

*The procedural motion was put and carried.*

*(Adjournment)*

THE CHAIR *Mrs Diana Webster (Europe)* took the Chair at 2.30 p.m.

Clergy Pensions (GS 1434)

*(Resumed debate)*

*The Chairman* retained a speech limit of three minutes.

*Ms Susan Cooper (London)*: I would like to underline some of the comments that were made by Mrs Alexander yesterday evening, when we were all rather tired. She pointed out that any reduction in the clergy benefit system would have a quite large impact on those who came into the ordained ministry later in life. I am slightly more hard-nosed than she is about this because I think that people do often manage to accumulate pension benefits before they come, but she did point out that those who earned their pension benefits and had left their job before 1991 were likely to have quite eroded benefits from previous careers.

I would like us to consider the advantages of contracting into the State system. It appears that there may be a financial advantage overall to the Church, and so we should certainly look at it in more detail, although it could be difficult explaining the effects of it to people (but that is a communications problem that needs to be dealt with).

Mrs Alexander said that she did not know of any companies changing benefits for people already in service, even if they were talking about changing benefits for future service. She may well be right, but I think that the climate is changing and that, with low rates of interest, people living longer and the impact of the economic situation, other companies may well feel obliged to reduce benefits for future service or change to money purchase schemes. So the Church may not be so far out as she believes.

I agree with Mrs Alexander's amendment, that we need to look at the stipends and pensions together.

*Mr Hugh Privett (Salisbury)*: I am wholly in favour of consultation but there should be realistic limits to it because I am worried about what happens when this gets to diocesan synods. I have a fearful feeling that there is going to be a terrible tangle. What we are talking about here is something to which there is no answer; it is a question of opinions. We are talking about pensions and which types of pension scheme; and what we are looking at is the question of risk, as Alan King mentioned in his introduction. Risk is a thing that applies to everybody in a different way. There is no conclusion about this because it all depends on future investment performance and

the markets in that direction. God alone knows the answer to that, and I do not suppose that he will tell us.

What I would like to suggest as a positive alternative to the consultation is that there might be a memorandum sent to clergy, whom principally this affects, and the results of that could go back to the consultative committee and perhaps to the Pensions Board, which could then make a recommendation to this body about which way to turn.

I think that we are going to get into a fearful muddle if we ask diocesan synods to get involved with the details of prospective pension schemes. This could be avoided by voting against paragraph (a) of the next motion, and I would urge members to consider seriously doing that.

*Mr David Wilkinson (Derby):* I am rather surprised to find myself speaking in a pensions debate, although I am a trustee of a small pension fund which was a defined benefit one but, because of the decisions of the Chancellor in the past, we have had to close it down and move to a money purchase one because the costs were so tremendous. I wonder if that is the way we shall have to go. However, because the financial connections between stipends and pensions are so strong and the cost to the dioceses will be so significant, I am wondering whether we should not consider the Decade of Evangelism as a kind of run-in and move on to a second decade of evangelism that seriously needs to get under way.

Richard Turnbull said yesterday that converted hearts lead to converted pockets, and it has not really been taken up from the floor. If we are to unlock the pockets of those in the pews and those not yet in the pews, we must preach the Gospel of God's grace with renewed urgency: the story of Jesus Christ who, though he was rich, became poor for our sake so that we, through his poverty, might become rich. As folk understand the greatness of God's love for us and the depths of Christ's suffering in our place on the cross and the new life that he offers us, both now and in eternity, as these truths penetrate the minds and hearts of those who do not yet know Jesus, and also those who do but are not gripped by it yet, gratitude for God's goodness will always lead to generous giving.

Okay, it is a loaf of bread a week or whatever, but that is not the way to warm the heart or open the pocket. We need to seek to win the whole man, as happened to Count von Zinzendorf when he saw the painting of Christ on the cross and read the words beneath: 'All this I did for thee. What has thou done for me?' We are confronting a spiritual problem and we need to apply a spiritual solution.

*Mrs Anne Williams (Durham):* On a point of order, Madam Chairman. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

*Mr Alan King*, in reply: I am both obliged to and encouraged by those members of Synod who have spoken on this matter. Those who made their contributions last evening will forgive me if, 24 hours on, I cannot remember what they said word for word, but it is on the record and we will certainly refer to it all. A number of items which were raised, and which I raised in my original presentation, show that we must look at all these things together. The point that Richard Blackburn raised was that we cannot consider, for instance, pensions and stipends separately, and all the other financial issues; they must come together as one. Also, as Clive Mansell reminded us, we must be alert to the knock-on effects; he mentioned the Church Commissioners but there will be knock-on effects for everybody involved in the finances of the Church of England.

The reference made by Stephen Trott, for instance, to the link between stipends and pensions is one that we cannot ignore and is at the heart of much of the thinking.

Coming to matters raised today, Susan Cooper said that we must look seriously at the SERPS question. Also, on the matter of the change in the scheme, while it is probably more usual for a change to apply only to subsequent new entrants, it is by no means unheard of for a change to apply in respect of all future service. We must look at that.

Hugh Privett raises the difficulty of communications and consultation, but I believe and hope that the documents which will be forthcoming soon will help us, particularly with the specific questions that we have to address. So I still believe that that is the best way to proceed.

*The motion was put and carried.*

*Mr Alan King*: I beg to move:

‘That this Synod

- (a) ask the dioceses to respond to the questions contained in the final paragraph of GS 1434 by 30 June 2002; and
- (b) request the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee of the Archbishops’ Council to follow up the issues set out in GS 1434, taking account of the responses from dioceses and other interested parties, and to make a further report to this Synod.’

*The Chairman*: I call Mr Cheeseman to move his amendment.

*Mr Jim Cheeseman (Rochester)*: Madam Chairman, although I believe that too short a consultation period, as I said yesterday, is a folly, I consider that having these two done separately would be an even greater folly, and therefore I do not wish to move the amendment.

*The Chairman:* Mr Cheeseman's amendment therefore lapses, and I call Mr Pye to move his amendment.

*Mr Chris Pye (Liverpool):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (a) *leave out* the words “30 June 2002” and *insert* the words “30 October 2002”.’

Like most of us, I wear many hats, but at the moment I wish that it was my safety hat! Yesterday Richard Turnbull actually made very eloquently, without his realizing it, a case for more time for parishes and dioceses to consider this. The two are linked. I disagree with Mr Cheeseman; if you pass my amendment you have further time to reflect on what was decided yesterday, or, rather, the dioceses and parishes do, rather than the finance forum who seem to know all about it, and their timetable seems to be the one that is set in tablets of stone.

There was something else set in tablets of stone, was there not? The Ten Commandments. We know what happened to them and what is still happening to them.

With regard to timetables and synodical processes, the rest of my speech has been made very eloquently and exceptionally frequently by the Dean of Derby, who has been on his feet like the proverbial Jack-in-a-box in his capacity as Chairman of the Business Committee.

All I ask Synod is for a few more weeks for us to think about it and to take consultation seriously. On the notice paper we have a meeting in February. Surely we are not going to do that much damage to stipends and pensions if we take just a few more weeks.

*Mr Alan King:* I would urge Synod to resist this amendment. Mr Cheeseman has made the point, and I have tried to make it a number of times, that we must have a look at these things together, with the same timetable. Synod decided yesterday that it would accept a June deadline for the stipends review and, for the same reason, we must have the same deadline for the pensions. I can say to Mr Pye that had his amendment been passed yesterday, I would have been prepared to accept this one because I believe that, as Mr Cheeseman said, the important thing is that we discuss these at the same time with the same timetable.

