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The Church of England and Britain's Cold War

The Church of England and Britain's Cold War, 1937 – 1948

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Abstract

The thesis deals with Britain's early Cold War history and the political history of the Church of England. It mainly uses primary sources, and contributes to our growing understanding of the early Cold War, especially in its cultural/religious elements.

It explores how the Church of England dealt with the development of the early Cold War in Britain. It argues that in order to understand better the Church of England's role, an account of its perspective on issues of state modernisation dating back to at least the 1930s is necessary. It was then, during a decade of authoritarianism, and especially at the Oxford Conference of 1937, that the Church's standpoint towards secularisation was established, while the transnational agenda of the ecumenical movement was also adopted and internalized by Church of England. The thesis also examines the agencies which it built and worked with: in particular the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. As the Church is the Established Church, its relationship with specific government agencies, especially the British Foreign Office and the Ministry of Information also became increasingly important.

The thesis reveals the Church of England's lack of autonomy in time of crisis and the importance of key individuals for the institutional leadership of the Church. Its ecumenical agenda had played an important role, but this was under pressure after the War, as a Europe-wide Christian community was increasingly challenged by 'Western Union' plans for a Cold War Western, Christian community and bloc. By 1948 the Church had been enrolled in the Cold War between East and West which was apparent in its alignment with British government policies and its withdrawn role in the ecumenical community.

The thesis adds to our understanding of the Church of England's relationship to the state in these years, and contributes to the cultural dimension of the early Cold War in Britain.

Abbreviations

BCC British Council of Churches

CA Christian Action

CCFCL Council of Churches on the Relations of Christian Faith to Common Life

CCIFSR Commission for the Churches for International Friendship and Social
Responsibility

CCIA Commission of the Churches on International Affairs

CERC Church of England Record Centre

CFR Council on Foreign Relations

FO Foreign Office

LPL Lambeth Palace Library and Archive

MoI Ministry of Information

PAG Peace Aims Group

PEP Political and Economic Planning

RIIA Royal Institute of International Affairs

UEM United Europe Movement

WCC World Council of Churches

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Introduction

This thesis examines the Church of England's role in the early Cold War. The main research question is whether the Church of England developed its own agenda towards Communism in the early Cold War, and if so, how, or if its attitudes and actions were primarily shaped by British government policies. So the thesis has a focus on the Church of England itself, and sets out to explore the development of the early Cold War within the Church and in its collaboration with British government institutions.

The Church of England already had a leadership role in the development of the ecumenical movement in the interwar period where a new ecumenical framework was being shaped. It will be argued that it was in this period that the Church's own standpoint towards totalitarianism and Communism, and the lot of those who lived under Communist rule, was established and the transnational agenda of the ecumenical movement became adopted and internalized by the Church of England. It will also be argued that this ecumenical agenda then played an important role in the Church both in Britain and abroad.

To understand this issue, it will be necessary to explain the role of the government agencies, church councils, as well as transnational and national ecumenical councils, in which the Church of England was engaged. Hence, although the outlook will be mainly that of the church, the study will need to look at both the British government, the united church councils (the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches), and the Church of England.

The reason for this is my particular interest in the dialectic relationship between these in-state institutions and the implications of decisions reached among

them, and second, the role of the ecumenical movement, because there were areas where the transnational agenda of the ecumenical movement was in opposition to both existing and emerging foreign policy objectives of the British government over time. The aim of this study is not to establish an academic account of the relationship between the church and state in Britain in general, but to trace how they reached a mutual understanding of how to confront the challenges of the beginning stages of the Cold War, based on their experiences from the rise of totalitarianism, total war, and shifting power balances in Europe. The thesis will also explore how the church managed its own ideological and transnational ambitions while being asked to perform politically and diplomatically as an embedded part of the UK state structure. Last, it will investigate how the British state managed to use Christianity strategically for political purposes, and how any developing joint church-state strategy fitted into the larger puzzle of Western political strategy-making in this period.

The thesis is influenced by recent Cold War research, especially its cultural dimensions. Although the study will to some extent join the family of scholars who are writing about the cultural Cold War, it will, to a larger extent than is often the case in the cultural approach, include formal political and religious institutions. These include the British Foreign Office (FO), the Religious Division of the Ministry of Information (MOI), the Church of England, the British Council of Churches (BCC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) and their diplomatic tasks, and formal as well as informal collaboration.

The study is a single case study, intended to give a detailed account of historical events and trace, in a problem-oriented manner, developments over this period. The density of critical events within the chosen time frame makes the tracking of causation highly complex and the application of more general models of causation

would be likely to generate inaccurate explanations.¹ In addition to a careful investigation of key events, which takes into consideration the relationship between the rise of ideas, institutions, and individuals, the careful consideration of conjunctures, i.e. the advent of increased Church opposition to the state and the outbreak of World War II, and what the agents and agencies made of them, is equally critical and contributes to an understanding of the emergence of the cold war, and how this was perceived and reacted to by the Church of England, which was so deeply embedded in the state.

It should be noted here that the thesis addresses the Church of England and its relationship to selected agencies. The thesis is not, however, addressing specifically the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church or other religious denominations beyond the contact which they had through selected agencies such as the British Council of Churches. It should also be noted that although the thesis examines the 1948 Lambeth Conference, it is not addressing the role of the Church in the British Empire in a wider sense. Further, although the thesis examines selected areas where the Church of England and the British Council of Churches interact with Churches in the US, the thesis is not specifically examining the perspective of the American Churches. Finally, although the thesis looks at the Church of England's – and the British Council of Churches' – interaction with the Churches in Europe, the thesis is not examining the continental Churches as such and neither is it addressing the issues of totalitarianism and reconstruction.

Methodology

This thesis is a single-case study and is carried out in a setting with multiple

¹ As each observation in this case study is unique (N=1). See more below

organizational and departmental settings. The data consists of historical documents from institutions, as well as from personal papers. Data collection has, therefore, involved the tracing of agencies with multiple geographic sites.

The method used to conduct the single case study is process-tracing, used as a deductive tool. Process-tracing is, as John Gerring writes, akin to detective work. The reason for choosing a single case study might be that the field of research is relatively under-researched and that no indications of causation exists; that input is in nature complex and cannot be directly compared or analysed in a unified sample.² Most observations in a single case study based on process-tracing are usually empirical, but are characterized by the fact that they would not be meaningfully understood within a formal research design due to the non-comparability of the pieces of evidence. All pieces of evidence might be relevant to the central argument, but they do not comprise observations in a larger sample. They are, as Gerring puts it, more correctly understood as a series of N=1 observations.

The data in this thesis is, as stated above, comprised of historical documents of different origin. The observations, which shape the narrative and serve as input in the analyses, come from different institutions and different individuals located, importantly, in the same historical context. The Ns, or the observations, are all unique, but related to the areas of concern in the study. The ‘truth claims’ to the extent that they can be made, might then be assessed on the quality of the sources and the depth of the knowledge of the temporal context.

The question in this research, then, as Gerring puts it, is not only about whether X might cause Y, but also why X causes Y, which, as Gerring notes, is often

² John Gerring, *Case Study Research. Principles and Practices*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 178

much more complex.³ The main research questions in this thesis seek to establish if the church-state relationship in Britain was altered due to specific events of external pressure, but is equally interested in discovering the underlying reasons for this.

It is recognized that contextual knowledge, such as a sound understanding of the time frame in which the process-tracing is carried out, is of great significance to ensure an accurate interpretation of sources. This involves, e.g., the ability to identify viable alternatives for central actors. It is for this reason that the reading of an extensive amount of secondary literature, as well as interaction with relevant scholars in the field, has been considered an important priority in the process. It is, as Gerring puts it, this knowledge, which compensates for the insufficiencies of a formal research design in a single case study based on process tracing.⁴

Definitions

The thesis will operate with a number of concepts, which are subject to different academic understandings. It is therefore necessary to outline briefly the way in which these concepts will be understood in this research.

Institutions

Institutionalism or New Institutionalism in the broad sense will not be applied fully in this thesis. Earlier attempts have been made to structure the thesis along historical institutionalist lines, but as a theoretical framework the explanatory capacity of historical institutionalism turned out to be too constraining. In other words; signifying major events within the time frame as critical junctures did not in itself lead to any novel discoveries regarding connections and causation. On this basis, it was decided

³ Gerring (2007), 180

⁴ Gerring (2007), 178

to let the research evolve as a thick description of the single case study as this to a much larger extent would open up for the discovery of new possible areas of causation. That being said, the church-state relationship can still be beneficially approached within an institutionalist framework. It is therefore recognised that church-state relations in Britain represent an institutional relationship that provides ‘opportunity structures’ for religious interests in the political process, and vice versa. Although institutionalist theory will not be tested or used explicitly, institutionalist accounts have played a role in the early stages of the research, providing tools to select key agents, critical moments, and a temporal framework.

Elites

The primary agents examined in the thesis are those who can be said to represent the Church of England elite. As will be explained in more detail in chapter one, the Church of England leadership consists, due to the episcopal structure of the church, of the bishops. Although the church elite might be said to include all the bishops, some bishops seem to have weighed more heavily in political matters than others. This is partly due to personal preferences (as not all clergy believed it was their task to be involved in politics), but also a consequence of bishops’ personal abilities to make a case for themselves and establish the relevant networks.

Within sociology, which is the field that most often works with elite theory, the concept of elites is also contested. The debate between the contestants will not be replicated here, where it is sufficient to outline the way elites will be understood in this thesis.

The elite will be understood as the group of persons who have vastly disproportionate control over or access to a resource. Within this definition, an elite is understood as occupying a position that provides access and control, or as possessing

resources that advantage them over others. Capital or resources are defined as an object of social contention; what counts as a resource and its transferability are defined socially. In the context of this thesis, the capital access to political power (Whitehall), belonging to a specific culture (background and education, and hence, identical frames of reference), social networks (both existing networks based on social background, and the capacity to establish new ones based on easy access to influential individuals), and knowledge (of theology and the ability to make meaningful links to politics); and of politics more generally.⁵

Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism

The area of how to define, categorise, and analyse authoritarian regimes is one of the most contested within modern political science, most recently in relation to Latin America and the 'hybrid' regimes in eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War. There is a growing literature on how to classify both authoritarian regimes and the 'hybrid' regimes located in the grey zone between democracy and autocracy.⁶

The classical theories on nondemocratic regimes devised during the 1950s and 1960s were based primarily on a distinction between totalitarianism and authoritarianism.⁷

Totalitarianism and authoritarianism were simply defined as 'rule by other means than democracy.'⁸ As this thesis addresses a time period previous to these modern

⁵ Shamus Rahman Khan, 'The Sociology of Elites,' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38, 2012, 361-377

⁶ See, e.g., Barbara Geddes, 'What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?' *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2, 1999, 115-44; Larry Diamond, 'Thinking about Hybrid Regimes,' *Journal of Democracy* 13, 2, 2002, 21-35; Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, 'The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,' *Journal of Democracy*, 13, 2, 2002, 51-65; Andreas Schedler, 'The Menu of Manipulation,' *Journal of Democracy*, 13, 2, 2002, 36-50; Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996; Juan Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner, 2000

⁷ Brooker, Paul, *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politic*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000

⁸ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Eliot Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton University Press, 1989 (1832), 87

conceptions of authoritarianism and totalitarianism they cannot rightfully be applied. What is essential is rather how these terms were articulated in the 1930s and 40s.

The concept *totalitarian* was first used by Mussolini in his article on the Fascist doctrine. Mussolini claimed that liberalism was a negation of the state in the interest of the single individual. Fascism, however, affirmed the state as the true reality of the individual. For the fascist the state was everything, and thereby totalitarian.⁹

Whereas today the concepts are used in a more technical manner, which refers more to establish certain characteristics about a state and society; in the 1930s and 40s the concepts were used to highlight the personal dictatorship's desire for total control of state and society through ideological indoctrination and enforcement by the political police, the backdrop to this being Hitler's fascist regime.¹⁰ It was not until the 1960s that the concept of *authoritarianism* was adopted by political scientists to describe the new examples of non-totalitarian, less ideological and less personalised versions of modern dictatorship.¹¹ The point here is that in the 1930s and 1940s *authoritarianism* was not necessarily seen only as a totalitarian trait.

As we shall see, *authoritarianism* was widely discussed in the ecumenical movement as a characteristic of the state in the modern society. With the above in mind we shall then see how the churches contributed with their own definition of the concept, and how this was linked to their understanding of the early cultural Cold War.

⁹ Waldemar Gurian, 'The Totalitarian State,' *The Review of Politics*, 40, 4, 1978, 514-527, 514

¹⁰ Paul Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politic*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, passim

¹¹ Brooker (2000), passim

Summary

The thesis is situated in a Cold War context and is concerned, within this framework, with the relationship between church and state in Britain. Situated within the fields of history and political science this thesis seeks to apply historical data to investigate events of institutional complexity. It will be suggested that in the Church of England, during a time where external threats and fear of extinction was strongly felt, changes were initiated which influenced the church's relationship to the state, to which it was constitutionally and culturally tied.

The development of a strategy to survive as a religious institution was embedded in the climate of the 1930s and the contemporary sense of crisis caused by economic depression, international conflict, and most specifically the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe and Russia. The Church of England, through its role in the transnational ecumenical movement, took part in articulating an understanding of the contemporary crisis as a combination of secularization caused by modernity, which was cast as the root cause of 'mal-developments' within states, such as Communism or Nazism. As part of a tactic for self-preservation the Church of England then began to question its close ties to the state in England, and also became increasingly involved in a new transnational ecumenical institution; in cultural terms, then, central church institutions positioned themselves to cold war years before the territorial Cold War became a reality.

It is argued that with the advent of WWII the institutional relationship between church and state in England was altered once again as leaders of the Church of England, already embedded in the state through the House of Lords and other dimensions of its institutions, now became formally involved in Whitehall's Ministry of Information. This led to a split in the Church of England's strategy towards the

state; on the one hand it regarded the collaboration and the war as an opportunity to further its own cause; on the other hand it understood well the political dilemmas of the British government and felt obliged to remain loyal.

The next chapter is a literature review which introduces the scholarly framework within which the thesis positions itself. Focus will then, in chapter one, turn to the institutional structure and ideational foundation of the Church of England. In chapter two, the role of the Church of England in the 1937 Oxford Conference of the United Council on Life and Work will be examined. The second part of the thesis will turn to the transformations which the Church underwent during WWII and immediately after; chapter three will address the role of the Church of England during WWII specifically; chapter four will investigate the change of leadership in the Church in 1945 and see how this played into the ‘changing enemy’ scenario in the post-war years, where the Soviet Union increasingly replaced Nazi Germany as the perceived main threat in Europe. In the last part of the thesis the Church of England’s Cold War strategies as they became clear after WWII will be investigated; in chapter five, the role of the Church in questions concerning European unity will be addressed; in chapter six the position of the Anglican Community as expressed through the 1948 Lambeth Conference will be looked at, and finally; in chapters seven and eight, the inaugural assembly of the World Council of Churches will be examined. Chapter seven will explain how the Church dealt with the Roman Catholic Church as well as the Eastern Orthodox Churches during the preparations for the WCC assembly; chapter eight will address the inaugural assembly itself.¹²

¹² Note that a fuller summary of the thesis chapters can be found in the conclusion

Literature Review

This section will provide an overview and discussion of the scholarly framework in which the thesis positions itself. The interdisciplinary character of the thesis and the different areas of scholarship it addresses require the examination of the two distinct areas of literature, which are relevant to the subsequent research. First I look at selected Cold War historical literature, particularly on the Western churches and religion during the Cold War. Second, I discuss the literature on church-state relations with a short section in the end focussing specifically on areas of Cold War literature, which deal with church and state. Finally, I shall look at a selection of church-state typologies in order to see how church-state relations in England fit into this framework.

