the Wednesday afternoon discussion of the document. Notes of comments and suggestions were made by subcommittee members Titus, Helena and Willis, who will take them into account in the revision to be presented for discussion at the SCWM's January meeting.

It was noted that the current draft had been circulated to: the Seminary Consultation on Mission, which was meeting in Toronto simultaneously with the SCWM meeting; all DFMS missionaries; all EPGM organizations, which were encouraged to share it with their constituencies, especially missionaries in the field; members of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission Mission and Evangelism; members of Executive Council's Committee on International Concerns; to other Anglican mission agencies, such as the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and to various other groups and individuals. In all, the draft had been sent to over 200 parties with invitations to send responses and assessments back by the end of November.

Logistics

The time of the January 2003 meeting was discussed and established. Commissioners will travel on Saturday the 11th, with the meeting to begin after church on Sunday, Jan. 12, and continue through Tuesday evening, Jan. 14. Commissioners will travel on Wednesday, Jan. 15.

[Kate Cullinane and Carole Jan Lee departed on Thursday morning.]

An invitation was issued through Bp. Perera for commissioners and guests to meet with Licenciada Caridad Diego Bello, Jefe Oficina Atencion Asuntos Religiosos, Departamento do Asuritos Religiosos, Comité Central, Partido Comunista de Cuba. This appeared to be an significant opportunity to discuss with an important government official the relation between

religious affairs and state policy in Cuba. Due to a national Cuban holiday on Thursday, the meeting was rescheduled for Friday. Commissioners and guests who were not departing prior to the meeting did attend.

Discussion of and Action on the Incorporation Consultation

Evaluation and discussion of the consultation continued with only members of the SCWM present. Venezuela is ready, has its resolution from the synod in place, and will proceed to do the necessary things to move forward. Cuba and Puerto Rico still need final approval from synods, which are scheduled to take place in early December. The main issue appears to be the concern of some each of those dioceses that the move back to ECUSA not prevent the formation of a Province of the Caribbean when they are ready. A communication from SCWM will be drafted by Titus Presler, Bill Skilton and Wilfredo Ramos-Orench to assure them of the support of this commission and to reassure them that the freedom and responsibility to initiate changes in their future lies with them, not with ECUSA. The resolutions presented by SCWM will recommend full incorporation and at the same time leave open the possibility of their taking initiative in the future to form or join another Anglican province.

The formal Blue Book report from this commission will include a history and description of each diocese. There will be a separate resolution for each diocese with appropriate explanation.

A motion was made by Bp. Wilfredo Ramos-Orench and seconded by Bp. William Skilton that the Standing Commission on World Mission recommend to the 2003 General Convention that the Diocese of Cuba, the Diocese of Puerto Rico, and the Diocese of Venezuela be incorporated into ECUSA. The motion was voted unanimously by the commission.

Tasks needing to be carried out about the matter of the incorporation were cited: Kate will follow progress on the pension issues with the Church Pension Fund and each diocese; Bill Skilton will be her back up as needed. Titus will contact the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church as to our resolutions and also ask if contact has been made with the Committee on Constitution and Canons. Titus will write Archbishop Peers. The recommendation about the incorporation committees should be one of the resolves in the resolutions. Helena will help with hospitality at General Convention, for she will arrive early and will be an alternate deputy. Invitations to the dinners of the Church Periodical Club, United Thank Offering, and Episcopal Relief and Development should be sent to those attending from the three dioceses.

Mexico Situation

The issue of the abuse of funds in two dioceses of the Anglican Church of Mexico was discussed. There was consensus that a strong resolution from the SCWM needs to be written which would speak missiologically about the responsibility of accountability. Bill Skilton and Diana Dillenberger-Frade will draft this resolution. There was discussion of how trust and accountability issues have played out over the years as ECUSA has sought to avoid being racist and paternalistic in its position as a relatively rich church relating to poorer churches. Willis

Jenkins suggested that the perspective on mission as gift exchange enables us to see that accountability is inherent in the mutuality of mission and that it must be affirmed as part of the giving, not consigned to a secondary place in mission relationships. Safeguards need to be highlighted in such a way that the church will be prepared for other difficult situations that might arise. Relationships must be redefined to include transparency in giving and receiving.

Young Adult Service Corps and Earth Summit

Willis Jenkins reported on his summer 2002 visits to members of the Young Adult Service Corps who are working in Latin America. The program, established by the 2000 General Convention, has been very successful so far, and more young people ages 18-30 are applying to go on the one-year mission assignments.

Willis also reported on his attendance at the Anglican conference held in conjunction with the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in August. Human rights and environmental concerns are being combined in sustainable development. Bio-diversity and human rights are historically important concerns in the Episcopal Church. There is polarity between rich and poor countries as to how sustainable development will be carried out. Reflected in the vision statement will be the need for the church to show what Christian solutions look like. In some parts of Africa the church is responding in remarkable ways. The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society has eco-missionaries in South Africa who work in renewal energy projects. At the conference there were strong voices from within the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Broadwell
Secretary