*Mrs Mary Bordass (Salisbury):* On a point of order, Madam Chairman. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The amendment was put and lost.*

*Mrs April Alexander (Southwark):* I beg to move as an amendment:

‘In paragraph (a) *leave out* the words “respond to” and *insert* the word “consider” and after the words “30 June 2002” *insert* the words “in the context of the work of the Stipends Review Group as set out in GS 1408 and to respond to them”; and in paragraph (b) after the words “set out in GS 1434” *insert* the words “alongside those contained in GS 1408” and after the words “other interested parties” *insert* the words “to both sets of questions”.’

*Mr Alan King:* I am happy to accept this amendment because it actually spells out what we have tried to say all along, that the two must be considered together. The other items raised in Mrs Alexander’s speech yesterday will also be noted and we will be having discussions with her on those and they will form part of the consultation process. I am quite happy to accept the amendment.

*The Bishop of Woolwich (Rt Revd Colin Buchanan):* I am delighted to see the linking of the two sets of agendas that we had yesterday, and I want to draw the pensions one into the context of resisting the ideology that Richard Turnbull put before us yesterday. As I accept the 1943 definition so much more easily than anything written in this report, however engagingly put, I want to say two things about differentials in pensions.

One, there can be no possibility of having extra responsibility which deserves a higher pension. Two, if I draw a differentiated pension when I duly leave this Synod I shall have contributed to it not for forty years but only for a very limited number of years, which means that a differentiated pension falls upon the contributions of all the other clergy, to give the differentiation.

Both those are appalling and should be handled in the context of resisting the ideology of the stipends review.

*Revd Chris Lilley (Lincoln):* On a point of order, Madam Chairman. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*The amendment was put and carried.*

*Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells):* I would like first of all to comment on Colin Buchanan’s speech in which he said that he had been contributing for only a short period; I would like to remind him that he has not actually contributed anything. *(Laughter)* Those who have been contributing have been contributing to the Bishop of Woolwich, whoever that happens to be, over a longer period and it has not been distributed over the other clergy.

I am very pleased to see some joined-up thinking going on, as Colin is, and it is absolutely right that we should take *Generosity and Sacrifice*, *Forthcoming Financial Issues* and *Clergy Pensions* all together. There is one thing that I believe has been missed out of all those bits of discussion and that is the fact that the Pensions Board, in addition to administering but not dealing with the strategy for pensions, also administers the charitable funds that help to look after clergy who are in more difficult circumstances at the end of their lives. If we start to look at pensions provision with a structure that starts to erode the amount of that pension over a period of time – and that is the danger perhaps with some of the money purchase arrangements – we may well put additional strain on those charitable provisions that the Pensions Board has to make. That is one more bit of joined-up thinking that needs to be included in this.

*Mrs Anne Williams (Durham)*: On a point of order, Madam Chairman. I beg to move:

‘That the question be now put.’

*This motion was put and carried.*

*Mr Alan King*, in reply: I am glad that we have been accused of some joined-up thinking and I hope that that is what we can pursue all the way through on all these matters.

The Bishop of Woolwich would not expect me, as a representative from Bath and Wells, on this particular day to make any reference to differentials of bishops in retirement!

I thank Synod for the debate. It has been a good one. As I said yesterday, please take it forward vigorously into the dioceses and at every possible opportunity.

*The motion was put and carried in the following amended form:*

‘That this Synod

- (a) ask the dioceses to consider the questions contained in the final paragraph of GS 1434 by 30 June 2002 in the context of the work of the Stipends Review Group as set out in GS 1408 and to respond to them; and
- (b) request the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee of the Archbishops’ Council to follow up the issues set out in GS 1434 alongside those contained in GS 1408, taking account of the responses from dioceses and other interested parties to both sets of questions, and to make a further report to this Synod.’

THE CHAIR *Mr James Humphery (Salisbury)* took the Chair at 2.55 p.m.

*Resourcing Bishops*: Note by the Archbishops' Consultations Group (GS 1438) to which is attached *Resourcing Bishops*, the first report of the Archbishops' Review Group on Bishops' Needs and Resources

*The Chairman*: On the invitation of the Presidents, Professor Anthony Mellows will speak to us about the first report of the Review Group that he has chaired. He will be followed by Stephen Bampfylde, a member of the Archbishops' Council, who will move the take note motion.

Professor Mellows is a very distinguished lawyer who in his younger days served in the intelligence corps of the Territorial Army. That experience may well have come in very handy, given that his first finding, which appears in the second paragraph of the chairman's preface to the report, is that there is only a partial understanding of what bishops do. Professor Mellows has served as a member of the Archbishops' millennium advisory group, and has been a practising solicitor and a professor of property law in the University of London. He is currently Emeritus Professor of Law at King's College, London.

It is a privilege and a pleasure for me now to ask Professor Mellows to address us, and I hope that Synod will welcome him. (*Applause*)

*Professor Anthony Mellows*: While I was listening to the remainder of the debate on pensions, I could not help wondering, looking at the order paper, what the exact significance of the juxtaposition of *Resourcing Bishops* and 'Farewells' actually was!

In the quarter of an hour available to me, I thought that I should say one word about the Review Group, another word about the scope of this review, two words about the context in which the review took place, three words about the findings that we reached, and finally just highlight one or two of the recommendations in the report itself.

The Review Group was an entirely independent body. The majority of us had not taken part in any form of Church government, although all of us had been long-term communicant members of the Church of England. We therefore came to the subject not only with virginal innocence in terms of fact but with no preconceptions and no axes to grind.

The review itself is taking place in two phases: one looking at bishops generally – that is the report that you have seen – and the other dealing with the two archbishops, on which we shall be publishing a further report next year. For our purposes, resources really come down to somewhere for a bishop and his immediate family to live, somewhere for the bishop to work, what sort of personal staff he should have,

somewhere for his staff to work, the necessary office and other equipment which the bishop and his staff need, the means to travel for official purposes, the means to provide hospitality for official purposes, the means to communicate, the means with which to be trained and adequate professional advice to do the job.

There are many who have found it disappointing that our report did not go more widely. Some would have asked us to look at staffing in a wider sense, some at the number and disposition of bishops, both within and between dioceses, others at the famous subject of stipends, others at the resources of cathedral clergy and others again at the amalgamation of dioceses and how that might achieve savings. If you are in any of those categories, I can only say that I am sorry but it is not what we were asked to do.

The context: we embarked on our review against four background elements. One was that if you look at the period 1990–99, you see that what was described in the Commissioners' statutory accounts as bishops' working costs had risen by more than 50 per cent in absolute terms, whereas, although the total contributions from the Church both centrally and locally in support of parochial ministry had gone up by about 20 per cent over that decade, the support by the Commissioners themselves had fallen in round terms by two-thirds.

The second background factor was the increasing financial pressures which were on the Church at all levels, pressures which have become more pronounced since we started our work. The third was the very difficult position in which the Commissioners were placed, on the one hand wishing and needing to provide proper resourcing for bishops (and do not forget that 25 per cent in round terms of the total capital assets of the Commissioners are derived from the former episcopal estates), while on the other hand being conscious of many other pressures upon them and seeing the amount being expended in the support of bishops apparently rising inexorably. There was also increasing public criticism of bishops' lifestyles, fuelled by various articles in the press, particularly the national press, leading to a loss of credibility and, as each article appeared, perhaps increasing the sense of dissatisfaction where it was felt.