Cold War History

Cold War history as a discipline has travelled a long way since the start of the Cold War, and has been revised at least three times. As is well known, the changing historiographical paradigms over this period have been labelled traditionalism, revisionism and post-revisionism. Since the end of the Cold War there has been a revival of interest in the topic and the range of approaches has widened from diplomacy, foreign policy and strategy, to include propaganda, cultural policies, ‘home fronts,’ national institutions and the third world.¹

From the early precursors and outbreak of the Cold War in the mid-1940s until the late 1960s, the Cold War was presented politically and academically primarily as

¹ Federico Romeo, ‘Cold War historiography at the crossroads,’ *Cold War History*, 14, 4, 2014, 685-703

a consequence of Soviet expansionism. In the very early Cold War period, British scholarship on the Cold War reflected the fact that Britain was still a significant world power, though already overshadowed by both the United States and the Soviet Union.² The bipolar nature of the cold war trumped more subtle accounts, not least because Britain's foreign policy actually depended upon its place in the Western Alliance. In the 1950s, however, Britain's international status was clearly in decline and most scholars referred to US-Soviet confrontations – by then, Cold War studies primarily occupied American scholars.

By the 1960s a number of British scholars began writing more explicitly about the Cold War. The most significant contributions came from Wilfred Knapp who discussed Cold War issues in his study of international relations from 1939 to 1965 in which Soviet expansionism was not questioned; H. G. Nicholas who wrote about Anglo-American partnership in international relations; Evan Luard, G. F. Hudson, and Donald Cameron Watt who focussed their studies on inter-state relations and the roles of key individuals.³ The common ground of these studies was that Soviet responsibility for the outbreak of the Cold War was treated as a 'given'. Soon, however, this orthodox view came under attack by revisionist historians who pointed to the expansionist tendencies of the US.

In 1959, the American William Appleman Williams altered the discourse about Soviet responsibility and opened a window to a new way of reasoning about the Cold War. Williams and like-minded scholars accused the traditionalist camp of underestimating Soviet weakness, overstating the Soviet threat, and ignoring the

² Peter Weiler, 'Britain and the First Cold War: Revisionist Beginnings,' *Twentieth Century British History*, 9, 1, 127-138, 1998

³ Wilfred Knapp, *A History of War and Peace, 1939-1965*, Oxford University Press, 1967; Herbert George Nicholas, *Britain and the United States*, University of Chicago Press, 1963; Desmond Donnelly, *Struggle for the World*, St. Martin's Press, 1965; G. F. Hudson, *The Hard and Bitter Peace: World Politics since 1945*, Pall Mall Press, 1966; Evan Luard, *The Cold War: A Reappraisal*, Thames and Hudson, 1964

degree to which U.S. policymakers were guided by economic considerations while failing to discuss the active role played by the United States in bringing about the collapse of the Grand Alliance after the Second World War.⁴ The revisionists found that the traditionalist camp was tied up in its own ideological mission, producing at best a rationalisation of U.S. foreign policy after the Second World War. The main revisionist argument was that America's chief aim in the years after the Second World War was to make sure that there was an open door for American trade.⁵

The revisionists also started to perceive the war in Vietnam as the realization of the impact of American foreign policy and war aims. From the latter half of the 1970s, a group of historians – the so-called ‘post-revisionists’ – approached the Cold War as a matter more complex than simply ascribing guilt. This group viewed the Cold War from more angles than earlier historians, and thus offered what many perceived as a more scholarly approach to Cold War studies. One of the most prominent of these scholars was John Lewis Gaddis who, at a time of détente in international politics, argued that the conflict ultimately was caused by mutual misunderstanding between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.⁶

Due to the thirty year-rule in Britain, the 1970s brought a beginning of the archival investigation of the early Cold War years, which led to increased understanding of Britain's important international role in the 1940s.⁷ The overall tendency was now to investigate the Cold War in a more nuanced manner and to a higher degree to disentangle academic work from political agendas.

⁴ Paul M. Buhle and Edward Rice-Maximin, *William Appleman Williams: The Tragedy of Empire*, Routledge, 1995

⁵ Peter Weiler (1998)

⁶ Lewis Gaddis *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War*, Columbia University Press, 1972

⁷ Michael F. Hopkins, ‘Teaching and Research on the Cold War in the United Kingdom,’ *Cold War History*, 8:2, 241-258, 2008; Anne Deighton, ‘Say It With Documents: British Policy Overseas, 1945-1952,’ *Review of International Studies*, 18, 4, 1992, 393-402

By the early 1980s, British scholars sought to demonstrate that Britain played an important role in the early post-war era, both over Germany, and in the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty. An example of this group of scholars is Alan Bullock, who studied Ernest Bevin's time as a Foreign Secretary from 1945 to 1951. Later, Anne Deighton stressed Bevin's lead in the need to take a tough line towards the Soviet Union on Germany.⁸ Other significant European international historians included John Young, who demonstrated the importance of British and French policy decisions to the outbreak of the Cold War, and David Reynolds, who contributed valuable work on the complexities of the states and their key personnel in the 1940s.⁹ In line with the argument in this thesis, Reynolds argues that the role and internal condition of the state are essential to understand when investigating the international Cold War climate in the 1940s.¹⁰

The next wave of Cold War re-thinking came with the opening of Eastern archives at the end of the Cold War. Two important repositories of new Cold War documents were established in 1991; the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) and the National Security Archive. Since its establishment, the Cold War International History Project has played an important role in accelerating the release and distribution of previously classified Cold War documents from former Communist countries. As Gaddis – in a rather positivist approach to history and influenced by the rise of the right wing in the US – argued in 1997 when he altered his earlier work dramatically: with the new archival access the time had come to

⁸ Alan Bullock, *Ernest Bevin, Vol III: Foreign Secretary 1945-51*, Heinemann, 1983; Anne Deighton, *The Impossible Peace: Britain, the Division of Germany and the Origins of the Cold War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

⁹ Including, John Young and John Kent, *International Relations since 1945: a global history*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; John Young, 'Churchill and East-West Détente,' in David Cannadine and Roland Quinault (eds.), *Winston Churchill in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004

¹⁰ David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s*, Oxford University Press, 2006, 4

discover what had *really* happened.¹¹ Regardless of whether this is true or not, the last decades have witnessed the publication of many new perspectives on the Cold War, not only as a security or foreign policy game, but also as a framework for Cold War studies on the home fronts, addressing the propaganda, psychological, cultural, and ideological dimensions of the Cold War.¹² Also, research on domestic and social dimensions, on institutions of civil society, on national and trans-national networks and new forms of mass communication is flourishing in the field, often approached in an inter-disciplinary manner.¹³

On the early ideological Cold War, David C. Engerman has offered interesting insights. In his contribution to the 2010 Cambridge History of the Cold War he argues that the ideological contest between the USA and the Soviet Union began immediately after the Russian Revolution. By 1937, the cultural Cold War was a reality in the USA, where individual liberty, anti-collectivism, and market values had been increasingly hardening into an ideology since 1917.¹⁴ By 1937 the American approach was not yet as universalistic in its objective as it would become after WWII, but the competition between communist and liberal systems was already acknowledged.¹⁵ Both nations subscribed to what might be labeled progressive ideologies, believing that their particular model would eventually become global. Consequently, each side feared the advance of the other as a step backward for themselves (that is, a zero-sum game). As David Engerman writes: ‘Americans

¹¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, Oxford University Press, 1997

¹² Kenneth A. Osgood, 'Hearts and Minds: The Unconventional Cold War', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4:2, 85-107, 2002, see also Tony Shaw, 'The Politics of Cold War Culture', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 3:3, 59-76, 2001

¹³ See for example, Deighton, Anne, 'Britain and the Cold War 1945-1955,' Leffler and Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010 1

¹⁴ Odd Arne Westad, 'The Cold War and the international history of the twentieth century,' in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, volume I: Origins*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 13

¹⁵ David C. Engerman, 'Ideology and the origins of the Cold War, 1917-1962,' in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, volume I: Origins*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 20

understood Soviet expansion as a direct blow to the gradual spread of freedom, while Soviet observers saw American expansion as proof that the final crisis of capitalism was near.¹⁶

At the end of the 1990s, there was also a so-called cultural turn in Cold War studies. As students from literature, media studies, sociology, and many others entered the field, as well as a turn towards culture among Cold War historians themselves, new perspectives on the Cold War surfaced, concentrating primarily on American culture and how that culture shaped and was shaped by the Cold War. The European parallel has begun to develop, but it still has a long way to go. At this point, German history in particular has profited from the trend to emphasize national and international history. In 1986 Volker Berghahn's work on the Americanization of West German industry was published and later came studies on American influence on basic law, lifestyle and US attempts to spread American culture, to name a few. French and British post-1945 history has also been opening up towards considering international influences.¹⁷

Apart from the impact of American culture, we have still not to the same extent seen in-depth studies of the cultural impact of the Cold War in Europe. More specifically, part of the growing trend towards writing cultural histories of the Cold War and of the post-revisionist emphasis on the importance of societies other than the two superpowers has been investigation of the establishment of a 'spiritual union' in the Western hemisphere from the mid-1940s in an attempt to create an ideological

¹⁶ David C. Engerman (2010), 23

¹⁷ Volker R. Berghahn, *The Americanization of West German Industry, 1945-1973*, Leamington Spa, 1986; Edmund Spevack, *Allied Framing of the West German Basic Law (Grundgesetz)*, Oldenbourg Verlag, 2001; Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels. Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*, University of California Press, 2001; Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger (eds.), *Transactions, transgressions, Transformations. American Culture in Western Europe and Japan*, Oxford University Press, 2000

foundation to the emerging Western security and economic community.¹⁸ A branch of this research area looks specifically at the use of propaganda in this regard. Michael Hochgeschwender and Julia Angster examine the ways in which the United States tried to create a Western community of values in cooperation with German politicians, academics and intellectuals via the Congress of Cultural Freedom.¹⁹ Dianne Kirby is engaged in a similar enterprise in her investigation of the Anglo-American Cold War alliance.²⁰ A number of studies have addressed how the West constructed its enemy stereotypes, using a mixture of popular psychology, advertising techniques and even academic research and the degree to which culture was used as an instrument of state propaganda in the West.²¹ Scott Lucas's *Freedom's War* is one important contribution to help understand the intersection between foreign policy making, domestic politics, propaganda and culture during the Cold War. Finally, Thomas Sauer analyses the Protestant milieu around a German *Kreis* (Kronberger Kreis), and shows that the majority in the Protestant milieu had reservations about a Western security community and the idea of Western union – instead they preferred a Protestant cultural foundation.²²

As part of the complex state fabric and as participant in policy and reform formulating bodies, the Church, as is already clear, is an important part of the cultural dimension of the Cold War, yet, it is also a political institution, especially in Britain.

¹⁸ Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan, America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952*, Cambridge University Press, 1987

¹⁹ Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive? Der Kongress für kulturelle Freiheit und die Deutschen*, Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999; Julia Angster, *Konsenskapitalismus und Sozialdemokratie. Die Westernisierung von SPD und DGB*, Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999

²⁰ Kirby, Dianne, 'Divinely Sanctioned: The Anglo-American Cold War Alliance and the Defence of Western Civilisation and Christianity, 1945-48', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35, 3, 2000, 385-412

²¹ Rana Mitter and Patrick Major (eds.), *Across the Blocks. Cold War Cultural and Social History*, Frank Cass, 2003; Ron Robin. *The making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Industrial Complex*, Princeton University Press, 2001; Lucas, Scott, *Freedom's War: The US Crusade against the Soviet Union, 1945-56*, Manchester University Press, 1999

²² Thomas Sauer, *Westorientierung im deutschen Protestantismus? Vorstellungen und Tätigkeit des Kronberger Kreises*, Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999

The leading scholars on this dimension of the Church of England are Dianne Kirby and Andrew Chandler, although their perspectives are subtly different from the one in this thesis.

As a significant scholar on the role of the Church of England in the Second World War and early Cold War, Kirby shows how members of the church elite became key personalities in the post-war planning. With a focus on individuals within the Church of England, Kirby shows how British Churchmen, most specifically Archbishop of York, Cyril Foster Garbett, were actively working towards the placement of Anglicans in key political positions and how key personalities in the Church of England often took a lead in formulating strategies to form a Christian counter-ideology to communism. Although we still need an account of Church-Church and Church-state lines of collaboration across the Atlantic, Kirby has started the work in her detailed examination of the personal involvement of Anglican leaders in the Anglo-American alliance against the Soviet Union.²³

Although the research in this thesis will be complementary to the admirable work of Kirby, it will be argued in the thesis that the Church of England leaders who worked towards placements in key positions and who took a lead in shaping a counter-ideology to communism, were in fact institutionally rooted in the ecumenical movement, which was then gradually adopted by the Church of England. It will be argued that these individuals were not merely Anglican 'free agents', but ecumenical missionaries who pursued a transnational strategy established during the 1930s and formally agreed to at the 1937 Oxford Conference on Church, Community, and State. The thesis will therefore take its starting point with an investigation of the 1937 Oxford Conference to lay out the main conclusions of the conference in regard to

²³ See for example Dianne Kirby, 'Harry Truman's Religious Legacy: The Holy Alliance, Containment and the Cold War,' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

authoritarian states, Communism and Nazism. Throughout the thesis lines will be drawn back to the Oxford Conference to see how actions of key individuals and institutions were motivated by the ecumenical ideas, thus developing, but widening the approach of Kirby.

This literature review will next turn to the literature that exists on Church and state internationally and in Britain generally, and then more specifically during the Cold War.

Church and State

Reading through the literature on Western churches and their political role in the twentieth century is not as big a task as one could have wished for. Social scientists' general acceptance of the so-called secularization thesis can be held largely responsible for this. This account of religion's role in society dates back to the 1960s work of the British sociologist and pioneer of the study of religion from a sociological perspective, Bryan Wilson. The main proposition of the secularization thesis is essentially that religion in the Western world was at its peak in the Middle Ages and has been in long term decline since then. In time, religion would become a matter of individual choice, rather than a form of social obligation.²⁴ Political scientists in particular have embraced the thesis and omitted quite completely the study of religion and the church as a political actor, trying to find a role in a rapidly changing social environment, particularly in a Western context.

Within the last decades, political scientists have now started questioning if the secularization thesis is reasonable after all. New studies have surfaced claiming to

²⁴ See Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, Penguin Books, 1969; Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy. Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, Anchor, 1967; Steve Bruce, *God is Dead: Secularization in the West*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2002

restate the importance of religion as a political and social phenomenon. The most significant of these attempts is the so-called rational choice theory of religion, also known as the Supply Side Theory.²⁵ We will have a closer look at this below when examining models of church-state relationships.

In spite of these new attempts to integrate church and religion into political science it is clear that in our pool of social research over the last century there is a serious gap in our knowledge about the churches in Western Europe in particular, as well as their political and social impact.