The final aspect of the context was that when the two Archbishops set up this review they made it clear that they were not just looking at the present position but wished to take this opportunity as a basis for forward planning. Hence my group was asked to look not only at the present position but at how we envisaged it would evolve during the next decade.

What then were our findings? First of all, perhaps my former involvement in an intelligence organization did prove to be beneficial, Chairman, because I have to say that in many respects the position could only be described as opaque, not, I think, through anybody's deliberate intention but simply because it had not been the practice to collate and publish information in a convenient and understandable manner. We had a good many enquiries to make, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank

those members of Synod who made observations to us and also to record that not only, as one would expect, did we receive a great many helpful suggestions from bishops and bishops' wives but we were also given a remarkable degree of information from diocesan secretaries. I should place on record here that we had a hundred per cent response rate to the questionnaires that we sent to diocesan secretaries.

Having penetrated to some extent the opacity, what then did we find? First of all, there was a quite extraordinarily confusing use of language. 'Bishops' working costs': what does it mean? Does it equal bishops' expenses, restaurant bills, hotel bills? What it actually covered, for the most part, were things which no man outside the Church would begin to consider as being anywhere approaching bishops' expenses. Outside the Church it would be regarded as professional fees incurred in running the operation and, while I am very hesitant about using secular terms in this context, some of the expenses would also be regarded as those related to personnel.

To take an extreme example, if I may, notwithstanding the presence of the archbishop so close to me, the expenses of maintaining the Lambeth Palace library have been accounted for as part of bishops' working costs. In the view of my group, although none of this expenditure has been improper, it has been highly misleading to attach that label to it. However, it does not stop there because you would have the impression that bishops' working costs were costs over which bishops had control, and yet, for the most part, bishops have no control over what is attributed to them.

We concluded that much the greater part of the expenditure accounted for under this heading is more appropriately described as expenses incurred in running the Church of England primarily at a diocesan level.

We then looked at the resources which are currently provided to bishops and came to the conclusion that at the present time they are about right. We would have liked to see some improvement but they are certainly not too lavish, and we are firmly of the view that if they were to be materially reduced then the job would have to be altered. We also concluded that the job of being a bishop is likely to get more difficult as the decade goes on, and had the financial circumstances been otherwise we would have certainly proposed some increase in the resources made available.

We did not find evidence of lavish lifestyles or of extravagance, and although I could understand how some of the newspaper stories originated, on examination the picture presented by those journals did not appear to be well founded in fact.

We also found that the present system did not encourage bishops to take financial responsibility for their own affairs but that on the contrary there was a system which one could only describe as central micro-management. We found that although the Commissioners' support for parish ministry over the decade had diminished to the extent that I have mentioned, far and away that was due to the increased provision of pension costs rather than the increase in the support of bishops.

We found a system which was full of anomalies. We found a system in which the bishops in one diocese were resourced in a different way or on a different scale from those in another, and we could not find to our own satisfaction any objective correlation which explained those differences.

We were shocked by the central costs of administration. If you take the costs of running episcopal support, together with the costs incurred centrally in looking after see houses, in administration terms alone in the calendar year 1999 they amounted to a little short of £1.2 million. In other words, if I look at every bishop in this room and I do a simple sum and I say to myself there are 114 bishops serving in episcopal posts and I do a crude piece of mathematics (and that is because lawyers can only do crude mathematics) that prorates at £10,000 of central administrative costs for every serving bishop. That, I suggest, cannot be right.

We also found that although there is a general image that the Commissioners meet the total costs of supporting bishops, DBFs are themselves also a significant contributor; the value of the contribution in the calendar year 1999 was not less than £700,000.

In the light of those findings, we therefore concluded that the present level of resources ought to be maintained. We concluded, however, that those resources could and should be provided in a manner which would give the Church much better value for money, and we thought that a new system should be such that it was likely to attract some new money, not just a redistribution within the Church but some totally new money or equivalent value in support of episcopal ministry.

Our proposals are deliberately in many respects loose, deliberately in some respects to be regarded as signposts rather than a specific blueprint. We were all aware that the issues with which we were dealing needed a lot of discussion, a lot of consultation, that they had all sorts of consequential effects and that the proposals as they finally emerged would be significantly redefined, embellished, altered, from what we set down in the report. So they are signposts.

What we have said is 'Do at the centre what you have to do at the centre or what produces demonstrable added value because it is done at the centre, and move everything else to dioceses.' We believe that the Commissioners should do what they are good at and that is generating spendable funds and also providing the backdrop of support in the sense of setting standards.

What are the basic resources which bishops ought to have? We propose a system of devolution of the Commissioners' funds to be used for these purposes by way of block grant, giving the bishops in each diocese the opportunity to take full advantage of local conditions and local opportunities and also to deploy such funds as are available (and they will always be limited) in the way which is best suited to local needs. We believe that a totally fresh start has to be made in working out how the available funds are to be distributed between the bishops in a diocese, rather than having this very *ad hoc*

approach which has emerged, and make that distribution by an objective formula. We proposed, as members will have seen, a bishops' resources group, partly to assist bishops, partly as a means to attract *pro bono* support for them. We place great emphasis on transparency and disclosure. We have endeavoured to set an example, if I may say so, in the extent of the financial detail which we have published, and of course, having put it into the public domain there has been virtually no media comment on it.

We believe that expenses incurred by bishops in attending any central body of the Church should be charged to that body, including, if I may say so, meetings of General Synod, because we think it helpful to identify the true cost of operating all these central structures.

We have recognized willingly the enormous support given to the Church by bishops' wives, not seeking to set them apart from clergy wives generally but we were concerned solely with bishops' wives, and we wish to proclaim that message very loudly indeed. Members will have seen the recommendations that we make as to the circumstances in which they should be resourced and the particular protection that needs to be taken where a bishop employs his wife.

We make proposals with regard to accommodation. Again, I do not like the word 'housing', although it appears in the accounts, because we are really talking about bishops' working as well as living accommodation, with a view to, broadly speaking, transferring management of property locally, to having a long-phased programme which will lead ultimately to the transfer of a suitable see house – whether the present one or another – to local ownership. We have made special recommendations with regard to heritage properties, and we have said that because we know that these proposals still have to be worked out in a good deal of detail in the consultation process, one cannot at this stage calculate what the cost saving to the centre will be. Nevertheless, whatever it amounts to should be separately identified and be made available for distribution by the Commissioners by way of additional selective allocations.

Two final comments. Certainly not I, and not any member of my group, think that we have a monopoly of wisdom. We cannot be sure what will happen in the future. We can only make a commercial judgement. That judgement is that the present system cannot continue; it will crack. If there are those who think that our proposals are fundamentally flawed, then, although it is not my responsibility – my responsibilities in respect of this phase are discharged – it will be the responsibility of others to listen to what alternative realistic proposals are put forward.

Second, in a report which sets out 108 recommendations, which occupies 277 pages of text, which took 22 plenary sessions on the part of my group to produce, I cannot begin to give an overall statement of what it is saying. I hope, however, that what I have said will have helped to identify some of the principles which I think are relevant, as well as to set the background against which we have conducted our work.

*The Chairman:* On behalf of the whole Synod, I want to thank Professor Mellows for that address. I hope that in doing so Synod will permit me to acknowledge the huge commitment of time and energy which he and the members of the Review Group have made in producing this report. An inkling of that effort can be gleaned from Appendices A and B of the report, which members might like to study on their way home.

*Mr Stephen Bampfylde (Archbishops' Council):* I beg to move:

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

I am delighted and honoured that my maiden speech to Synod should be on a subject as fascinating as *Resourcing Bishops*, and somewhat challenged that it should follow such a lucid exposition as that of Professor Mellows.