To understand this further we must turn to Matthew Grimley's work on the development of the intellectual framework of the Anglican Church during the 1920s and 1930s, which offers valuable insight into the development of Christian thinking on the eve of World War II. Grimley offers a detailed description and his own reflections on the role of individual clergy in the Church of England in the development of a Christian standpoint, and also of the circle of intellectuals who were drawn into the debate over two decades. Grimley's conclusions will be considered in this thesis, and have so far been particularly helpful in pointing to key debates in the Church of England, specifically concerning William Temple, in the period leading up to the Oxford Conference in 1937.²⁶

On the Church of England as a formal institution, of course, much work exists on its foundation, structures and practices. The Church of England is often said to be part of the British constitution. With no written constitution, however, what is called the 'British constitution' is, at least to this outsider, largely a name for the way in which British governments happen to work at any given time and the accretion of laws, conventions and practices. For this reason, shifts in British government have

²⁵ Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *A theory of religion*, Rutgers University Press, 1987

²⁶ Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State between the Wars*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004

been particularly important in the history of the religious establishment in England.²⁷ This was never a single relationship, neatly embodied in a fundamental constitutional document, but rather a complex of relationships often regulated by the indefinite ways of tradition and custom. For this reason alone it makes good sense to demarcate clearly the time frame in which research on the church and the church-state relationship is carried out – the Established Church is a continuously changing phenomenon. Andrew Chandler writes ‘[t]he essence in the Establishment lay not in its formalities, but in its manners, its informal respect and courtesies. Very possibly these permitted both church people and politicians not to question too thoroughly its logic and justice.’²⁸

Understanding the legal structure of the Church of England is greatly helped by Mark Hill’s impressive volume *Ecclesiastical Law* (1995). Here the reader is offered detailed insight on the nature and sources of the legal foundation of the Church of England as expressed in ecclesiastical law. Areas dealt with in the book include the constitution of the Church of England, the purpose of the parishes and their structure, the role of clergy, the forms of service and worship, the Church courts, faculty jurisdiction and the cathedrals.²⁹ The book must be considered indispensable for the scholar working with the Church of England from an institutional point of view.

The Church of England is regulated by a combination of secular and ecclesiastical jurisprudence. Its laws are to be found in Measures and Canons, both of which, in different ways, require the sanction of the monarch in Parliament, in the common law in England, in custom, and in Divine or natural law. The purpose of the

²⁷ Hinchliff, Peter, ‘Church-State Relations,’ in Stephen Sykes and John Booty (eds.), *The Study of Anglicanism*, Fortress Press, 1988

²⁸ Andrew Chandler, ‘The Church of England and the Obliteration Bombing of Germany in the Second World War,’ *English Historical Review*, 108, 429, 1993, 920-46

²⁹ Mark Hill, *Ecclesiastical Law*, London: Butterworth, 1995, chapter 1

law of the Church of England is to regulate the functioning of the Church and the conduct of its members by a combination of commands, prohibitions and permissions. Such purpose, Hill explains, is realised in a number of ways: by God through revelation; by the Church through its internal mechanisms of government and by the state through secular legislation. It is also stressed that, since the Church of England is the established Church in England, the inextricable link between church and state permits the state to legislate for the church and its religious affairs, either directly or by implication. The General Synod (earlier Church Assembly) of the Church of England may legislate by Measure, which has the full force and effect of an Act of Parliament and may relate to any matter concerning the Church of England.³⁰

Another much smaller volume by Guy Mayfield gives a detailed overview of the organisation of the Church of England. The Church of England is divided into two provinces, Canterbury and York, each of which has an Archbishop possessing jurisdiction over the bishops in their respective provinces who join the other bishops who sit in the House of Lords.³¹

The work by E.R. Norman offers some detail on the development of the Church of England. In accounting for the history of the Church of England over a period of 200 years, Norman interestingly brackets the period in the 1940s and 1950s as being a period of unfamiliar patterns and practices in the church. According to Norman, this was a time when the church leaders discovered that the serious problems in the world (total war and Cold War) had implications beyond the mere adoption of ideas.³² Dianne Kirby supports this view in her study of Cyril Foster Garbett.³³ This has influenced the thinking in this thesis as well.

³⁰ Mark Hill (1995), chapter 1

³¹ Guy Mayfield, *The Church of England. Its Business and its Members*, Oxford University Press, 1963

³² E.R. Norman, *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970: A Historical Study*, Oxford University Press, 1976

Although Owen Chadwick calls him an "ecclesiastical gadfly," the works of Herbert Hensley Henson (Bishop of Durham 1920-39) remain important to anyone trying to understand the Church of England in the period prior to the Second World War (he retired in 1941). Representing the 'prophetic doctrine' within the church, Henson argued strongly for the right of free opinion within the church, that neither Church nor state could require unconditional obedience from the individual who has access to higher guidance than any earthly authority could question.³⁴ More recent work includes Andrew Chandler's detailed institutional history of the bureaucracy within the church.³⁵

Also to be mentioned here are the biographies of leading Churchmen in 1937-48, most notably those of Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Lang, written by Robert Beaken in 2012; the biography of Bishop of Chichester (1929-58) George Bell, written by R.C.D. Jasper in 1967; of the archbishop of York (1929-42) and archbishop of Canterbury (1942-1944) Canterbury William Temple, whose biography was written by F.A. Iremonger in 1948, and Archbishop of Canterbury (1945-61) Geoffrey Fisher, whose biography was written by David Hein in 2008, and more fully by Edward Carpenter in 1991. These works all provide essential information about personal aspirations and ideas of these church leaders.³⁶ Adrian Hastings should also be mentioned here. His large volume *The History of English Christianity* has been a particularly helpful tool to help establish an understanding of the development of the

³³ Dianne Kirby, 'The Archbishop of York and Anglo-American Relations During the Second World War and Early Cold War, 1942-1955,' *The Journal of Religious History*, 23:3, 327-345, 1999

³⁴ Owen Chadwick, *Hensley Henson. A Study in the Friction between Church and State*, Oxford University Press, 1983; Herbert Hensley Henson, *The Church of England*, Cambridge University Press, 1939; Andrew Chandler (1993)

³⁵ Andrew Chandler, *Church of England in the Twentieth Century. The Church Commissioners and the Politics of Reform, 1948-1998*, The Boydell Press, 2006

³⁶ Robert Beaken, *Cosmo Lang, Archbishop in War and Crisis*, I.B. Tauris 2012; Edward Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher – His Life and Time*, The Canterbury Press Norwich, 1991; Ronald C.D. Jasper, *George Bell, Bishop of Chichester*, London: Oxford University Press, 1967; F.A. Iremonger, *William Temple. Archbishop of Canterbury*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963; David Hein, *Geoffrey Fisher. Archbishop of Canterbury*, Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2008

Church of England and its relationship with other Churches in the UK over a long stretch of time.³⁷

Additional volumes on George Bell, which have been consulted include Peter Raina's books, which include printed primary sources from Bell's personal papers, e.g., Bell's correspondence with Rudolf Hess; and also Kenneth Slack's work specifically on Bell.³⁸

In recent years we have seen three new and interesting publications on the Church of England. Stephen G. Parker and Tom Lawson have edited a collection of articles under the title *God and War: The Church of England and Armed Conflict in the Twentieth Century*. The volume sets out to examine the Church's role in conflicts across the twentieth century and to ask questions on the ever-changing relationship between the church, the state and the people of United Kingdom.³⁹

As has already been demonstrated by Dianne Kirby in her earlier work on church leaders in the 1940s, Parker and Lawson single out the Second World War as an important branching point; it was the new practices which were established during this War that revealed a new relevance for the Church of England, particularly through a closer relationship to the British Foreign Office. Another volume published in 2012 is a collection of articles edited by Andrew Chandler under the title 'The Church and Humanity: the Life and Work of George Bell, 1883-1958.' The list of contributors include Kirby, Coupland and Lawson, but also Gerhard Besier and Jaakko Rusama and others, who contribute with fresh perspectives on different

³⁷ Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity*, London: Collins, 1986

³⁸ Peter Raina (ed.), *Bishop George Bell. House of Lords Speeches and Correspondence with Rudolf Hess*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2009; Peter Raina, *George Bell: The Greatest Churchman – a portrait in letters*, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 2006; Kenneth Slack, *George Bell*, London: SCM Press, 1971

³⁹ Stephen G. Parker And Tom Lawson (eds), Introduction *God and War: A Century in the Politics of Religion in God and War: The Church of England and Armed Conflict in the Twentieth Century*. Ashgate Publishing Company, 2012

aspects of Bell's life. Chapters in this volume paint a picture of George Bell as bishop and ecumenical statesman, who saw his church not as a national but as a universal body, and who never refrained from reminding governments of the Christian and moral perspective on world affairs. The volume takes us through Bell's early ecumenical work and through to his retirement and death in 1958.⁴⁰

The third book to mention here is Andrew Chandler and David Hein's recent book on Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher. Contrary to his reputation as a rather anonymous archbishop, and despite the fact that Hein published a biography of Fisher in 2008, Hein and Chandler find that Fisher's was a 'pivotal archiepiscopate' that 'cries out for fresh examination.'⁴¹ Hein and Chandler emphasize that Fisher accomplished two major tasks during his time as Archbishop: He instituted the process of revising the 1603 canons of the Church of England, and he modernized its finances. In order to face up to modern times, Fisher thought it was necessary to put the internal workings of the church in order.

A final note should be made about the Church of England's relationship to Hitler's regime. The standpoints and perceptions that the Church of England had developed over the course of the Second World War were very much alive and had to be dealt with as a new war lurked. It is therefore necessary to have an idea of which legacies from the Second World War the Church of England was digesting in 1945.

Tom Lawson has examined the Church of England standpoint on Nazism and the holocaust and concludes that there initially was a tendency to condemn all Germans for Nazi atrocities. Lawson shows, however, that leading members of the Church of England, especially Bishop George Bell of Chichester, made a distinction

⁴⁰ Andrew Chandler (ed.), *The Church and Humanity. The Life and Work of George Bell, 1883-1958*, London: Ashgate, 2012

⁴¹ David Hein and Andrew Chandler, *Archbishop Fisher: 1945-1961, Church, State and World*, Ashgate 2012, p. 5

between the general party members and the Nazi elite. Instead of condemning all Germans as racial murderers, they sought to preserve the image of the German Churches, especially the Protestant Churches, as victims of Nazi anti-Christian violence and oppression. Lawson also reminds us that Nazi racial policy was not initially at the core of Anglican and German Protestant opposition to Hitler as much as it was Hitler's collectivist view of religion.⁴²

Related to this work is the study by Philip Coupland, who also takes the reader back to look at the attitudes of the Church of England towards Nazism, but with his analysis of changing patterns of elite behaviour in the Church he pursues the study further and engages in questions of wider implications for post-war European integration. Coupland shows how, during the Second World War, British church leaders were concerned to share in building transatlantic bridges rather than focusing on European concerns. A major exception was Bishop Bell who perceived a need to build a post-war Europe in which a reconstructed Germany should play a major role. Just like Norman's conclusion in 1976, Coupland emphasizes the shift in Anglican thinking in this period, from ecclesiastical ideas about Christianity and the world to a confrontation with governmental realism.⁴³

The final area to mention, briefly, here is the existing scholarship on the ecumenical movement. General accounts that cover a very long time span in the history of ecumenical thoughts include the volume edited by Rouse and Neils from 1954. Because it describes ecumenical developments from 1517 to 1948, the volume is not very detailed, but provides a useful overview.⁴⁴ Another helpful book is Norman

⁴² Tom Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust. Christianity, Memory and Nazism*, The Boydell Press, 2006

⁴³ Philip Coupland, *Britannia, Europa and Christendom. British Christians and European Integration*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006

⁴⁴ Ruth Rouse & Stephen Charles Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, London: SPCK, 1954

Goodall's handbook on the recent history of the ecumenical movement as seen from 1964. Goodall, however, was himself involved in the ecumenical movement and the book is therefore not considered completely reliable as a secondary source.⁴⁵

On the relationship between the ecumenical movement and world affairs Darril Hudson's general overview from 1969 is enlightening. Taking as a starting point the beginning of the twentieth century, Hudson writes a general narrative about the ecumenical movement through the century from the perspective of international themes such as disarmament, international ethics and human rights.⁴⁶

Seen from the American perspective, John Nurser's book on the churches and Human Rights from 2005 explains how American ecumenical thinking influenced the shaping of Human Rights. Although the perspective is almost exclusively American, the focus of the book on 'Just and Durable Peace,' which, as shall be seen, influenced British ecumenists during World War II, provides useful insights.⁴⁷

Now more specific sets of literature will be addressed. Literature on the Oxford Conference 1937 specifically is sparse. The book which has proved most useful for this thesis is Graeme Smith's analysis of the conference. Although Smith's analysis investigates another issue, namely if the Oxford Conference was a missionary conference, his reflections have been helpful in understanding the planning and structure of the conference.⁴⁸

Although work is beginning to surface within both history and political science, which addresses church-state relations in the 20th century western

⁴⁵ Norman Goodall, *The Ecumenical Movement. What it is and what it does*, London: Oxford University Press 1964

⁴⁶ Darril Hudson, *The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs*, London: London School of Economics, 1969

⁴⁷ John Nurser, *For all People and all Nations. Christian Churches and Human Rights*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005

⁴⁸ Graeme Smith, *Oxford 1937. The Universal Christian Council for Life and Work Conference*, Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2004

hemisphere, there is still a major gap in scholarly accounts on all the dimensions of this topic. Only very few academic accounts are available that look specifically at church-state relations during the Cold War period, and hardly any address the UK in particular. So, both from the perspective of Cold War history, and the academic field of church-state relations, empirical as well as theoretical work is called for.

Cold War and the State

West European Churches have not yet gained much attention from Cold War scholars, but this thesis deals only with the Church of England, although brief reference will be made below to the wider European context. After the Second World War, the Church was a significant political institution: it was embedded in the British state and yet had a high degree of independence; it was a trans-national actor in its intense cooperation with Christian churches all over the world; it was an international actor through its participation in the World Council of Churches, it was a mediator of national and international morality and legitimacy; it was a strategic and political force in its establishment of access to the otherwise closed off orthodox churches of the east; and finally it was a significant actor itself on the British political scene. In other words, the Church of England mattered, and was a significant political actor in the complex situation in Europe after 1945.

Dianne Kirby, as already mentioned, is one of the scholars who has contributed intensively to the establishment of empirical historical work on the Church of England during the Cold War. Writing as an historian and not a political scientist, Kirby rightly stresses that religion has been 'systematically neglected' by Cold War historians, and that those historians who have dealt with religion or culture broadly speaking (ideas and beliefs), in a Cold War context, have done so only with

an eye on the Communist ideology that is rooted in Soviet history – John Gaddis is mentioned as the prime example. No one, Kirby claims, has systematically examined the making of Western perspectives, and certainly not with regard to Western Christianity.⁴⁹ She has shown how ideology generally, in part based on and informed by religious beliefs and values, was highly significant in shaping both perceptions of and responses to the Soviet Union and how the religious dimension of the Cold War was of significance in the United States and the UK in mobilising public support for a war against the Soviet Union. Further, American and British governments collaborated in a joint strategy to mobilise support for war against the Soviet Union, where Christianity was intended as the overall counter-ideology to Communism.⁵⁰

A general problem with the studies of Kirby, but also of other scholars who have contributed to the field, although not with a specific Cold War focus, to which Matthew Grimley also draws attention, is the concentration of focus on the issue of war as opposed to the changes in the churches themselves and in Christian thinking. As he writes: '[t]his concentration on the short period surrounding Britain's entry into war (...) has led to a problem of emphasis. Historians have tended to treat churchmen's comments on the Nazi threat as the instant responses of ecclesiastical politicians. Because they are dealing with such a short period, they do not see that what many senior churchmen said about Hitler was part of the wider public debate about state and community to which they had already been contributing for two decades.'⁵¹ Grimley's comment raises a very important point concerning the temporal, contextual understanding of the churches and their relationship to the state in the 1930s and 40s. It is therefore fully supported in this thesis.