Members have before them GS 1438, outlining the consultation programme. Since that was published, we have welcomed Mrs Marlene Wharton to our group and I would like to thank both her and all the other members for their generosity of time and spirit in carrying this work forward. There will need to be rather a lot of meetings in rather a short period of time.

Our role as the Archbishops' consultations group is to listen carefully and sensitively to the responses of the Church as a whole to the report and, in that spirit, I am particularly looking forward to hearing what is said today. Professor Mellows mentioned how many recommendations are made; whether we will cover them all this afternoon I doubt, but I am looking forward to hearing what is said about the general principles and about some of the more detailed matters.

Today's discussion is part of the first round of consultations, as I think the paper makes clear. We recognize that the timetable set out is a pretty rapid one and, given that there will be further consultation to take place, it may be more appropriate to think in terms of legislation sometime next year rather than be tied to July. If we are ready by July, so be it. If not, this subject should not be rushed. Importantly, there will be, in the legislative process, a further occasion for this Synod to comment on the issues as they emerge.

In terms of what we have heard to date – and we have had quite a bit of feedback – perhaps I could just share with Synod four of the questions that have come to us. I am sure that many members will want to comment on others, but here are four on which we would welcome comment this afternoon. First, how should the block grant be made up? In many ways, that is the Fermat's theorem that will test us in getting that solved. Second, what does all this mean for the relationship between the bishop and the diocese? (That is more subtle than may at first appear.) Third, what might be the funding and administrative implications for dioceses? Fourth, and one dear to my own heart: what of the suggested training or coaching activity for new bishops?

*The Bishop of Portsmouth (Rt Revd Kenneth Stevenson)*: The report before us is the first proper statement of what bishops do in the practical outworking of some of their tasks, at least. It is now down in black and white how a bishop functions, what kind of ministry of hospitality is offered, and what sort of demands are made on a bishop's time, and I welcome this as well as all the proposals about transparency, including transparency of costs of running the bishoprics and cathedrals department as well. Professor Mellows's work has served the Church extremely well in dispelling a number of myths about what we get up to, and although that may not be entirely welcome to the myth-sustainers, it is certainly good news to many of us.

The report is also an important milestone in how the business of bishoping develops. Each age has its own contribution to make and indeed there may be some who would like to return to some kind of golden age in the past in which everything was apparently much simpler; but when Synod goes along that track there needs to be some joined-up thinking, for a report like this is not about bishops but about the whole Church and our financial inter-relatedness, as well as many other things.

That brings me to my first caution, which is about resourcing. A complex way of running the Church will require a complex way of resourcing bishops, yet as more and more is being devolved to dioceses I am not entirely sure that total devolution of finances will be more efficient than the present system: forty-odd more diocesan committees. Surely the inefficiencies of the present way of doing things – and I could give a few examples – argue for partial devolution. Resourcing will moreover have an effect on what a bishop can do. If the resourcing is reduced, it will reduce what a bishop's diary can take on. I know that the Mellows report does not argue for a reduction in resources, but at this stage I think that it is necessary to fire some kind of warning shot.

For example, it is only in living memory that in the Manchester Diocese bishops have travelled to parishes to perform institution services. We used to roll up on the third Sunday of the month at cathedral Evensong with a piece of paper. Yet the Mellows report suggests that there will be more and more demands on bishops to get round their dioceses and attend all kinds of functions as part of our encouragement of the mission of the Church. We cannot have our cake (resources must be reduced or cut) and eat it (why can the bishop not come and do such and such in my deanery, even when it means he needs to work in his car?) (which is where I do a lot of my work).

My second caution is about housing, and this is another area of public mythology. It ties in with a lot of what Professor Mellows has just said. The vast majority of bishops live in what used to be called elegant poverty. We regard our see houses as neutral ground for an important ministry of hospitality, to the clergy of the diocese primarily, then in various forms of networking which, we hope, opens doors of opportunity to encourage the parishes and other ministries in the diocese in all sorts of areas, for example, social responsibility and education. However, the synodical system is a driving force too. Much of the work of my office is about implementing what is, at

times, a highly complex parish vacancy process, with letters and forms going here, there and everywhere, and I see this tendency in the current Church on the increase. I am not complaining. I am simply saying how it is. For example, whereas a few years ago placing stipendiary and non-stipendiary curacies could be done relatively informally, there is now a nationally agreed system, a process, which involves parish profiles, a system that now requires for me, in a relatively small diocese, two extra full meetings of my staff with the director of ordinands and the director of non-stipendiary ministry. Again, I am not complaining, but that is the trend, and it has its toll on my office and on the paperwork. Add to that the need for rooms for different sets of parish representatives, the rural dean and the archdeacon in a multi-parish benefice appointment when they ask for advertisement, which is what they normally do, if the Pastoral Measure is to be followed.

If you put all that together, the see house is already a significant player, and my experience is that those involved expect the interviews to take place at the bishop's residence, though in my case obviously it is different on the Isle of Wight; but that is exceptional. That all may have to change, but that is how things are.

If the Church is to be a less complex institution in the future, maybe the way we operate as bishops will change with that, but we need to see how all these factors are interconnected in relation to how things are now.

Finally, as the son of an architect – he was not a Territorial Army intelligence officer; he was one worse, he was in MI6 and he was a very good lie detector as a parent – and as the only bishop in recent memory who has had to live through a change of see house involving moving twice in two years, the second time with the whole of the bishop's office as well – and it is a process which had its excitements, to understate myself (unusually) but which was actually a considerable distraction in the early time of being a bishop – I have to say that some of the suggestions made about see houses – and I appreciate that there will be different needs – puzzle me rather. This is the part of the report where I think that more work needs to be done.

Just as the Perry report asked for evidence from the two Appointments Secretaries, I am wondering about the extent to which the Mellows working group actually got in hard architectural advice, for example, from the senior Church Commissioners' architect, John Taylor. That is an area in the report that needs more work, but I offer what I hope are positive observations to help the debate go on.

*Lady Brentford (Third Church Estates Commissioner, ex officio):* First, I would like to say how grateful we are to Professor Mellows and his team for all the work that they have done for the Church in producing this report. Thank you, Professor.

The Commissioners warmly welcome the publication of *Resourcing Bishops*. It acknowledges how hard bishops and their wives work with quite limited resources for the benefit of the Church and the nation. The Commissioners are currently involved in

the detailed analysis of the report's findings and recommendations. Our board will finalize its response to the Archbishops' consultation group at its meeting in February next year. At this stage, I want Synod to be clear about the Commissioners' continuing commitment to supporting episcopal ministry. Members have heard how we are concerned to see that any system for resourcing bishops ensures that they are properly supported. This is why we welcome the emphasis in the report on partnership between the Commissioners, bishops, dioceses and parishes, as it recognizes that bishops' ministry is local, national and often international.

However, the world in which our bishops work, both in our culture and in legislation – the Child Protection Act and the Data Protection Act, to name but two, and the Bishop of Portsmouth has mentioned others – has changed significantly over the last generation, and the system which supports them needs to keep pace because the change will continue.

In our submission to Professor Mellows's review, the Commissioners' board of governors made four points about the present system which recognized a need for change in key areas. I want to emphasize at the start that we are speaking about the process and not about the quantum of support that we make available.

First, there are disadvantages in a system where decisions about bishops' ministry are considered quite separately from the issue of funding.

Second, there are no clear parameters in the current system for allocating money to support particular needs. This leads to a lack of consistency and equity.