⁴⁹ Dianne Kirby, 'Introduction' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

⁵⁰ Dianne Kirby, "Harry Truman's Religious Legacy: The Holy Alliance, Containment and the Cold War" in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

⁵¹ Matthew Grimley (2004)

Although there are distinct schools of thought on the Church of England, on the German Protestant Church, and several schools on the international dimension of Christianity (primarily within history and church history), the distinct area of ‘Western Churches in the Cold War’ or ‘religion and the Cold War’ (in the West) generally lacks coherence.

It is worth now mentioning some of the wider non-British focused contributions to questions of church-state relations during the Cold War, to give the setting for the research to follow. The scholarly interest for religion and churches in the Soviet regime has been relatively constant throughout the Cold War. To mention but a few contemporary scholars, Lucian Leustean examines the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the state under Communist rule in Romania,⁵² and Anna Dickinson looks at the role of the Russian Orthodox Church after the Great Patriotic War 1941-5.⁵³ Interestingly, both scholars conclude that the relationship between church and state in the Soviet regime was not as simple as earlier assumed. With a more international perspective, Merrilyn Thomas explores how the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Great Britain each sought to seduce the other with promises of mutual interest and cooperation in terms of promoting Christian-Marxist dialogue amongst peoples, if not governments. Exploring how politicians understood and sought to harness the power of Christianity, with Christian leaders eager to play a role in shaping the future of the world, Thomas provides insight into the Christian-based underground network in the GDR that was evidently directed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).⁵⁴

⁵² Lucian N. Leustean, *Orthodoxy and the Cold War: Religion and Political Power in Romania, 1947 – 1965*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009

⁵³ Anna Dickinson, ‘Domestic and Foreign Policy Considerations and the Origins of Post-war Soviet Church-State Relations, 1941-46’ in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

⁵⁴ Merrilyn Thomas, *Communing with the Enemy: Covert Operations, Christianity and Cold War Politics in Britain and the GDR*, Peter Lang, 2005

Studies of the political and cultural role of the churches in the West have been far more limited. Most studies have evolved around the Catholic Church and the Vatican as a political actor. Only a few will be mentioned here: Frank J. Coppa offers an account of the development of the alliance between the US and the Vatican and shows how the Vatican had had a strong anti-Communist policy since 1917.⁵⁵ John Pollard writes about the Vatican attitude and strategy towards the Communist presence in Italy and argues that the Catholic Church owes much to the Cold War for the hegemonic status it enjoyed in Italy after the Cold War.⁵⁶ Charles Gallagher has written on the diplomatic contact between the US and the Vatican in Cold War Yugoslavia and shows how the US and the Vatican could satisfy a common interest – namely that of access to and information about the Eastern satellite states - by combining their diplomatic forces in the east.⁵⁷

William Inboden and Andrew Preston have contributed with accounts underlining the role of religion in American thinking and foreign policy. Inboden's contribution focuses on the American Protestants' influence on foreign policy in the Truman Administration.⁵⁸ This research is highly relevant for the research in this thesis, particularly with regard to John Foster Dulles and his Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, which the British Churches became involved in during WWII. Preston has contributed a large volume on the role of religion in American history.⁵⁹ Covering the period from the seventeenth century till the present, only a small part of the book is relevant to this thesis, namely the section on John Foster Dulles, whom

⁵⁵ Frank J. Coppa, 'Pope Pius XII and the Cold War: Confrontation between Catholicism and Communism' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

⁵⁶ John Pollard, 'The Vatican, Italy and the Cold War' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

⁵⁷ Charles Gallagher, 'Pro Patria, Pro Deo: The United States and the Vatican in Cold War Yugoslavia, 1945-1950' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

⁵⁸ William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960. The Soul of Containment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008

⁵⁹ Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy*, Anchor, 2012

Preston characterises as an ‘ecumenical statesman.’ This is opposed to the traditional picture painted of Dulles as a harsh cold warrior.

On the Anglican Church in the Cold War, Ian Jones has a study of the life of the local church in post-war Birmingham. Jones concludes that the local clergy generally perceived of the Cold War as a struggle between good and evil.⁶⁰ The existing accounts of the role of churches and religion in the Cold War offer insight into and explanations of Cold War politics and culture from perspectives different from that of strict foreign policy. At the same time, however, they only scratch the surface of an area of study, which holds promise for our understanding of Cold War history. Not only do we lack in-depth studies of the role of the different Western European churches in the Cold War, there is also a web of Cold War church relations across Europe, which needs to be investigated and which might prove to add valuable knowledge about the political and cultural transformative role of churches, the intermixing of religious and political ideas and the role of non-state actors during the Cold War. It is here that this thesis hopes to make a small contribution.

Cold War and the State in England

The work of Kirby, Coupland, and Lawson has established that George Bell and Cyril Garbett were significant political actors in World War II and in the early Cold War. We also know that, as the government was reluctant to use the Church of England too explicitly for propaganda purposes, and did not wish openly to compromise the morally independent church, a group of Anglicans were hired as individuals to work for the government, namely in the Religious Division and its sub-divisions under the Ministry of Information. With the establishment of the Religious Division in

⁶⁰ Ian Jones, ‘The Clergy, the Cold War and the Mission of the Local Church: England c.1945-60’ in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003

September 1939, and the intensification of the bond between the Church elite and the Foreign Office that the Religious Division provided, a new form of relationship between government and Church of England had come into existence. The policies and perspectives of the two institutions now became more integrated. During and after World War II, the collaboration between the two institutions increased significantly. This thesis will therefore look at the Religious Division and CFR as formal arrangements for church-state collaboration.⁶¹

Further, although the Church of England is an old and well-established institution in British society, the church's formal characteristics are not as cemented as one could think. According to Grimley, the Church of England has traditionally been a disorganised, fragmented and un-bureaucratic institution, with a large room for manoeuvre by individual clergy.⁶² Although the Church of England is part of the British state fabric, it is also a significant political actor in its own right and has in many instances proven significantly powerful in shaping public opinion. Because of its loosely organised structure and the political activities of individual clergy, it has also been difficult for political elites to steer the Church of England in any specific direction. Government and Church have often been left to lobby each other, which places an enormous emphasis on the informal aspect of church-state collaboration.

During World War II collaboration between church and state thus became more integrated and the idea of a 'common cause' towards Germany and the Soviet Union became stronger in some areas of cooperation, formally through the church-state collaboration in the Religious Division and the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, and informally through the endeavours of individual Anglicans and

⁶¹ See chapter 1 for an introduction of CFR

⁶² Dr. Matthew Grimley, Tutorial Fellow, Department of History, Merton College, University of Oxford. Private correspondence. See generally Matthew Grimley (2004); Matthew Grimley, 'Civil Society and the Clerisy: Christian Élites and National Culture, c. 1930-1950, in Jose Harris (ed.), *Civil Society in British History. Ideas, Identities, Institutions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003

their institution-shaping capacities, as we shall see. An important aspect of this is the role of the transnational ecumenical movement; its idea and institution shaping role but also the drawing in of other British as well as foreign Churches in Church decision making. The development of this work, during and after World War II is therefore also significant to this work. It was often the case that individual Church of England Anglicans were involved as leaders in the Church of England, and the Ecumenical Councils, and in some cases also as employees of the Ministry of Information. This was a highly complicated setting in which information sharing was key, but with great potential for inter-institutional tension due to conflicts between core institutional interests and many individuals with multi-institutional capacities.

Models of Church-State Relations

This thesis will not attempt to make a contribution to more academic Political Science accounts on church-state relations; for such a task, the empirical account presented in the thesis, based on one of the most complex decades in modern history, is too dense, and the potential number of variables and the causal relationship between them is too large. The proper clarification of variables in church-state relations, particularly in the west, in the 20th century is a task that political scientists only recently have begun to investigate. Although interesting contributions have started to emerge in the field, we are still far from able to make general conclusions about causation in church state relationships; both in regard to specific denominations, such as Protestantism or Catholicism, but also in regard to Western Christianity and democratic states more generally.

The thesis will, however, be looking at mid-century relations between Church and state in the UK, and, primarily relying on an empirical approach, make an

assessment of the development in this relationship in the period 1937-1948. For this task an analytical tool, which will help assess the church-state relationship, and specifically the questions of degree of separation, relative authority over certain questions, and the formality/informality of the relationship is useful. A typography of church-state relations will therefore be consulted. The typography is applied as a tool to help clarify the basic foundation of the special church-state relationship in the UK as compared to other types of church-state relationships, in order to assess more closely if church-state relations in the UK were moving away from its traditional classification or if the relationship upheld the status quo.

Although the task of developing an accurate typography of church-state relationships in the West is still in its infancy, the thesis will be informed by accounts which include not only the constitutional basis for the church-state relationship, but also a cultural dimension. As Michael Minkenberg notes, for the purpose of more empirically oriented efforts at operationalizing the state–church relationship, the social and political sciences do not offer much, and many empirically oriented comparisons focus heavily on legal aspects.⁶³ For a church, such as the Church of England, which has in many aspects a unique relationship to the state, and to which, as we shall look at more closely in chapter 2, the role of tradition, culture, informal relations, and temporal context have been highly significant to its relationship to Whitehall, a typography based on legal aspects alone would present, as we shall see, a highly inaccurate picture.

In the following, the most significant contributions to the field of church-state relations will be discussed briefly and it will be explained which elements of current accounts will prove useful to this study.

⁶³ Michael Minkenberg, 'The policy impact of church–state relations: family policy and abortion in Britain, France, and Germany,' *West European Politics*, 26, 1, 2003, 195-217, 197

The growing body of literature on church and state in Western Europe is full of efforts to systematise and categorise the multitude of patterns of church–state relations. A large part of the literature relies on traditional distinctions between three basic types: the state church type which is characterised by a close relationship between state power and church existence on the one hand; the type of strict separation between state and church on the other; and a third type in between in which the idea of separation is modified by some overlap of state and church, thus resulting in the preservation of particular privileges of the main churches. Often the UK, or more specifically England (along with the Scandinavian countries), is presented as the prime case representing the first type of a state church, while France is quoted as the embodiment of the opposite type, the ‘separationist’ model; finally, the most prominent example for the third type is Germany.⁶⁴

Economist Laurence Innaccone is one of the most significant contributors to the school of thought emphasising that religion can be analysed and understood as an actor in a marked economy. Following Adam Smith (1723-1790), Innaccone argues that ‘public religion,’ by which he means religious institutions that are heavily subsidised by the state or are otherwise subject to constraining regulation, will lead to lower levels of religious participation among individuals.⁶⁵ Nations with established churches will have less vibrant religious institutions than nations with a completely unregulated, fully competitive religious market. Innaccone identifies five mechanisms that will produce this effect. First, like regulated markets in general, state-subsidised religious institutions will produce ineffectively, engendering both fewer and inferior services. Second, even when religion is ‘for free,’ individual levels

⁶⁴ G. Robbers, ‘State and Church in the European Union,’ (ed.), *State and Church in the European Union*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1996, 328

⁶⁵ Laurence R. Innaccone, ‘The Consequences of religious market structure: Adam Smith and the economics of religion,’ *Rationality and Society*, 3, 156, 1991, 156-77

of practice and participation will be lower because consumers have no control over the quantity or quality of government-supported religion. Third, state administrators will be in a position to sway the content and policies of publicly supported religion to their own advantage. If this content does not reflect public interest it will reduce the levels of religious participation. Fourth, a single publicly sponsored religion can never provide the variety of religious choices desired by diverse individuals. Fifth, the religious human capital invested in an efficient state religion will bind people to it for generations after religious alternatives arise, preventing these alternatives from raising the religious vitality level as much as it otherwise might.⁶⁶ Innaccone's central result is that for Protestant countries, the more religiously concentrated a society is, the lower its church attendance rates; the more religiously plural it is, the higher its church attendance rates. According to Innaccone, a prime example of these theoretic propositions in the real world is America's 'exceptionally' high level of religiosity compared to the 'pervasive religious apathy in Northern Europe.'⁶⁷

Building on the thoughts of Smith and Innaccone, Mark Chaves and David E. Cann argue that the profound difference between religious regulation and religious pluralism can be best understood by looking at the different perspectives of Adam Smith, who places the causal weight on the presence or absence of state regulation of religion; and French political thinker and historian Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859), who places the causal weight directly on the extent of religious pluralism present in a society. Alexis de Tocqueville argued that religion intimately linked to 'earthly governments,' risks its legitimate authority and becomes as 'fragile as all

⁶⁶ Laurence R. Innaccone (1991), 156-77

⁶⁷ Laurence R. Innaccone (1991), 173

earthly powers.’ Any alliance with political power is therefore bound to be burdensome for religion.⁶⁸

To Smith the absence of state regulation frees the religious market and unleashes the competitive forces. To Tocqueville, on the other hand, the dissociation has an indirect effect: it prevents identification between religion and the state, and it is the absence of that identification that assures religion’s vitality. A disestablished religion, then, avoids rejection by those opposed to prevailing political powers. In other words; when government and church are too tightly linked the church might be subject to the populations’ ‘exit strategy.’

Chaves and Cann offer an operationalization, which involves political, economic, and juridical criteria and leaves room to distinguish between an institutional church–state relationship and its political outcomes.⁶⁹ Their index of church–state relations, measured by the degree of regulation or deregulation, seems useful because it avoids the problem of choosing a single dichotomy or continuum of ‘established religion’ vs. ‘separation of state and church’ which underlies others’ typologies.⁷⁰

Another contribution is the account offered by Michael Minkenberg. Building on Chaves and Cann’s contribution briefly outlined above, Minkenberg attempts to analyse comparatively church–state relations in Western Europe as an independent variable. Working from an institutionalist platform, Minkenberg questions older conceptualisations such as the view that institutions are only ‘arenas’ for the struggle of more ‘primary’ forces or that they are the mere reflection of their social and political environment. Instead, they are seen as relatively autonomous and coherent

⁶⁸ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by George Lawrence, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1835, 1969

⁶⁹ M. Chaves and D.E. Cann, ‘Regulation, Pluralism, and Religious Market Structure. Explaining Religion’s Vitality’, *Rationality and Society* 4, 3, 1992, 272–90

⁷⁰ M. Chaves and D.E. Cann (1992), 158

actors, which not only create order and organise chaos but also provide symbols and thus ‘interpretive coherence’ to politics. Minkenberg argues that church–state relations represent an institutional arrangement which provides an ‘opportunity structure’ for religious interests in the political process and as such they determine to some extent whether churches, as political actors, operate as public institutions or as interest groups. The principal argument is that state–church relations matter with regard to policy outputs. Taken alone, Minkenberg argues, patterns of church–state relations as conceptualised in the ‘inherited’ typology show a limited relevance for policy outputs.⁷¹

In this thesis, Minkenberg’s proposition that the Church of England as a state church generally acted as an institution, and not an interest group, will be incorporated, but it will also be examined whether the Cold War altered this characteristic.

A final contribution to the scholarly field of church-state relations to be mentioned here is the work of José Casanova.⁷²

Casanova shows that public religions in the modern world are ambiguous. Sometimes they represent the struggle to restore pre-modern religious hegemony and homogeneity, but not every example of a public religion can be interpreted as a rejection of modernity. He argues that public religions have acted to promote and protect civil society, which Habermas has identified as the unique and essential

⁷¹ Michael Minkenberg (2003), 197

⁷² José Casanova is a scholar in the sociology of religion. He is a professor at the Department of Sociology at Georgetown University, and heads the Berkley Center's Program on Globalization, Religion and the Secular. He has published works in a broad range of subjects, including religion and globalization, migration and religious pluralism, transnational religions, and sociological theory. His best-known work, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994), has become a modern classic in the field and has been translated into five languages, including Arabic and Indonesian. In 2012, Casanova was awarded the Theology Prize from the Salzburger Hochschulwochen in recognition of life-long achievement in the field of theology. Source: Casanova’s own presentation at Georgetown University, available online: <http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/jvc26/?PageTemplateID=132>

contribution of modernity to democracy. While established religions in the past have opposed the existence of an autonomous sphere of human activity, modern religions are at home in a world which accepts the autonomy of politics, religious liberty, and the integrity of the individual conscience. Casanova argues that religion enters civil society legitimately for three reasons: 1) to protect its own rights and freedoms and/or all modern freedoms and rights including the right of a democratic civil society to exist against an absolutist, authoritarian state; 2) to question and contest the claims of secular spheres to absolute lawful autonomy based on claims to be organized in accordance with rational principles of functional differentiation without regard to ethical or moral considerations; 3) to protect the traditional life-world from administrative or juridical state penetration (i.e, the protest of the American evangelicals and the Catholic bishops on ethical issues in the U.S.). In the first case, religious communities serve to protect the very constitutions of the democratic political and social orders. In the other two cases, they question and contest the very boundaries between ‘public’ and ‘private’ established by political and economic elites.

Casanova’s account is interesting for this thesis because it addresses the heart of the matter in the Church of England’s own struggle between maintaining the traditional religious hegemony in England on the one hand, and promoting and protecting the changing civil society on the other. To the Church of England, however, this was as much a question of connecting with the new layers of civil society as well as finding a role for the Church within it. Another theme addressed by Casanova, which will evolve in the early chapters of the thesis, is the church’s opposition to the existence of an autonomous sphere of human activity and organization, which was outside of the religious sphere. The development of such

spheres was in the late 1930s perceived by the churches as one of the main premises for the development of authoritarian and totalitarian states. Hence, the development of democratic civil societies was not, as Casanova argues, regarded as a safeguard against authoritarianism, but rather as a road that was likely to lead to the spread of ‘fake communities,’ based, e.g., on atheistic Communism.⁷³

Casanova’s case studies do not cover England but have sufficient general scope to be of interest here. His account, however, will rather be discussed and alluded to throughout the thesis than specifically accepted or rejected as a valid theory.

The methodological premises of the accounts presented here are debated and contested by political scientists. This thesis is not the place to engage in this debate, primarily because the thesis does not have a comparative objective; the ambition is to offer a detailed empirical account, rather than to add an explicit theoretical contribution to this field of study. The complexity of the time period examined in this thesis calls for further empirical studies before accurate suggestions of causality can be made. The complexity of the time period and the relationship between church and state as it developed is increased by the occurrence of church reactions to secularisation and modernity on the one hand; and church reactions to authoritarianism, totalitarianism, and expanding states on the other, which were developments that took off at approximately the same time and were therefore often mixed together in theologians’ intellectual handling of them. This was complicated even further by the major influence of international conflicts of the era.

In relation to this thesis specifically, the relationship between the Church of England’s opposition to Communism and the ideological Cold War, and how it later related to the geopolitical Cold War, and how this, in specific terms, influenced the

⁷³ See chapter 2

relationship between Church and state in England, is an area on which hardly any, if any at all, coherent academic material exists.

In contemporary political science, it is often argued that the development in the post-war decades, and the question of whether or not the churches embraced liberalism, democracy and individual rights in this period, may be considered a decisive factor in the way in which the churches are categorized today. In this thesis, however, it is claimed that this process was already well underway in the mid-1930s, and the churches' articulation of authoritarianism, modernity and secularisation formed what might be called a religious Cold War in the cultural area. It seems fair to suggest, then, that the dynamism of change in early and mid-century church-state relations should be investigated from an earlier date.

From an historical and empirical perspective, it is here that the thesis hopes to make a contribution. For this purpose, the categories of church-state relationships mentioned in this section will be alluded to as relevant throughout the thesis.

Chapter 1: The Church of England: Institution and Ideas

This chapter provides an introduction to the Church of England in the time frame of the thesis, 1937-1948. To assess the relationship between church and state in England within the given period, it is necessary to have an understanding of the specific features of the church and how it was interwoven with the state. This chapter will therefore look at developments in England up to the 1930s and 1940s. The chapter will then turn to introduce key persons in the church leadership, who formed the church elite in the time frame of this thesis. In the second part of the chapter, the ecumenical movement will be introduced. It will examine the development, as well as individuals from the UK who played influential roles either within the movement, or as links between the movement and the state.

Church of England

The Church of England is the established Church of England. As an established church it carries out tasks of witness, pastoral care, and mission that its constitutional position provides. It also has twenty-six bishops in the House of Lords, and the monarch has the role of its Supreme Governor. Its parochial structure means that it functions through dioceses under the oversight of a bishop. The Anglican Church can be said to belong in a conciliar tradition. This is partly expressed in its synodical institutions - the Convocations of the provinces of Canterbury and York, which were, however, highly influenced by the Reformation.¹ After the Reformation the conciliar

¹ During the Reformation, the Convocations were subject to submission to the King's wishes and in 1532 they surrendered the right to make canons unless licensed to do so by the monarch, who had the right to veto. Under Elizabeth a more moderate approach was taken. The Thirty-Nine Articles were written to signal the autonomy of the church in matters of doctrine. The Articles did not, however, achieve authoritative legal standing until Parliament approved them in 1571, and even then, the Convocations were not granted the power to serve the interests of the clergy. Source: Paul Valiere, *A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 165

tradition was visible mainly in the political conciliarism embodied in the English Parliament; the reformed Church of England was still an integral part of the English political body. The English episcopate sat in Parliament and enjoyed the right of counsel and consent, not just in ecclesiastical affairs but in all affairs of the state that came before the Lords.²

The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England describe the Church of Christ as ‘a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.’³ Expressing the relationship between church and state, an established church has been understood judicially as an action by a state ‘to grant legal status, recognition or protection’ to a church; ‘to confer on a religion or religious body the position of a state religion or a state church;’ ‘to support a church in the observance of its ordinances and doctrines;’ and ‘to found or set up a new church or religion.’ Full establishment may involve duties on the state and the citizen to maintain the established church as well as legal protection to the exclusion of other religious communities.⁴

The Church of England is not an established church in all of these senses.⁵ First, while there is no ‘Establishment Act’ as such, the institutional Church of England has been formed at least in part by a series of direct legislative acts of the civil power – though the Reformation legislation of the sixteenth century is often seen as part of a process which may have begun considerably earlier.⁶ Secondly, in consequence, the principle of establishment means that the Church of England,

² Paul Valiere (2012), 167

³ Norman Doe, *The Legal Framework of the Church of England. A Critical Study in a Comparative Context*, Clarendon Press, 1996, 8

⁴ Citations are from R. Davies, ‘Church and State,’ *Cambrian Law Review*, 7, 11, 1976, passim

⁵ Norman Doe (1996), 8

⁶ Adrian Hastings, *Church and State. The English Experience*, The Prideaux Lectures for 1990, University of Exeter Press, 1991

established by law, is treated legally as ‘the public or state-recognised form of religion.’⁷ Thirdly, the terms or incidents of establishment are expressed in the fact that state-made law places a series of rights and duties upon the Church of England, which are not applicable to other churches. Fourthly, establishment is produced by a fundamental identification of the Church of England with the state, the monarch being head of each: ‘the Queen’s excellent Majesty, acting according to the laws of the realm, is the highest power under God in the kingdom, and has supreme authority over all persons in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as civil.’⁸

The emergence of Anglican churches abroad in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries revived the tradition of conciliarism in the Church of England. This began with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States at the end of the eighteenth century when it was acknowledged that there was a need to create structures of local church government to replace impractical arrangements for ecclesiastical oversight from England.

The early Lambeth conferences were intended as a countervailing force to the diversity that was emerging in the Anglican diaspora; to keep in check differences in theory and practice. Although outcomes of the Lambeth Conferences were not binding for member churches, they carried great weight as an expression of opinion by the Anglican churches collectively.

Until the Synodical Government Measure of 1969 established the General Synod as the new central body of the church, the National Assembly of the Church of England, established in 1919, functioned as the church’s central legislature. The National Assembly was established by Parliament and it was empowered to legislate by measure, and consisted of three Houses: the House of Bishops and the House of

⁷ Norman Doe (1996), 8

⁸ Canon A7. Consulted online:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/aboutus/structure/churchlawlegis/canons/section-a.aspx>

Clergy, both derived from the Convocations; and the House of Laity.⁹ The House of Bishops consisted of the members of the Upper House of both Convocations (which included the two archbishops and all diocesan bishops of the two provinces).¹⁰ The House of Clergy consisted of members of the Lower Houses of both Convocations, persons representing clergy of the diocese, university clergy, deans and provosts of cathedrals, archdeacons, chaplains of the armed forces, and religious communities.¹¹ The House of Laity is composed of four classes of lay people: those elected by the diocesan electors of each diocese, lay persons chosen by lay members of religious communities, ex-officio members, and co-opted members.¹² Ecclesiastically, National Assembly was, as General Synod is today, the supreme legislator *within* the Church of England.

In the Church of England the National Assembly has a policy-making function and a power to discuss matters of religious or public interest.

The general activities of the Church of England's National Assembly mostly fall in the area of administration, rather than in law-making.¹³ A host of ecclesiastical institutions and persons carries out the implementation of church law, the discussing, formulation, and execution of policies which have not been given legal expression, the management of property and the administration of liturgical matters. The work of the National Assembly is regulated directly by its Constitution and Standing Orders, the latter being kept under review by the Standing Orders Committee.¹⁴ In addition, central administration of the Church of England is looked after by a number of bodies,

⁹ Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act 1919, s. 1(1); for Convocation see A.F. Smethurst, *The Convocation of Canterbury*, London, 1949

¹⁰ Norman Doe (1996), 89

¹¹ Canon H2. Consulted online:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/aboutus/structure/churchlawlegis/canons/section-h.aspx>

¹² Norman Doe (1996), 89

¹³ Norman Doe (1996), 89

¹⁴ Norman Doe (1996), 89

which can be classified broadly as ‘statutory’ and ‘non-statutory.’ The work of the major statutory bodies, established and regulated directly by synodical measure, relates in the main to the administration of property and finance.¹⁵

Church leadership

The Church of England leadership has traditionally endorsed a position of the church within the state, but they have also seen it as a duty to address political matters, and to judge the ethical integrity of the ideas of politicians. As we shall see later, within the time frame of this thesis we can detect in the church leadership different, though overlapping, ideas of how to act as the ‘nation’s conscience.’ It is therefore central to understanding the – sometimes contradictory – standpoints and policies of the Church of England that even high standing church officials had, and were allowed to have, different opinions about the role of the Church in politics. The role of individual agency within the Church was, it appears, thus very significant and at times very powerful. Although a coherent study of the area is currently missing in accounts of the Church of England, the role of its leaders, most specifically the Archbishops, appears to have had a significant influence on the ‘mood’ of the church in a given era, and on the directions in which the church has developed in certain periods. In addition to this, other influential clergy who have managed successfully to make ‘their case’ within the church and in the public, have also, whether the strategy has been to capture the British population, or to lobby political or religious elites, had tremendous impact on the Church of England as a whole. Individual initiatives have not infrequently grown to become kind of an official part of the Church. Such was the

¹⁵ These bodies include the Church Commissioners, the Pensions Board, the Cathedral Fabric Commission, and the Legal Aid Commission. The ‘non-statutory’ bodies play an important part in the administrative life of the church. They operate without direct control by the church’s central legal system. See Mark Hill, *Ecclesiastical Law*, London: Butterworth, 1995

case, i.e., with George Bell's Life and Work movement, which, as we shall see, grew into the British Council of Churches, whose statements were read from the pulpit in local churches throughout the UK.

In this section, three of the most significant individuals in the church leadership in the time frame of this thesis will be introduced; William Temple, Geoffrey Fisher, and George Bell. Other significant individuals who played a considerable role in the church leadership will then be presented throughout the thesis.

William Temple (1881–1944) had a very dense career, with many contributions to the intellectual development of the church and beyond. In this brief introduction, however, we shall only look at those of his contributions with direct relevance to this thesis.

Temple's years at Oxford, most specifically his six years as a fellow at The Queen's College, grounded the work of the rest of his life, and in this period too, his political and ecumenical interests also developed. He became very closely associated with the Student Christian Movement (SCM), declared himself a socialist, was elected president of the Workers' Educational Association, and in 1908 was ordained by the archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson.¹⁶

In 1910 Temple became headmaster of Repton School, Derbyshire, in 1914 Rector of St James's, Piccadilly, London; and in 1919 a Canon of Westminster.¹⁷ In this period he also became the youngest member of the Archbishops' Commission on Church and State. During WWI he became chairman and joint leader of the Life and Liberty movement, which aimed to gain a wider freedom for the church from the state. He also joined the Labour Party.¹⁸

¹⁶ F.A. Iremonger, *William Temple. Archbishop of Canterbury – His Life and Letters*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, third edition, 1963, 24ff.

¹⁷ Iremonger (1963), 39ff.; 66ff.; 115ff.

¹⁸ Iremonger (1963), 39ff.; 66ff.; 115ff.

Late in 1920, when Temple was still only thirty-nine, he was offered the diocese of Manchester, where he remained until translation to the archbishopric of York in 1929. In 1924 Temple chaired the interdenominational Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship (COPEC) at Birmingham. This was an attempt to revive the debate about the role of the church in society - a project into which he had put much work and which started with the Life and Liberty movement.¹⁹ In 1925 he became Chairman of the Commission on Christian doctrine appointed by the Archbishops, and he remained in that position until its report was completed in 1937. Internationally he assumed an increasingly authoritative role in the ecumenical movement. He took an active part both in the first World Conference on Faith and Order, held at Lausanne in 1927, and in the International Missionary Council's conference in Jerusalem during Easter 1928, where he was the leading intellectual figure, and was chiefly responsible for the writing of its message. Back in the UK, he chaired the General Advisory Council of the BBC. His most important books were written in the 1930s: *Nature, Man and God* (1934), compiled from the Gifford lectures given in Glasgow between November 1932 and March 1934; *Readings in St John's Gospel* (1939 and 1940), and *Christianity and Social Order* (1942).²⁰

Temple was a significant leader of the international ecumenical movement. Already in 1929 he was elected chairman of the Faith and Order continuation committee, and he continued to head Faith and Order up to his death. The following year he chaired the Committee on Christian Unity at the Lambeth conference where he helped ensure Anglican support for a strong ecumenical line in the Community.²¹

¹⁹ John Kent, *William Temple*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992, 115

²⁰ Adrian Hastings (1991), 211ff.