Third, as Professor Mellows has said so eloquently, the system is far too centralized, and spending decisions about very small amounts are taken at the centre. This can be a waste of time and money for all concerned.

Fourth, the system is driven by precedent, by what has always been done, and not by an open, top-down assessment of bishops' needs.

In our submission to Mellows, the Commissioners went on to identify five key principles which should, in their view, underpin any future system of support for bishops. First, decisions about the responsibilities, needs and resources of bishops should be taken together with decisions about funding that ministry. Second, those decisions should be equitable and, third, consistent. This is quite difficult because you have to recognize that different bishops have different ministries and different styles. Fourth, decisions should be transparent. Finally, the Commissioners identified the need for cost-effectiveness, including administrative efficiency and simplicity.

At this early stage in the consultation process, I hope that Synod has found these comments helpful. Again, I must stress that the Commissioners are fully committed to the support of bishops. It is not for the Commissioners to decide which of Professor

Mellows's proposals to implement, but we are keen to listen and work hard with all concerned to see a system which ensures that bishops are properly resourced in their vital ministry for the Church and the nation.

*The Chairman:* The report which we are debating may have financial implications, so I will call the Dean of Derby, in his capacity as a member of the Archbishops' Council, just to address us very briefly on that.

*The Dean of Derby (Very Revd Michael Perham):* Mr Chairman, my briefing was that the Third Estates Commissioner, when she spoke, would address this matter, so I am working rather fast, but I think that if you look at the fourth notice paper where there is a financial memorandum on all the issues that have been before us in the Synod – (*laughter*) – you will see that paragraph 3 refers to it. However, I have been ill advised because I was told that I would not be called on this matter!

*The Chairman:* I am sorry for the discomfiture that I have caused the Dean. Perhaps I could also mention that in his capacity as Chairman of the Business Committee, when we began our business this morning, the Dean mentioned that he did not think that many would want to speak in this debate. Members of Synod have responded with enthusiasm, so after the next speaker I will impose a time limit of five minutes.

*Canon Simon Brown (Oxford):* I sense that I may be in a substantial minority in what I want to say, but I want to begin my remarks by thanking Professor Mellows for his presentation and for the clarity of the work that has been carried out by the group. I am not sure whether this Synod will go down in history (if it goes down in history at all) as the horse and cart Synod or the joined-up sinning – (*laughter*). There is a very good pub which sells Young's bitter which I will take any member of Synod to at the next sessions. (May I also say that I was in China, teaching some Chinese oral English, and we used a tongue-twister: "Thick ticks think thin ticks are sick" so you can try that while I am speaking.) I do not know whether this Synod will be known as the horse and cart Synod or for its joined-up thinking, because our problem seems to be that we still have not got an overall strategy of what we are trying to do; that has come up time and time again. I feel that this report is dealing with the wrong issues at the wrong time, a misbegotten report, and that is to take nothing from the clarity of the presentation of the limitation of what has been offered to us.

Why? I do not believe that we can have this debate sensibly without looking at questions to which Professor Mellows referred, such as how many bishops we should have, what the numbers are that we are involved in, and what the task of the bishops is. In the parishes and the deaneries we are having to ask what is the task of the stipendiary clergyman. It used to be easy: he ran a parish. That in the changing circumstances is no longer true. We have incredible imbalances in the number of senior staff in different dioceses. I do not need to mention Sodor and Man, but the deanery for which I am area dean is bigger than the Diocese of Sodor and Man in terms of the number of clergy and in other ways, including population. The Bishop of Portsmouth

we have heard from. Looking him up, I see that he has 105 clergy; there is a bishop and three archdeacons there. I do not see the Bishop of Coventry here at the moment, but he was Bishop in Bucks not long ago and we congratulated him on his semi-retirement when he moved to Coventry, because he has 138 clergy and a second bishop and two archdeacons; in Bucks we have one bishop and one archdeacon for 160 clergy. These imbalances must be looked at. It is absolutely ridiculous not to, if we are looking at paying and resourcing bishops.

Synod will note from 3.10.1 and 3.10.2 of the report that the number of bishops has gone up slightly since 1975; though we are not given the numbers, the number of stipendiary clergy has gone down by 20 per cent. What does that say?

The report says that it has deliberately excluded the archdeacons (paragraph 16.22). Why? They are part of the senior staff. How can we look at resourcing some parts of senior staff and not the other parts? Why are bishops resourced centrally? We had a hint on that from Professor Mellows because 25 per cent, I think he said, of the Commissioners' money comes from episcopal estates. Just think how those episcopal estates were garnered four or five hundred years ago and where they came from. Is that really what determines our rational way of looking at these things? At least we ought to be arguing the case for saying that bishops are resourced in this way when the money is now all coming from the parishes, or most of it, and that we really need to take that into account.

Those are only supplementaries; my main point is that the centre for strategic thinking, for managing finance and for all sorts of pastoral care and indeed, in our case, for interviewing people for posts, is not now the bishop's house; it is in the deanery. We have not used the bishop's house for interviews for any posts in the deanery in the twelve years that I have been area dean; it is done locally. So that sort of question does not ring bells for me. However, in our deanery we are responsible for allocating the parish share. We have to encourage the parishes to produce the money; it is done at that sort of level. We do not live in a hierarchical Church now, where the bishop can come down and say, 'Come on, chaps, we've all got to up our giving'; it is long, slow, hard work to help ensure that the parishes understand why they are interrelated, why we need to give money to other dioceses; all that sort of thing is done really at a deanery level.

We are in the middle of discussing the Bridge report. We almost did not receive the Bridge report, if members recall. One of the reasons is that the tide turned under the Bridge. The tide about deaneries has completely changed. Deaneries now are a centre and a base for our mission, so we look at area deans. How do we train them? How do we resource them? So to talk about the bishops' remuneration and conditions of service apart from the leadership in the Church as a whole seems to me disastrous.

I know that if I go back to people in our parish with this report, they will say that it is totally irrelevant and we have been wasting our time, because that is not where they

see the essence of leadership being. Leadership now is servant leadership, in partnerships and in leadership teams. Therefore, to focus just on this issue will send all the wrong messages to the Church.

Mr Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity of speaking. I believe that the report we needed was 'How do we resource leadership for the Church of the future?' I do not know of any plans at the moment to enter into that debate. We are only supposed to be taking note, not receiving, and that is the most limited thing that we can do with this report; but then I ask what is the consultation process? Would we dare take this report to the parishes and ask if they want the bishops resourced centrally or if they want a say in how many bishops we have in the Church of the future? There seems to me no time and no provision in the follow-up of this, whatever we call the consultation, for those in our churches who now produce the vast bulk of the resources for running our Church to have a say in it.

Therefore, I am very hesitant but I will say that the one thing that we can do is not to receive this report. That is not to say that all the work is not very valuable, and it is not that I disagree with any of the conclusions of the report. I just think, in the horse and cart Synod, that this report is such a blinkered, narrow look at the issues that we should not receive it.

*The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd John Oliver):* May I begin with a very brief lifestyle anecdote? Some will know that I succeeded a bishop who was a person of blessed memory but who believed in being a bishop in the grand manner. Realizing that you do not change anything in your first six months if you are a new incumbent, I just went along with it. Very early on in my time there was an SAS event at which I arrived in a fairly big car, with a driver in uniform, flying the flag of the diocese. The driver wound down the window and said to the policeman who greeted us, 'The Lord Bishop of Hereford'; the policeman looked down his nose at us for some time and said, 'Civilian cars over there.' It was a catalyst for a change that was about to take place in any case. I have a small car, I drive it myself, and I regard a car as a means of transport of last resort; I would rather go by train or motor bike or bicycle or my own two feet. That is by the way.

I want to say how grateful we are to Professor Mellows for the wonderful care and courtesy he has shown in preparing this report and the enormous amount of time that he has devoted to consultation. We are all of us deeply grateful to him for that, but I do want to say that there is one fundamental aspect of this report on which we – I can speak for most of the bishops in the West Midlands dioceses, except for the Bishop of Worcester, who does not agree with me about this – are agreed: we want to reject the idea of devolved budgets. They are not desirable. Professor Mellows showed great concern for the workload of bishops and went out of his way in the report to recognize that we do actually most of us work quite hard, are under quite a lot of pressure and bear quite a lot of burdens. Then, strangely, paradoxically and contradictorily, he wants to impose a further burden on us, which is to administer a

devolved budget, and not just on bishops but on those willing, hard-working laypeople whose arms we shall have to twist to make up a resource group. I know who they will be, if this comes about, and I do not want to have to ask them. I just do not think that this is a sensible use of our time or theirs.

I am in favour of openness. I want to publish our working expenses, with proper clarification of what they really are. I have no love of opacity, and we are indebted to Professor Mellows for pointing out how opaque some of this has been. I do not think that we should go by precedent. I want to see some convergence of expenses that bishops incur and for which they are reimbursed. I know that there are some horror stories, and that some of my colleagues believe that they have not been treated well by the Commissioners and have had great trouble with them. I want to say, on behalf of myself and my colleague the Bishop of Lincoln, I mean Ludlow – and may I, in parenthesis, say apropos what Canon Brown has just said that we have a good arrangement in the Hereford Diocese: recognizing that there has been a reduction in the number of stipendiary clergy, we have combined the roles of Archdeacon and Bishop of Ludlow. I believe that it has worked well, and I commend it to other dioceses and to members of the Synod, to agitate for it, because it can be done. That was really in the middle of my saying how excellent our experience has been of the treatment that we have received from the Commissioners. I want to pay tribute to Ruth Badger and her predecessors. We have not ourselves had any problems at all; we have found the Commissioners' administration of bishop's expenses to be efficient, courteous, sensible, wise and fair.

It must be true - never mind about £1.2 million ( I do not know how that is made up) of central costs of administering bishops' expenses – theoretically (and why can it not also be true practically?) that to centralize these matters is potentially more efficient and economical than devolving them. I cannot believe that, if there is some saving in the Commissioners' department, and  $\frac{1}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> of that saving is passed down to each diocese, it will go anywhere near paying the additional costs which will fall on our DBFs. I am very mindful of how hard-pressed they are too. They do not want any part of administration of the episcopal budget. It is not necessary. Nor do I believe that it is a case of centralized micro-management. We already have a remarkable degree of flexibility and freedom in administering the budgets that the Commissioners pass on to us.

This particular aspect of the proposals is therefore one that many of us would like to resist. We do not believe that it is either necessary or desirable; we do not believe that it would be a good use of our time or of the time of people in our own dioceses or of our DBFs. Why can we not have – to borrow a phrase from the pensions matter that we were discussing earlier – a hybrid arrangement? Bishops who really want devolved budgets can have them, and those who do not want them do not have to have them.

*The Chairman* imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

*Revd Andrew Watson (London)*: When I first read this report, as part of our diocesan

response group, I was intrigued to discover where the mandatory theological chapter would lead us. Would we be reflecting on the payments made by St Paul to various scribes who penned his letters? Would we be treated to a historical expenses claim from St Clement, detailing his administrative costs and the allowable rate of 6p per mile for travel by horse? In the event, we had two useful chapters, including one on the general theology of episcopacy, just in case the General Synod decided that bishops were too expensive and ought to be abolished. After Monday's debate, when we very nearly decided to disestablish the Church, all things are possible.

In many ways this is a good and positive report. It rightly recognizes the excellent work carried out by our bishops and their wives, it acknowledges the misleading impression given by the lumping together of personal expenses with the salaries of secretaries and chaplains, it rightly questions the appropriateness of some bishops' housing, both in terms of its comfort (or lack of it) and in the signals that it sends out to the wider world. In addition, the basic thrust of the report towards devolving responsibility away from the Commissioners and towards the dioceses is surely to be welcomed. Greater consistency, greater freedom, greater local accountability: all these are prizes that the report holds out to us.

There are quibbles of course. On page 36, the claim that some bishops are working up to 100 hours a week as the norm receives no negative comment, except in the careful phrase in the opening of chapter 1 that 'bishops are very hardworking – perhaps excessively so'. The lower figure of 70 hours a week may well be reasonable and is matched by many hard-working parish clergy, but if the figure of 100 hours is right – that is, 14 hours a day over a seven-day week or more than 16 hours a day over a six-day week – it is a scandal. The expectations of bishops imposed by their dioceses, by the wider Church or maybe by their own inner drive need to be properly looked at if bishops are to demonstrate good models of ministry to the clergy in their care.

Eugene Peterson, the American academic, memorably put it like this: 'the word "busy" goes with "pastor" as the word "adulterous" goes with "husband".'

My main concern with the thrust of this report – and I know that I am speaking against two bishops here, and I am alarmed to be doing that – is simply that it does not go far enough in devolving responsibility to the dioceses. Instead of taking the parochial situation as its model, which would seem to me eminently sensible, it starts with the status quo and then makes some moderate adjustments to the way things are done now. Look at the parish clergyperson. He or she will probably discuss the appropriate level of expenses with the churchwardens. These will then appear as an item within a parish budget and accounts. At times they may attract comment in the PCC: was that mission trip to the Caribbean really necessary? That is right and proper in view of the fact that PCC funds are being used to cover those expenses in the first place. However, the PCC too faces legitimate constraints in the guidelines sent to it by the diocese, asking that all legitimate expenses be paid and spelling those expenses out

in some detail. So we have a balance between freedom and local accountability, which generally works pretty well.

If that were to be our starting point in this review, the result might also work pretty well. Bishops would discuss expenses with the general secretary of the diocese, a very similar practice to that found between MDs and CEOs in many companies. Those expenses would appear in the diocesan budget and accounts and might occasionally attract comments in the bishop's council. There would be certain expectations placed on the dioceses to cover legitimate expenses as well as to pay for the support staff that bishops need. Here is the rub: those expenses would be paid by the dioceses direct. Such a system would require some further thinking, especially about the national and international duties that bishops are involved in, but it would lead to administrative savings at the centre, thereby making more money available to the dioceses. It would also encourage a limited but constructive debate within bishops' councils on the current vision, priorities and needs of their diocesans and suffragans alike.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr George Carey):* All I want to do is express thanks at two levels and make one or two comments. First of all, I want to thank Professor Mellows and his group for this masterly report which, as he reminded us, was set up by the Archbishop of York and me because the bishops were being hammered in the press and, we thought, very unfairly. Therefore, in conjunction with the bishops' committee, we invited him, knowing his background experience, to mount this very thorough report, and he has given it to us. It is very thorough and helpful.

I want to remind Synod of that background because anything that undermines confidence in the bishops themselves undermines the whole Church; if there is any question about the transparency of our life, it will impact on the Church's mission. This report has demonstrated that our bishops are hard-working and give of themselves freely. In expressing my thanks – and I know that the Archbishop of York joins me in this – I want to thank the bishops' committee also. As the Bishop of Hereford has said, they work hard, but I think that the time has come to take this one step further, and what the report gives us is the opportunity to make any necessary changes, together with the bishops' committee.