²¹ George Bell (ed.), *Documents on Christian Unity. Third Series, 1930-48*, London: Oxford University Press, 1948, 1-21

By the mid-1930s, working closely with J. H. Oldham and Visser't Hooft, (about whom we shall hear more) he had become the principal public sponsor of the idea of a world council of churches, a plan adopted at two international conferences in 1937: that of Life and Work at Oxford in July, and that of Faith and Order (chaired by Temple himself) a month later in Edinburgh. At a subsequent meeting in Utrecht in May 1938 he was elected chairman of the provisional committee of the world council 'in formation' ; and at home in September 1942 he inaugurated the British Council of Churches with a service in St Paul's, then becoming its president. As Archbishop of York he held a higher ecclesiastical position than anyone else in the first rank of the movement. In July 1937 he chaired the meeting of the so-called committee of Thirty-Five at Westfield College, which formulated the precise proposal for a world council of churches, subsequently accepted by the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences that summer. The next year at Utrecht he was elected chairman of the provisional world council's central committee.²²

Temple's enthronement sermon at Canterbury was devoted largely to 'the great new fact of our era,' the worldwide Christian fellowship and the ecumenical movement. For Temple the final challenge was whether he could lead both the Church of England and the ecumenical movement, especially at a time when England was at war. What seems certain is that for him the one real ground for a renewed hope in the circumstances of the time had come to lie in the development of the ecumenical framework. One of Temple's most influential contributions in the social field in these years was to commission, with the help of a special committee and the Pilgrim Trust, a report on unemployment, *Men without Work* (1938), and to convene and chair the Malvern conference (January 1941) on church and society, the latter being at once a

²² Adrian Hastings, 'Temple, William (1881–1944)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/36454>

follow-up to COPEC and a first attempt to plan theologically the guidelines for a post-war world, for which T. S. Eliot, Richard Acland, Dorothy L. Sayers, and Donald Mackinnon were among the principal speakers.²³ Temple was never keen to participate in House of Lords debates, though he frequently broadcast, and wrote letters to *The Times*. On diverse issues several of his fellow bishops, notably George Bell of Chichester, Hensley Henson of Durham, Arthur Headlam of Gloucester, and Archbishop Lang himself, took up outspoken positions on the issues of the time. However Temple failed to act in this way. His own effort was chiefly to press ahead with cementing international Christian fellowship. He did, however, make very clear his disagreement with the widespread pacifism of the peace movement.

Temple became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942 and held this post for only two years until his untimely death in 1944. As Adrian Hastings has written ‘Temple’s profound national loyalty and moral restraint were well fitted for church leadership at

²³ Iremonger (1963), 174ff.; T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) was a poet, critic, and publisher. Eliot was part of the intellectual circle around Joseph Oldham and William Temple and took great part in the intellectual debate about the role of the church in modern society. He contributed largely to the 1937 Oxford Conference and was also part of Oldham’s ‘Moot’ group, see Ronald Bush, ‘Eliot, Thomas Stearns (1888–1965),’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/32993>; Sir Richard Thomas Dyke Acland (1906-1990) was a politician and benefactor. In 1942 he was part of the group which established the Common Wealth Party, which in 1945 had four MPs, which, however it soon lost. Acland was a skilled propagandist with a moralistic and socialistic emphasis. From 1947 Acland became committed to the Labour Party and had a seat in parliament until 1955 where he left in protest to the development of the hydrogen bomb. Source: A. F. Thompson, ‘Acland, Sir Richard Thomas Dyke, fifteenth baronet (1906–1990),’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/39848>; Dorothy Leigh Sayers (1893-1957) was a writer and scholar know among other things to give hope to Britons during WWII, where her twelve radio plays helped lift the British war spirit and encourage her countrymen to fight. Source: Catherine Kenney, ‘Sayers, Dorothy Leigh (1893–1957),’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/35966>; Donald MacKinnon (1913-1994) was a philosopher and theologian, educated in Edinburgh and at Oxford University, fellow and tutor at Keble College, Oxford (1937–47), and lecturer in natural and comparative religion (1945–7). David Fergusson, ‘MacKinnon, Donald MacKenzie (1913–1994),’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/55120>; on the Malvern Conference see also *Malvern, 1941. The Life of the Church and the Order of Society. Being the Proceedings of the Archbishop of York’s Conference*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1941

such a time.²⁴ Temple made great efforts to produce a Christian consensus behind the war effort and unlike his ally in many matters, George Bell, was not a man to denounce British wartime strategies. Temple's book *Christianity and Social Order* (1942) and the Malvern conference (1941) helped the British Christians to welcome the welfare state which was to develop after the war, along lines being proposed in the war years by William Beveridge, R. H. Tawney, Stafford Cripps, and R. A. Butler, who were all Temple's friends. Temple was apparently the first person to use the term 'welfare state' in print (in 1941).²⁵

²⁴ Adrian Hastings, 'William Temple, 1881-1944. Archbishop of Canterbury,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Consulted online:

<http://ezproxyprd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/36454?docPos=6>

²⁵ William Beveridge (1879-1963) was a social reformer and economist and, from 1919 until 1937 Director of LSE. Subsequently he returned to study unemployment and the historical development at Oxford University. In the early 1940s he worked on the research which would lead to the highly influential Beveridge Report, which, by 1942 became highly appreciated by the British public. The result of the Beveridge Plan, which emphasized social justice and moral ethics, became the blueprint for the welfare state legislation of 1944-1948. Source: Jose Harris, 'Beveridge, William Henry, Baron Beveridge (1879-1963),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/31871>; Richard Henry Tawney (1880-1962) was a historian and political thinker. Tawney was supporter of progressive Liberal politics and active in the Labour Movement in the 1920s. He wrote several books of which *Religion and the rise of Capitalism* (1926) was considered the most influential. The book criticised the reluctance of the church to engage in questions of moral, economic and social behaviour. Source: Lawrence Goldman, 'Tawney, Richard Henry (1880-1962),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004. Accessed via <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/36425>; Sir Stafford Cripps (1889-1952) was a British politician and lawyer. Cripps joined the Labour Party in 1929 and during the 1930s showed strong parliamentary ability as a front-bencher in Ramsay MacDonald's Labour government. Not always in agreement with the party, he described the League of Nations as an 'International Burglars Union'. He was also opposed to appeasement of Germany. By the late 1930s, however, Cripps fully supported the British perspective on Germany. Cripps was not offered a place in Churchill's coalition government. Instead he was offered official posting in the Soviet Union. He served as Ambassador in Russia 1940-42. Cripps saw it as his mission to ease relations between Britain and Russia pending the eventual divorce between Hitler and Stalin. During this period Cripps relationship with the Churchill government was poor and he was regarded an 'eccentric ambassador.' This changed, however, when Germany attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, and a British alliance with USSR was to be formed. Alongside his political career Cripps was engaged in church work. In his political life he was often used as an advisor on foreign affairs by the Church of England, and during Ernest Bevin's launch of the 'spiritual' Western Union Cripps was in charge of directing the churches. Sources: Peter Clarke, Richard Toye, 'Cripps, Sir (Richard) Stafford (1889-1952),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/32630>; Simon M. Burgess, *Stafford Cripps: a political life*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1999; Richard Austen Butler (1902-1982) was a politician. In 1938 he went to the Foreign Office as undersecretary of state. Butler was a supporter of Chamberlain's Munich agreement as a way of settling differences with Hitler and avoiding a violent clash. He did not favour an alliance with the Soviet Union. In July 1941 after nine years as an under-secretary he became president of the Board of Education. Although warned by Churchill not to stir up party politics or religious controversy, Butler was determined on substantial reform. Butler managed to establish agreement of the churches as well as of Churchill and

The importance of Temple in this thesis is related mainly to the wide reach of his ideas, the time of his posts – both as Archbishop of York and as Archbishop of Canterbury – and also the critical point at which he died.

Geoffrey Fisher (1887–1972) who was Archbishop from January 1945 till May 1961 was a man whose career was shaped by the untimely death of his predecessor. He was born in a vicarage and brought up in the Church. Though he was not outspokenly either Anglo-Catholic or an Evangelical, to Fisher the Church of England was emphatically Protestant. In his time as Archbishop, it was his mission to do his best to build bridges between Anglo-Catholics and Protestants within the church.²⁶

Fisher was educated at Marlborough College, and then at Exeter College, Oxford. He gained brilliant firsts in Classical Honour Moderations (1908), *literae humaniores* (1910), and Theology (1911). He was ordained Deacon in 1912 and Priest in 1913. In 1914 he was appointed to succeed William Temple, who later became archbishop of Canterbury, as headmaster of Repton.²⁷ Fisher remained headmaster of Repton for eighteen years (1914-32).²⁸ After Repton, he moved on to become Bishop of Chester for seven years until he in 1939 was offered the Bishopric of London.²⁹ By the time of his enthronement in November 1939 the Second World War had broken out.

Conservative back-benchers, and the 1944 Education Act, widely cherished by the churches, was established. Source: Ian Gilmour, 'Butler, Richard Austen, Baron Butler of Saffron Walden (1902–1982),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/30886>

²⁶ Andrew Chandler and David Hein, *Archbishop Fisher, 1945-1961. Church, State and World*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012 (e-book), location 248 of 6068

²⁷ Alan Webster, 'Fisher, Geoffrey Francis, Baron Fisher of Lambeth (1887–1972),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/31108>

²⁸ Webster (2004)

²⁹ Edward Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher – His Life and Times*, Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1991, 32ff. and 55ff.

The death of Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple on 26 October 1944 left Church of England without a leader just as it faced the post-war years of reconstruction. When Winston Churchill nominated Geoffrey Fisher as William Temple's successor at Canterbury, he was thrown right into one of Church of England's greatest challenges of the twentieth century.

It seems that Geoffrey Fisher, who was enthroned at Canterbury on 19 April 1945, took the greatest pleasures in sorting out the administrative business of the church. As Chandler and Hein write: 'What the church received with the appointment of Geoffrey Fisher to the See of Canterbury was, at the very least, a man of strength, discipline and tenacity – indeed, a former headmaster – who would not readily submit either to primeval or to ecclesiastical chaos. Everything he did was connected to the service of one overriding goal: building up the church.'³⁰ The extent to which he could provide real leadership will be explored in subsequent chapters of the thesis.

Fisher was not at this time well known to the British public. Whereas Temple before him had been a great public speaker who could capture the imagination of the public and his fellow clergy with visions for the future of Christianity, Fisher was more of a 'common-sense' Archbishop. As Carpenter writes: 'While Temple was stumping the country on behalf of 'Life and Liberty' and campaigning for social justice, Fisher was quietly adjusting the timetables at Repton School, preaching in the chapel, immunizing sixth-formers against the political enthusiasms of the dedicated Victor Gollancz, and cultivating those intimately pastoral relations with the boys which he found deeply satisfying and did so well.'³¹

Fisher was naturally conservative and was at most times loyal to the line adopted by Parliament. He did not, for example, follow the general Christian view

³⁰ Chandler and Hein (2012), (ebook) location 126 of 6068

³¹ Edward Carpenter with Adrian Hastings, *Cantuar. The Archbishops in their Office*, Mowbray, 1997 (third edition), 489

that modern warfare should be condemned and would not go along with those who called for a ban on nuclear weapons.³² Fisher's loyalty to Britain, as we shall see, sometimes placed him in a difficult position, where his role as ecumenical leader demanded of him to take a position which differed from British foreign policy objectives. But Fisher was, first of all, conservative and consistent, and a loyal and devoted churchman.³³

Fisher had not been exposed to ecumenism in his younger years. When he became Archbishop in 1945 and took over Temple's ecumenical responsibilities he was, as he himself acknowledged, rather unprepared for the tasks. As his career had had a solid English focus, he was not experienced in the field of foreign affairs either. In spite of his inexperience, however, Fisher engaged energetically in ecumenical tasks and in the postwar period became involved in Churchill's United Europe Movement.

In this thesis Fisher will become relevant from chapter 6 where the role of the changing leadership in Church of England will be examined. In the later chapters of the thesis Fisher's role will be examined from various angles when he, as Archbishop of Canterbury, was largely responsible for Church of England policies and also acted as co-president of WCC. As we shall see, the importance of Fisher's ideas about Church of England, the Anglican Community and the World Council of Churches, as well as the relationship between them, was not insignificant.

George Bell (1883-1958) was bishop of Chichester from 1928 to 1958, and during the 1930s President of the Executive Committee of the ecumenical 'Life and Work' movement, the precursor of the World Council of Churches. Perhaps he, of all his Church contemporaries, had the highest public profile. Bell was educated at Christ

³² Chandler and Hein (2012), location 126 of 6068

³³ Chandler and Hein (2012), location 211 of 6068

Church, Oxford, where he secured a First Class degree in Classical Moderations in 1903. He went to Wells Theological College for a year, a time during which he discovered ecumenism. He was ordained deacon in Ripon Cathedral in 1907 and then priest a year later in a Leeds parish church. The social realities of modernising Britain, which he discovered in Leeds, shaped his perspective on social justice.

From 1914 Bell became involved in the two currents within the church of the time: the young ecumenical movement, and the role of the church in the political and social life of the nation. In 1914 Bell served as Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Lang, and so from early on in his career he became accustomed to contact with the highest religious and secular authorities in Britain and abroad. Bell sat on the Archbishops' Commission on Church and State, and supported Temple's quest for greater spiritual liberty for the church in the Life and Liberty movement (see above).

In 1919 Bell went to Oud Wassenaar in Holland to attend the beginning of the new, post-war World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches. It was in Holland that Bell first encountered the Swedish Archbishop Söderblom, who was leading the initiative. At the 1920 Lambeth conference Bell worked on the influential 'Appeal to all Christian people,' which came to be regarded as the defining statement of the conference.³⁴ It was at Oud Wassenaar that it was proposed that the Churches found a permanent world conference to discuss moral and social questions. This became known as the Life and Work movement. Bell became the leading figure of this movement, and in 1932, almost coinciding with the coming to power of Hitler and Nazism in Germany, Bell became its Chairman.

³⁴ Andrew Chandler, 'Bell, George Kennedy Allen (1883–1958),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/30685>

Bell became Bishop of Chichester in 1929 and remained in this position until his death in 1958.³⁵ As a Bishop Bell was an influential character, both within Church of England and as an ecumenical statesman, but also as a voice to which the British public listened. Bell generally made his opinion widely available. Not only did he contribute actively to public debate via newspapers and church publications, his thoughts were also published in a series of short books and pamphlets, some of which had wide circulation. A second major means of getting his voice heard was through Parliament. From 1938, Chichester had a seat in House of Lords and Bell was not afraid to venture outside of the accepted sphere of church matters to speak on foreign affairs. Through these channels it became publicly known that Bell had his own visions about Christianity and also about the continent of Europe. In Bell's view, Europe was first and foremost a cultural formation, and the basis of that culture was Christianity.

Although Bell was at times a harsh critic of the British government, he was never against Church of England's status as the established Church³⁶ For example, after Parliament's rejection of the revised Prayer Book in 1926, Bell was disappointed, but no more than that. He believed that the Parliament had 'failed the Church' and that the parliamentary method of legislation on spiritual matters had broken down; but it would be possible for the church to renew itself without the revised Prayer Book.³⁷

During the war years Bell was a member of the Churches' Peace Aims Group, in which British church leaders met with experts and government civil servants to discuss post-war reconstruction. The group was founded under the authority of the

³⁵ Ronald C.D. Jasper, *George Bell – Bishop of Chichester*, London: Oxford University Press, 1967, 70

³⁶ Jasper (1967), 179

³⁷ Jasper (1967), 70

World Council of Churches ‘in formation,’³⁸ and had important links with a similar influential group in the U.S called the Commission to Study the Just and Durable Bases of Peace, and also to Willem Visser t’ Hooft, who was General Secretary of the WCC in formation with an office in Geneva.³⁹ As we shall see, Bell contributed to the group with his perspectives on post-war peace, but, as the end of the war came closer, he increasingly disagreed with the Americans and with William Paton about the question of Germany.⁴⁰ To Bell, a well-functioning and united Germany was the key to peace in Europe.