We need reform. I hear the point that this is maybe not extensive or radical enough. For the General Synod to be radical – I would love to see it. I remind you of Trollope's phrase about evil and change: that, fearing evil, we make the change but, because we fear evil more than the change, we make the change as small as possible. Often we have that tendency in Synod. Even the thought that we might reject this causes me some degree of disappointment. We must move forward. I believe that we can save a great deal of money. Setting up a local committee does not mean an elaborate committee. I am working all the time with lay committees and it can easily be done.

I just want to say again how grateful I am. If we remember the background, what it is saying is that our bishops are hard-working, and we want to support them. Indeed, as

I have a pastoral care for all the bishops in my province, I know that they are spending more time than ever on the pastoral care of their clergy and their laypeople. They need our support. I believe that this report will help us in our ministry to our nation. It will help us to express those gospel values. We have a long way to travel, but to the gentleman over there it is all part of a whole and, if we can take this forward, it will help our ministry enormously.

*Mrs Vivienne Goddard (Blackburn):* I felt that I ought to say something in the debate as I am in the peculiar position of having, since I was elected to this body, become, through no fault of my own, the wife of a suffragan bishop. I am indebted to the Archbishop of Canterbury for starting off what I wanted to say.

Some twenty years ago, when I first made a speech in the Synod, representing a different diocese, I spoke about the need for pastoral care for the clergy and their families. I believe that, whatever else we think bishops are for, they are for the pastoral care of the clergy and their families, and therefore I would like to express my appreciation of chapter 17 of the report, the one about bishops' wives, except of course for the very last paragraph, which I consider totally outrageous.

One of the decisions that my husband and I made was that we would, as far as possible, extend hospitality in our home to as many of the clergy and their spouses as we could. I would simply like to affirm that I can do that because I am in the privileged position of working part-time (actually for the Church in another capacity) and so I can make my work flexible enough to do that. We simply would not be able to carry out this ministry in the same way if I were to return to full-time employment.

The second point that I would like to make is to Synod and not to the report at all. It is simply to say that in our household we now have three copies of this report. One duly arrived for the bishop. The day after the embargo another arrived for the bishop's wife. The day after that another one arrived for the member of General Synod. When my husband and I first met we were both reading theology at Durham and after the first few weeks we never again bought two copies of the same book because we managed to share them. Perhaps Synod could accept that bishops occasionally speak to their wives and will share copies of any future reports.

*Father Aidan Mayoss CR (Religious Communities, York):* What I want to say may sound peripheral but it is not. I believe that it is absolutely essential. It is to look at the sort of undergirding theology of this report and the whole of *episcopate*, whether it is that administered by bishops or priests or headmistresses or whatever.

King Alfred did a lot more than burn cakes. He translated from the Latin Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*. It is about that remarkable book that I want to speak. It is a book that was beloved of Michael Ramsey, who never went into retreat without it; it receives in Stephen Sykes's theological input really a footnote to a footnote, and I felt

very strongly that this was inadequate, for I believe that what he said will help all of us, as we go forward in this process, just to see what we are about.

Sister Benedicta Ward of Fairacres in her latest book has quite a lot to say about Gregory the Great, and about pastoral care. It was 'a book forged by a monastic bishop in the midst of danger and distress, and it had immediate impact. Gregory sent his treatise to Leander, Bishop of Seville, the Emperor Maurice had it translated into Greek by Athanasius of Antioch ... Carolingian councils recommended it. Bede recommended it and Alfred the Great translated it. Gregory was a monk but he was also a bishop, and it is this mixture which shows the way in which the central stillness of the monk was expressed in the care of the people of God in England. It is an immensely practical book, a handbook for bishops and also for anyone who has to care for others. In it there are no inspiring ideas about the survival of cultures or the education of the under-privileged. There is no dialogue with other religions, nor is it filled with instructions for crisis counselling. Gregory was concerned with the twofold love of God and neighbour among ordinary Christians, and it is as much about silence and stillness before God, where the pastor must always look to see his own faults and needs, as about the way in which the mercy that he receives is to be given to others.' After quite a torrid and difficult week it behoves all of us members of Synod to ponder those words.

*Dr Carole Cull (Oxford):* On a point of order, Mr Chairman. I beg to move:

'That the question be now put.'

*This motion was put and carried.*

*Mr Stephen Bampfylde,* in reply: It is very encouraging to have such clear views so helpfully expressed, most particularly when they are diametrically opposed. Fr Mayoss's comment about the stillness of the monk in the role of the bishop picks up something that Andrew Watson said about the hundred hours a week, which was again reflected in what the Bishop of Portsmouth said at the beginning about the enlarged role of the bishop. The exact role of the bishop is not part of what my consultation group is about, but it seems to me truthful that a well-resourced bishop is less likely to work one hundred hours a week than one who is trying to do everything himself. So it is very important that we value our bishops and resource them appropriately if they are to have space to bring that monk-like stillness to their roles.

I particularly welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury's comment that this provides the opportunity to make necessary changes. This report may not bring everything that you would individually like but it brings a significant number of opportunities to do some things differently.

Simon Brown commented very wittily on the differing sizes of dioceses, but he could perhaps have picked up on the fact that we are trying to introduce devolution here and

that bringing the impetus for how the bishop operates down into the diocese allows, I hope, some reflection of that.

I enjoyed the image of the Bishop of Hereford on a motorbike and reducing costs in that way. I think I will take away particularly the block grant, moving from precedence to convergence, which was an interesting phrase for us. I love the idea of hybridity, if there is such a concept, and we will have a look at that too.

Mrs Goddard, I am not responsible for your having three copies; I am sorry about it. I greatly enjoyed my good friend the Dean of Derby's unique contribution on finances.

All in all, Synod has given us a lot to think about. I am mindful of the significance of what we are doing. It is easy to look at this report and think that it is a matter of pure administration. What the Synod has brought out today is that it is not, that it speaks to the heart of how ministry is carried out, and with that I was grateful for Lady Brentford's affirmation of the Commissioners' continuing commitment to episcopal ministry and the readiness to change. We all have to continue to support our episcopal ministry and we have to find the right way through making the necessary changes.

*The motion was put and carried.*

## Farewells

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr George Carey):* I say farewell to two bishops who will not be with us the next time we meet in York. I would first like to say a few words about Bishop David Smith.

Bishop David has served most of his ministry in the north of England. Ordained in the Diocese of Newcastle, he served in various parishes until being asked to be the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne. What a lovely place to be archdeacon of! However, his first appointment as bishop was to the see of Maidstone in the Canterbury Diocese, where he is remembered for his north-country grace and grit – straightforward and matter-of-fact. He is the bishop to whom the village newsagent in Charing, where he and Mary lived, still sends a Christmas card each year. Indeed, Eileen and I still recall the friendly and helpful way David and Mary welcomed us into the Canterbury Diocese and helped us to settle during those early days of our ministry.

While at Maidstone David was also appointed Bishop to Her Majesty's Forces. A story he enjoys telling is one of finding himself treated as a senior officer, with the general's car often put at his disposal. At the same time, he was often asked the question by those whom he was visiting, 'Were you ever in the forces?' 'Oh yes,' he would reply, 'I was a lance-bombardier in the Gunners.' (The Gunners, by the way, is not my favourite football team!)

In 1992 David became Bishop of Bradford and quickly became conversant with the

multi-racial and multi-ethnic make-up of the urban parts of his diocese. He deliberately set out to make friends with leaders and members of the Muslim communities and has often spoken out and acted in support of their needs and concerns. In the city of Bradford, particularly, David has been greatly respected for his courageous willingness to mediate on the streets during times of violent racial disturbance. Indeed, Synod will remember that he had to leave our last meeting early so as to be with the clergy and people of Bradford during a renewed outbreak of rioting. During his time there, he has become a trusted conciliator and spokesman for all faiths; his advice is regularly sought by senior Government Ministers, as they wrestle with the complex situation after the summer disturbances in northern cities and, more recently, the traumatic events of 11 September. For his service to the city, the University of Bradford awarded David an honorary doctorate earlier this year.

However, Bishop David has not focused only on the city. In the more rural areas – and Bradford has a great number of them – he was aware that many were experiencing their own particular form of anxiety and distress. Every single farming family in the Dales which suffered the slaughter of its livestock because of foot and mouth disease received a personal telephone call from Bishop David, expressing his concern and promising the support of the Church.

His style of leadership has constantly been to emphasize the need for Christian people to be supported and affirmed as much in their roles as Christians in the world as in their ministries within the organization of the Church. This outward-looking perspective has been underlined by the encouragement that he has given to the link between his diocese and the Church in the Sudan. He has made several visits to North Sudan, on occasions representing me on these visits. His gracious but firm statements have given much joy to the Christian Church there and have strengthened the Sudanese bishops in their leadership. The fruit of these visits, and the high regard in which he is held, is measured to some degree by a recent invitation by a House of Lords joint Christian/Muslim parliamentary delegation to lead a visit to that country within the next few months.

Mary comes from Tyneside – I believe she is somewhere in the gallery; welcome, Mary – where David served most of his parochial ministry. She has carved out her own spheres of interest. She has worked for many years with the Citizens' Advice Bureau; she is a magistrate; and she has her own involvement with the Church of North Sudan, being particularly concerned for the role of women in that country. In addition to these activities, she has given tireless and active support to Bishop David's ministry, accompanying him to most services and events, and entertaining large numbers of people of all races and faiths at Bishopscroft.

David and Mary will be retiring to a village on the outskirts of York where, no doubt, a great number of us will want to seek them out during some of the less exciting moments of the summer General Synod meetings.

David, thank you so much for a dedicated and sacrificial ministry. We wish you and Mary a happy retirement when you move from Bradford next June. (*Applause*)

I turn now to another bishop and wish to embarrass him as well. Bishop Jim Thompson has been described as a national treasure, not least because he is a profound communicator of the truths of the gospel. His big heart and generous spirit led him to be affectionately known by the *Today* programme as 'Big Jim Thompson'. He has touched very many people through those broadcasts, and his ability to choose the right words for the right moment was never better demonstrated than in his *Thought for the Day* on the morning after the terrorist attack on the USA on 11 September. (*Applause*)

He was appointed Bishop of Stepney by Bishop Gerald Ellison in 1978, after a remarkable six years as team rector of Thamesmead. He served 13 years in Stepney at a time when the area was changing rapidly. After the closure of the docks the region saw real deprivation and poverty, and in Bishop Jim the people had a passionate advocate. He was naturally in tune with the social conscience traditionally to be found in the clergy serving in the parishes of the East End. As a member of the Urban Bishops' Group, he was one of those who provided the stimulus for *Faith in the City*.

It was not only with prominent members of the Government of the day that he found himself out of favour. His thoughts for the day sometimes touched other sensitivities. In one he explained that his dog, a spaniel, 'heard through its nose': every time it smelled an interesting smell, it went deaf to all other sounds, especially calls to come to heel. He related that he was taking the dog for a walk in Victoria Park when it spotted a man holding a shopping bag across the other side of the park. The spaniel took off. Jim shouted. The dog took no notice. By the time Jim reached the man, he was holding the shopping bag above his head, and the dog was eating a chicken which had fallen out. Jim then got letters of complaint from listeners: 'How could you let your dog eat a chicken? The bones splinter.' It just shows that you cannot please everybody.

Jim has always been very good company. Encounters with him are always characterized by his sense of humour. He possesses the inestimable grace of being able to laugh at himself and at the Church as well. However, he is an equally good companion in times of struggle or sorrow, entering into the pain and sharing its burden. Sharing the pain of others has quite frequently led Jim to identify with causes that have been unpopular or controversial in the Church. It has never been his intention to hurt or upset others necessarily, but his integrity and commitment to where he has felt the gospel is directing him has commanded the respect of us all.

Those who have worked with him know him to be an outstanding and inspirational leader, someone who gives totally of himself in all that he does. He has been an exemplary delegator, sharing his *episcopate* with suffragan bishops and archdeacons and trusting those with whom he shares this, giving utterly loyal support to them. His concern for the clergy of his diocese and their families is second to none, especially

when they are struggling. At the same time, he is realistic and honest in his assessments of clergy and has never been afraid to share those thoughts with the person concerned, even though it has meant living with the resentments and anger which that kind of honesty can sometimes evoke.

His chairmanship of the Children's Society is simply one expression of Bishop Jim's love of children and young people. His open, friendly and down-to-earth manner has endeared him to thousands of them during visits to schools, young people's events and children's workshops. His response to the challenge of a bouncy castle during the *Time of our Lives* – some of us noticed it, as we were there – will go down in the annals of diocesan history as well as in the memories of Jim and Sally as a somewhat painful experience of what identification with the young can mean.

Above all, his depth of faith, integrity, patience, gentleness, amazing memory and wonderful sense of humour are all clearly rooted in his deep love of Jesus Christ.

In all this he has known the wonderful support of Sally, who has had a significant ministry in her own right as a mother and as editor for many years of the *International Anglican Family Network*.

Jim and Sally are retiring to their cottage on Exmoor where they will have time, we trust, to read and ride their horses and simply to be, and to enjoy their grandchildren and their new black labrador puppy called Shadow. In all this we wish you, Jim, and Sally, who sadly cannot be with us, every joy and happiness, and we hope to see you from time to time, not in General Synod, but we hope that you will pray for us as we labour for the sake of the gospel too. God bless you. (*Applause*)

I have one final farewell, briefer because this particular gentleman is not actually retiring but is simply moving from one job. I want to express our thanks to Archdeacon Trevor Lloyd, because we mark his retirement as Synod chaplain for the past five years. He was given the task at very short notice and in difficult circumstances in February 1996, and he has steered the Synod's worshipping life ever since then. As we all know, finding the right style for worship in the Church of England is never an easy task – too conservative for some, too radical for others – but his long service on the Liturgical Commission, his experience as an incumbent in north London, and coping with the varied traditions of a rural archdeaconry have served the Synod well.

It is during his time that we have developed a style for celebrating the Eucharist in our debating chamber, both here and in York, and the brief and formal prayer with which the Chairman of the session used to open each day's sitting has been enlivened by music and a wild – I mean, wide – variety of participants. (*Laughter*) Mind you, that is a confession: I believe that we could do with a little wilder variety of participants!

Since 1997 he has organized a small team of volunteer listeners who can offer confidential pastoral support to any member of Synod in need at the time of our

meetings and, let it not be overlooked, he has also had responsibility for the nitty-gritty of preparing liturgical text for copy, organizing the rota of those leading the worship, and even counting out the wafers in the early dawn on Synod days in Heslington.

Trevor, we owe you a great deal and we wish your successor, Revd Mark Bonney, well, as he takes forward this vitally important work for us as a Synod. Thank you, Trevor.  
(Applause)

*The Chairman:* That completes our business for this group of sessions.

*The Archbishop prorogued the Group of Sessions at 4.28 p.m.*