Bell’s position on Europe was thus shaped by several factors: firstly, his ecumenism; his belief in the goal of reuniting the Christian church and his deep involvement in the World Council of Churches; secondly, his social theology – his application of Christian principles to the social and political problems of the modern world. Social theology, Bell believed, applied to international politics too, particularly in response to the catastrophe of WWI and the crisis in European international politics, which dominated the 1920s and 1930s. Bell was in favour of ‘practical Christianity,’ which took into serious account the social problems of the time. Though never a pacifist, Bell was strongly opposed to war, perhaps not least because two of his younger brothers were killed in France in WWI, as were many of his university friends. A third factor influencing his advocacy of a new Europe was his understanding and empathy with Germany, which he had developed through strong

³⁸ LPL, Temple 57, Paton to Temple, December 23, 1942; Members of the Peace Aims Group were Archbishop of Canterbury (chair), M.E. Aubrey, the Rev. Dr. S.M. Berry, the Very Rev. Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn, the Rev. Dr. A.C. Craig, the Rev. W.T. Elmslie, the Rev. J.E. Fenn, Mr. Kenneth Grubb, Dr. A.D. Lindsay, Mr. Dennis Routh, professor A.J. Toynbee, the Rev. J. Pitt Watson, Sir Alfred Zimmern, Rev. Dr. W. Paton (secretary), Professor John Baillie, the Bishop of Chichester, Mr. A.D.K. Owen, Sir John Hope Simpson, and Professor R.D. Whitehorn

³⁹ Philip Coupland, *Britannia, Europe and Christendom. British Christians and European Integration*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, chapters 1-3

⁴⁰ Information on William Paton will follow below

personal and professional friendships with German clergy from early on in his career.⁴¹

Bell maintained strong ties to the German Protestant Church during WWII and his support for the Confessing Church in Germany developed into a wider support for what was often called the ‘other’ Germany. Bell made the argument that Germany could not be equated with Nazism and, accordingly, that the British government should publicly recognise the ‘other’ Germany. In contrast, he perceived that the stance of the British government was that there was no ‘other’ Germany.⁴² Although he supported the war against Germany, it was Bell who became the most vocal critic of the British wartime strategy of night time ‘area’ or ‘saturation’ bombing that destroyed German cities and inflicted huge civilian casualties. This critique made him very unpopular with sections of the British press and government as the claims of lacking patriotism over this issue were very real, and raw to many. The issues of civilian bombing, and responsibility for the War were both hotly contested during the War.

After the war Bell continued to speak out on unpopular subjects. During the winter following Germany’s defeat Bell described the conditions he had witnessed during a visit to Germany: destruction, refugees, shortages of food and fuel. Bell was also a strong opponent of the war crimes trials, and the de-nazification policy imposed by the Allies.⁴³

⁴¹ Philip Coupland, ‘Bishop George Bell: Speaking for Germany and European Unity, 1939-1950’, *KZG/CCH*, 21, 2008, 300-323

⁴² This was a position popularised during wartime by Sir Robert Vansittart who, in radio broadcasts and in print, argued that Nazism were merely the latest manifestation of a German national character which went back to Tacitus (see Robert Vansittart, *Black Record: Germans Past and Present*, London 1941). In a broadcast to the German people on 28 November 1945, Archbishop Fisher partly supported this approach, stating that the English, as well as the rest of the world, were waiting for genuine signs of repentance from within Germany. See Matthew Hockenos, *A Church Divided*, 103

⁴³ Tom Lawson, ‘Bishop Bell and the Trial of German War Criminals: a Moral History,’ *KZG/CCH*, 21, 2008, 324-348

In the years after 1945 Bell continued his quest for European unity. As the Cold War began the theme continued to play a central role in his advocacy for Germany as well as in his warnings about Soviet Russia. That Bell was a committed anti-Nazi did not make him any less a spiritual foe of Communism or of the Soviet Union. Already in 1940 Bell expressed his view that Europe needed to be saved from Bolshevism.⁴⁴ So, although he kept his distance to the government and sought to avoid compromising his Christian convictions by political objectives, with the emergence of the Cold War, Bell's caution not to be influenced by government policies faded. As Kirby writes: 'Bell's determination to repel the claims of Communism led him (...) to embrace a state engendered consensus that promoted the Cold War as a crusade against the forces of evil.'⁴⁵ Whereas Bell had been strongly against policies which increased tensions with the eastern countries during the war, by 1948 he had become rather muted.

The significant role of Bell as Bishop, Church of England leader, and ecumenist, will be confirmed throughout this thesis. But, as Bell most often represented the faction of the Church of England which was critical, not only towards the British government, but also towards the Allies and his church colleagues, it is mostly to highlight church division and disagreement, that he plays a role in this thesis.

The Council on Foreign Relations

The Council of Foreign Relations (CFR) was established by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in February 1931. CFR was a Church of England 'non-

⁴⁴ Philip Coupland (2008), *passim*

⁴⁵ Dianne Kirby 'George Bell and the Cold War,' in *The Church and Humanity. The Life and Work of George Bell, 1883-1958*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012, (ebook) location 3974 of 6220

statutory' body and was not a Church Assembly organisation as such. Though its office was financed by the Central Board it was neither accountable to the Church Assembly, nor was it under its direction in any way.⁴⁶ The Council was primarily a forum for clergy and professionals who held knowledge or positions considered valuable to the Church. It should be noted, however, that membership frequently changed to meet new demands in the international field, which the Church of England needed to address.

At the onset, CFR was loosely defined as to its practice and functions, and the practice of the Council was shaped quite informally over time. This feature allowed the Council to take different measures depending on the political situation in Britain and abroad. The first Secretary General of the Council, Canon John Albert Douglas, who served from 1933 until September 1945, was given a large degree of freedom by Archbishops Lang and Temple so that he could organise the work of the Council.⁴⁷ It was Douglas, in his years as secretary, who was responsible for giving the Council its shape and character in the first period of its existence up until 1945. Douglas noted himself that '[t]he whole thing has come into being rather as an organic growth than as having been planned.'⁴⁸ Supported by Archbishop William Temple, Douglas thought that the primary function of the Council was to exist *ad nutum* of the two Archbishops, to give them advice and to undertake such work as they directed or approved.

⁴⁶ LPL, Temple 17, ff. 16-17, Douglas to Temple, undated but 1943

⁴⁷ Rector of St Michael Paternoster Royal 1933–53; Hon. General Secretary, Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, 1933–45 (Vice-Chm. 1954); Principal, Society of the Faith, since 1906; Hon. Canon St Saviour, Southwark, 1924; Member of the Senate (1907), University Extension Board (1907), Theological Board (1909), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (1931), Chairman of Convocation and Member of the Court (1939), of the University of London. Source: *Who's Who and Who was Who*, A & C Black, consulted online, 2015

⁴⁸ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 200, Douglas to the Rev. Prebendary C. Cheshire, 13 February 1945

The Council was not intended to express an opinion on any matter except to the Archbishops, hence it was not initially intended to be a Church of England Foreign Office, because this function was exclusively that of Lambeth Palace. On the functions of the Council, Douglas wrote to Archbishop Temple: ‘Since 1933 I have regarded the Council as having a bilateral scope and function: a) to bring together a body of experts of all outlooks, schools of thought, and types specially concerned with the foreign churches. As so constituted its job is to be a clearing-house of opinion and to tender your Grace advice, if and when wanted. In no case, except when bidden by yourself should it take any public action or make any public pronouncement; b) it should provide a bureau staffed with people (...) who establish and maintain contacts, arrange hospitality and do X odd job under the authority and direction of your Grace (...).’⁴⁹ CFR was essentially a foreign policy advisory instrument for Church of England but in the 1940s, as we shall see, it also became a coordinating body between the Church and the British Foreign Office.

By 1945, the Council consisted of sixty members, the majority Church of England clergy and now in addition, with at least one civil servant from the British Foreign Office and one or two Members of Parliament. It should be noted that the records are not entirely clear about which members sat on the Council permanently, and which were only brought in as visiting experts, underlining again the contingency in Council membership. Under the Council’s constitution, members were appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York sometimes on the recommendation of the Council, and less frequently after self proposing, on their own initiative.⁵⁰ In addition there were a number of corresponding members, primarily chief bishops and others of Anglican jurisdiction around the world who could feed the Council with useful

⁴⁹ LPL, Temple 17, f.59, 7 March 1944

⁵⁰ LPL, Fisher, 2, f. 196, Douglas to Fisher, 13 February, 1945

information. There were also a varying number of consultative members, that is, *ex officio* members or other Anglicans holding high office. These members had the right to participate in meetings, take part in discussions and receive papers, but not to vote. A final category was the assessors who could be appointed to act as experts to any of the Council's committees.

The Council primarily worked through permanent committees and smaller *ad hoc* committees. In 1945 the four principal committees of the Council were: the Roman Catholic Church Committee, the Orthodox Church Committee, the Lesser Eastern Churches Committee and the Continental Churches Committee.⁵¹

Finally, the Council operated with a system of so called 'Circles' of more informal character. The circles were intended to give its members contact with foreign clergy and laity, and with Anglicans who had particular relations with foreign clergy. These circles had no function except for these useful contacts and were brought into being to expand the network of the Council.⁵² A more social body of the Council was the Nikaeian club, established in 1925, before the CFR, to entertain official guests of the Church of England.⁵³

In 1945 the chairman of the Council, Bishop of Gloucester, Headlam, and Secretary General, Canon Douglas, retired. Archbishop Fisher appointed George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, as the new chairman of the Council, and, on Bell's request, appointed Herbert Waddams as Secretary General. Under Bell's leadership the

⁵¹ Further committees in 1945 were the Finance Committee, the Committee on Interchange of Students, the Committee on Interchange of Clergy, the Periodicals Bureau and the American Liaison Committee. See LPL, Fisher 2, ff. 202-206, Memorandum by Canon J.A. Douglas on the System of the Council, 23 February 1945

⁵² In 1945 the circles that existed were: Anglican-American Circle, Anglican-Ethiopian Circle, Anglican-Polish Christian Circle, Anglican-Rumanian Circle and Anglican-Serb Orthodox Circle.

⁵³ The Nikaeian Club was sometimes used as a forum to invite foreign guests who could not, e.g., for political reasons, be official guests of the Church of England. See LPL, Fisher 2, ff. 206, Memorandum by Canon J.A. Douglas on the System of the Council, 23 February 1945, appendix A

Council became more of a Foreign Office of Church of England than a private think-tank for the Archbishop. This will be examined in more detail in chapter 6.

Church and State in England, 1910-1938

In this section, two factors in the first half of the twentieth century, which were important articulations of the church-state relationship in England in recent times, will be briefly explained. The two have to be understood as significant background to the developments in the Church in the lead-up to the 1937 Oxford Conference and further into the 1940s, and beyond. The first is Temple's Life and Liberty movement; the second is the Prayer Book controversy between the Church of England and House of Commons, 1927-8.

The Life and Liberty Movement

The *Life and Liberty* movement was a movement, which, during World War I, pursued the almost complete separation of the English church and state. Spurred by the 1912 disestablishment of the Church in Wales, a debate concerning both the efficiency in the governing of the Church, and the question of the spiritual freedom of the Church, arose in the Church of England. A point had been reached where some individuals within the church, most significantly William Temple, were considering whether disestablishment should be the price paid for Anglican self-government. The *Life and Liberty* movement became partly a Church reform lobby group, and partly an evangelistic attempt to engage the working classes by addressing social questions in Britain, which was becoming a growing matter of concern within the churches.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State Between the Wars*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, 18

In 1913 the Archbishops had set up their own committee to consider which changes were possible to secure in the relations of church and state, a better expression of the spiritual independence of the Church as well as of the national recognition of religion.⁵⁵ This committee was established as a result of episcopal frustration that church matters were being increasingly ignored in Parliament. Between 1880 and 1914 a large number of church bills had simply been dropped by House of Commons due to lack of time, and, possibly, interest.⁵⁶ So the committee's report recommended the introduction of what in 1919 became the Church Assembly. It did not, however, settle the question of the spiritual independence from the state, but left the final power still in the hands of Crown and Parliament.⁵⁷ The question of independence and efficiency was only one question under discussion. Another issue was disagreement within the Church of England about what 'establishment' properly meant. This particular question was of growing concern to many clergy during and after WWI where it was felt that the church had lost contact with the working class.

The challenge then, which Temple was to struggle to meet, was how to unite the divided classes into a nation, and how the church could be a significant part of the solution. The trade unions in particular were becoming increasingly difficult for the Church to deal with. After the war, it was anticipated that the unionised workers would not be happy to return to lower-paid work. *Life and Liberty* stressed that in the

⁵⁵ At least two bodies were convened and reported after 1918 on issues connected with the church-state relationship. Within the timeframe addressed here the two most significant reports were: *The Archbishops' Committee on Church and State. Report*, London: S.P.C.K., 1918; *Church and State. Report of the Archbishops' Commission on the relations between Church and State*, London: Press and publications board of the Church Assembly; 1st edition, 1935. See also Peter Webster, *Archbishop Ramsey. The State of the Church*, London: Ashgate, 2015, 54

⁵⁶ John Kent (1992), 62

⁵⁷ The more controversial parts of the report concluded that the Church of England was 'paralysed' by its lack of power to adjust its own organisation, and that Parliament was not the right body to undertake the task of church adjustments. Further, the report pointed to the Established Church of Scotland as an illustration of the principle of spiritual independence, questioning if establishment and liberty were incompatible, or that establishment was an unsound foundation for any religious institution. The Committee was, however, split on the issue of possible disestablishment. See *The Archbishops' Committee on Church and State. Report*, London, 1918. See also 'Church and State. Report of the Archbishops' Committee,' *The Times*, 7 July, 1916

future, labour, which in all European countries would want a larger share in control of national policy, should be given its place in the management of industry, which could no longer be private. *Life and Liberty* now wished to ‘make the church a living force in the nation’ but found itself ‘hampered at every turn by an antiquated machinery,’ which they were ‘powerless to change.’⁵⁸

This radical approach coming from inside the Church of England itself was highly provocative to the more conservative forces in the Church, who now felt that, due to Temple’s radical agenda, the less autonomy the Church had the better.⁵⁹ An official policy on unions, it was felt, was more likely to divide the Church than to unify the nation. Temple seemed to be suggesting a larger share for the laity in the government of the Church of England, and that the unions should be running industry and politics. Temple was worried about the lack of contact between the state Church and the working classes, and was aware, that although the Church of England might like to think of itself as the church of the English people, this was no longer the church of ordinary English people in a post-Victorian urban society. The working classes, however, were uninspired by Temple’s calls for Church self-government, and they remained, as Grimley notes, ‘just about the only group who were not represented in *Life and Liberty*.’⁶⁰

Although there was in *Life and Liberty*’s message a clear critique of the bishops’ lack of leadership, the suggested alternative was not a democratic one. It was generally accepted that the bishops should lead, but they should do so more

⁵⁸ ‘Liberty in the Church. Movement for Reform,’ Letter to the editor of *The Times* from William Temple, Louise Creighton, A.A. David, A. Mansbridge, J.R. Seaton, A.L. Smith, A.P. Charles, F.A. Iremonger and H.R.L. Sheppard, June 20, 1917

⁵⁹ One of the most vocal critics of Temple’s ideas was H. Hensley Henson who felt that Temple was too hastily trying to ‘hustle out of form in a few months (...) the religious settlement, which was slowly hammered into shape in the course of 130 years, and which has stood the test of more than two and a half centuries.’ Source: ‘Liberty in the Church. The Nation and Hasty Measures,’ *The Times*, 26 June, 1917

⁶⁰ Matthew Grimley (2004), 19

efficiently, and they should to a much larger extent do so through a common mind. In this way, priesthood and laity should be brought into closer contact, and the church should be more relevant to ordinary people. In the end, Temple did not achieve with *Life and Liberty* anything that he had hoped to, but had, if nothing else, made church, state, and the public aware of his agenda. Archbishop Davidson (1848-1930) and the Church Assembly would not, in the 1920s, reflect Temple's anxieties about the broader issue of the establishment's relationship to state and society and it had no desire to end the state connection.⁶¹ Temple did, however, as we shall see later in the thesis, manage to keep the subject on the agenda in the ecumenical movement, not least with the Oxford Conference on Church, Community, and State, to which we will return in chapter two.

We now turn to have a look at the controversy over the revised Church of England Book of Prayer 1927-8, which contributed to a growing discontent among clergy with the management of the Church of England.

The Prayer Book debate 1927-8

The outcome of Parliament's rejection of the Church of England's revised Book of Common Prayer in 1927-8 caused quite a reaction in the Church of England.⁶² It had taken the bishops two decades to prepare the revised Prayer Book. The revisions mostly dealt with what had been felt to be declining discipline in the church due to the fact that the laws governing worship were too narrow. A report made by the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical discipline, which had been set up in 1904, therefore recommended that the Prayer Book should be revised.⁶³

⁶¹ John Kent (1992), 84

⁶² The revisions of the Prayer Book have been described in detail elsewhere, see, e.g., See John Maiden, *National Religion and the Prayer Book Controversy, 1927-8*, Boydell Press, 2012

⁶³ Matthew Grimley (2004), 143

The main point of the revision was, from an episcopal and administrative perspective, to make some concession in a Catholic direction in order to keep the Anglo-Catholics from the practice of using Roman canon. In essence, the revision opened up for some extent of pluralism.⁶⁴ The revision was, then, part of an attempt to modernise the Church to keep up with the pace of change. In spite of some disagreement within the church, the new Prayer Book was passed in Church Assembly, because so many, as Hastings puts it, felt it was ‘the right thing.’⁶⁵ Based on the careful preparation of the revision, most churchmen felt that the Revised Prayer Book would be approved in Parliament and that the careful judgement of the Church would be respected.⁶⁶ The bill passed the Lords but was defeated twice in the Commons (December 1927 and June 1928).⁶⁷

The rejection of the revised Prayer Book by the Commons on 15 December 1927 came as a shock to the Church. An unusual coalition of right-wing Evangelical Anglican Tories, led by one Sir William Joynson-Hicks and Sir Thomas Inskip, and left-wing pro-Protestant, anti-Catholic Labourites and Liberals, led by Rosslyn Mitchell (1879-1965), a Glasgow solicitor and Labour MP, combined to defeat the Revised Prayer Book by 238 to 205 votes. The issue caused much public discussion and debate.⁶⁸

The significance of the Prayer Book controversy, and what was really shocking to the church, was that the Commons had interfered so profoundly with what was considered the internal affair of the Church of England. The revision of the Prayer Book had not been taken lightly by the bishops; on the contrary, it had been

⁶⁴ Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920-1985*, London: Collins, 1986, 204

⁶⁵ Adrian Hastings (1986), 205

⁶⁶ Adrian Hastings (1986), 205

⁶⁷ John Maiden (2012), *passim*

⁶⁸ William D. Rubinstein, *Twentieth-Century Britain: A Political History*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 162

meticulously planned and prepared by the Church itself. Given this background it was felt by the majority of the Church of England clergy that the decisive influence of a politicians' campaign to reject what they saw as renewed Papal influence in the church was an almost hazardous way of determining the Church's fate. In addition, many supporters of the revised Prayer Book now also complained that non-Anglicans had voted on a matter wholly internal to the Church of England. The rejection of the revised Prayer Book further led to an atmosphere of defeat within the church. Parliament was not prepared to improve its governance of Church affairs and the Church now had to retreat and to prepare for a long wait. It is against this backdrop that the Church of England's rapid engagement in the ecumenical movement in the late 1930s should be understood.

The Ecumenical Movement

The development of ecumenism in the Church of England in the period 1937-1948 forms an integral part of the examination of the Church of England's response to the Cold War. This is an important, and perhaps not entirely expected, dimension to this thesis. The Church of England's contribution to the ecumenical movement will therefore be investigated initially as part of the Church's response to secularism, but the changes in the place of ecumenism, as the Cold War increasingly encroached upon Church thinking show how the Church's response to the events after the War was operationalised through pre-existing initiatives and institutional structures. This introductory section will be limited to a short introduction of the basic features of the ecumenical movement, its many and often confusing sub-groups and institutional offshoots, as well as key individuals in the ecumenical sphere within the framework of the thesis.

In the period 1918 to mid-1930 the ecumenical movement was active, but did not make much contribution towards church unity. There were two major forms of procedure, one through a Church of England Committee of Faith and Order, which organised discussion on the disagreements which surrounded such subjects as the doctrines of the Church and the priesthood; and the other through the Life and Work Council, which in theory dealt with the practical problem of applying Christian principles in national and international life.

The Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, to give it its full name, had two organizations to support it: the Christian Social Council, which was Temple's initiative and grew out of the 'COPEC' (Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship) conference of 1924, and the British Christian Council, which grew out of the Stockholm Conference of 1925.⁶⁹ By the mid 1930s the idea of establishing a Christian world council was taking form. The proposal was based on a wish for greater unity for the churches, but might also be seen as a tool to enable the Protestant

⁶⁹ In addition to this there was a British Section of the World Alliance of the Churches for International Friendship, which was founded when war broke out in 1914. The Universal Christian Council for Life and Work represented the attempt of Protestant and Orthodox churches to reach consensus on the church universal's practical role in society. What was initially a movement rose from a preliminary conference held in 1920 in Geneva, and culminated in two world councils: one at Stockholm in 1925, and another at Oxford, England in 1937. In between these conferences a loosely constructed Continuation Committee and then a formally constituted Council for Life and Work, maintained the ideals of the movement. Its formal end came in 1938 when it was incorporated into the preliminary founding stages of the World Council of Churches. Source: Norman Goodall, *The Ecumenical Movement*, Oxford University Press 1964, 57-75. 'COPEC' ('Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship') was a notable interdenominational conference held in Birmingham under the chairmanship of William Temple. The conference was part of Temple's mission to get the church onto the idea of a fellowship between men that the church should help facilitate. The conference seems to have marked out Temple as an ecumenical leader and spokesman for social justice. 1500 delegates attended the conference; eighty of these came from outside Britain. Six European countries and China and Japan were represented. They were all convinced that the only solution to the present social problems lay in corporate Christian action. Messages were read from the King, from the Prime Minister (Ramsay MacDonald), and two ex-Prime Ministers (Baldwin and Asquith). Sources: Goodall (1964), pp. 57-75; William L. Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism: From State Church to Global Communion*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 271; Iremonger (1963), 151 - 163

churches, which had the majority of power in the ecumenical movement, to draw attention to their view of the worsening economic and political crisis.⁷⁰

In Britain, Temple had gathered a small group of religious professionals who had their roots in the Student Christian Movement before 1914. They had all done what they could to organise an efficient international network of Protestant activity. They formed a spiritual but also political bureaucracy unrestricted by their national churches. Joseph Oldham, William Paton, John Mott, Marc Boegner and George Bell were members of this group.

In 1937 the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work held a conference in Oxford under the headline 'Church, Community, and State.' This conference, to be examined in chapter two, was largely the initiative of Joseph Oldham, and because a very large number of international clergy and laymen were involved, it was a major ecumenical event. The conference marked a shift for the Life and Work movement. Principally it was the rise of the totalitarian state in Germany that sparked this change. From a programme which had primarily given attention to the relation of the church to social and moral welfare issues, Sinclair argues that the movement now turned to focus on a re-statement of the Christian doctrine of man and society, in the light of the whole tendency on the part of the state, not only in Germany, to control the individual's freedom of thought and action.⁷¹

As a result of the 1937 Oxford Conference it was decided to establish a Commission of the Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility (CCIFSR), and to associate this new agency with the Council on Christian Faith and

⁷⁰ On the influence of primarily American Protestantism on ecumenical thinking see, e.g., Mark Thomas, 'God's Totalitarianism: Ecumenical Protestant Discourse during the Good War, 1941-45,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 10, 3, 2009, 285-302

⁷¹ Margaret Sinclair, *William Paton*, London: SCM Press, 1949, 206

the Common Life.⁷² CCFCL and CCIFSR worked successfully in tandem as agencies of Christian unity; CCFCL functioned largely as the strategic think-tank, securing influence and support from high-ranking officials; CCIFSR was the ‘hands on’ unit, which worked largely to influence targeted social groups in Britain through direct contact. The objectives of the Council (CCFCL) and the Committee (CCIFSR) were essentially the same and both rooted in the Oxford Conference of 1937 and the Provisional Council of WCC.

The final form of the united British Christians, the British Council of Churches (BCC), was then created in 1942 to further Christian action of unity among the Churches of Great Britain and Ireland. It became a formally associated council of the World Council of Churches in 1948.⁷³ BCC was formed by amalgamation of CCFCL and CCIFSR and was, in essence, the World Council of Churches in Great Britain.⁷⁴

We have already seen that George Bell and William Temple were highly influential members of the ecumenical movement; they were part of the same group of younger clergy who actively questioned the role of Christianity vis-à-vis state and society. Whereas they were both engaged in the question of how to adjust the Church to modern society in England, Bell was more international in his ecumenical orientation, and more interested in continental matters, particularly in Germany. Temple was more focussed on England and the production of ideological visions for the Churches. Whereas Temple was rather discreet in his critique of the British government and rarely spoke in the Lords, Bell was as a notorious watchdog towards

⁷² Church of England Record Centre (CERC) CCFCL 7/1/3, amalgamation material, December 1942

⁷³ BCC’s ‘Articles of Amalgamation’ (23 September 1943) provided for 112 members with official representatives of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Free Churches, the Churches of Ireland and Wales, the Salvation Army, the Society of Friends and the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. Source: E.A. Livingstone (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Faith*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 239

⁷⁴ CERC CCFCL 7/1/3, Minutes of CCFCL’s fifth meeting, February 3, 1942

state policies in Parliament. Hence, they were both critical voices but had different areas of focus and used different means for influence.

A key person in the ecumenical movement from a British perspective was *Joseph Oldham* (1874–1969), who was a missionary and a theologian. Oldham was educated at Trinity College, Oxford, where he obtained a Second Class degree in Honour Moderations (1894) and *literae humaniores* (1896). Oldham had planned a career in the Indian Civil Service, but this changed as the result of a religious conversion under the influence of D. L. Moody, the American evangelist. In 1896-7 he worked as the first secretary to the Student Christian Mission. He subsequently spent three years in India, but returned to Britain after catching typhoid. In 1901 he entered New College, Edinburgh, where he completed his theological studies. He subsequently went to the University of Halle, Germany, to study missionary theory and practice.⁷⁵

Oldham was never ordained but became a ministerial assistant at Free St George's, Edinburgh, and worked to promote the study of missions among students and in Scottish congregations. Throughout his life he saw the work of the laity as crucial to the future of the church and its mission. In 1908 he was appointed full-time organizing secretary for the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, the first major ecumenical conference, which would eventually contribute to the establishment of WCC.⁷⁶

In 1934 Oldham became chairman of the research committee for the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, and began preparations for the world conference

⁷⁵ Kathleen Bliss, 'Oldham, Joseph Houldsworth (1874–1969),' rev. Andrew Porter, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/35301>

⁷⁶ At the Edinburgh Conference Oldham was appointed secretary to a proposed 'Edinburgh continuation committee' under the chairmanship of his friend John R. Mott, the American evangelist. See K. Clements, *Faith on the frontier: a life of J. H. Oldham*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999

of church, community, and state, to which he had been inspired at the 1928 missionary conference in Jerusalem.⁷⁷ Oldham spent three years preparing the conference, which was to become an important milestone in ecumenical history. It was at this conference that essential steps were taken to bring existing ecumenical movements into a single world council. In this work, Oldham worked in close collaboration with William Temple, but also with George Bell and William Paton.⁷⁸

In 1939 Oldham founded the *Christian News Letter* to carry on the ideas of the Life and Work conference, and edited it throughout WWII. The Christian Frontier Council, founded in 1942 as a lay movement bringing together lay expertise and Christian insight, was also his conception. Oldham also founded ‘the Moot,’ a group of intellectuals who included T. S. Eliot and Karl Mannheim, formed to debate and discuss the problems of modernity and the future role of Christianity. In this thesis, Oldham is particularly important in the early chapters where the Christian articulation of modernity, secularization and authoritarianism as expressed at the 1937 Oxford Conference is examined.

Another key individual from the British part of the ecumenical movement was *William Paton* (1886–1943), who was a minister of the Presbyterian Church of England and missionary. Paton was educated at Pembroke College, Oxford (1904–8). At Oxford he also became an active member of the Student Christian Movement (SCM). It was during these years that Paton came into contact with the American missionary John Mott, who became a great influence on Paton’s development as a missionary.⁷⁹ It was also in these years that Paton met William Temple.

⁷⁷ It was in Jerusalem that the debate concerning the churches’ response to secularism and modernity had forcefully entered the ecumenical agenda. The growth of totalitarian states and the church policies of the German government directed Oldham’s sustained attempt to make Christians and others alive to the issues at stake.

⁷⁸ K. Clements (1999)

⁷⁹ Margaret Sinclair, *William Paton*, London: SCM Press, 1949, 29ff.

Paton was employed until 1921 as secretary to the SCM, and had been ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1917. In 1927 he became secretary of the International Missionary Council (IMC) in England, an office, which he held until his death.⁸⁰ He was a cornerstone in the organization of the IMC's Jerusalem meeting in 1928, which he prepared from his office in Edinburgh House in London. One of his most significant co-workers in this process was Joseph Oldham, with whom he shared the secretaryship and the editorship of the *International Review of Missions*. The Jerusalem meeting gave Paton the opportunity to work with a number of Christian leaders, and his friendship with such men as William Temple and R.H. Tawney was both deepened and strengthened.⁸¹ At the Life and Work conference in Oxford in 1937 Paton acted as secretary to the section on 'The Universal Church and the World of Nations.'⁸² After the Oxford Conference, Paton devoted himself to the reality of the World Church, and in 1938 he became general secretary of the provisional committee of the World Council of Churches at the invitation of William Temple, then archbishop of York.⁸³

In the 1930s Paton moved increasingly towards 'political realism' or 'political Protestantism,' a tendency particularly seen in sections of the American churches and perhaps most famously articulated by Reinhold Niebuhr.⁸⁴ He was one of the few British churchmen to condemn the Munich agreement in 1938, but supported the rights of conscientious objectors during WWII. In co-operation with George Bell, Paton sought the release of German refugees who were imprisoned by the British

⁸⁰ Margaret Sinclair (1949), 130ff.

⁸¹ Margaret Sinclair (1949), 134

⁸² Margaret Sinclair (1949), 208

⁸³ Giles C. Watson, 'Paton, William (1886–1943)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/35414>

⁸⁴ E. Jackson, *Red tape and the gospel: a study of the significance of the ecumenical missionary struggle of William Paton (1866–1943)*, Published for the Paton family by Phlogiston Pub in association with the Selly Oak Colleges, 1980, 61-81

government as ‘enemy aliens’. He also negotiated with the Treasury for the transmission of funds to European foreign missions deprived by war of their normal means of support. A consistent advocate of Jewish mission, he also devoted himself to fund-raising for the victims of Nazi anti-semitism.

In this thesis Paton’s role is particularly important in regard to the establishment of Anglo-American relations during WWII. In his capacity as London based general secretary of the provisional committee of the World Council of Churches during the war Paton was the leading British force in the Peace Aims Group, which worked closely with the American Churches Commission on a Just and Durable Peace to influence the postwar peace planning.

A final individual, whom we will meet throughout this thesis, is missionary and public servant, Sir *Kenneth Grubb* (1900–1980). Although little biographical literature exists about him, a brief introduction here is necessary in order to place him in the context of the Church of England, the state, and the ecumenical movement. Grubb was perhaps more than anyone the personification of the link between them.

Grubb was president of CMS from 1944 to 1965, and from 1959 chairman of the House of Laity in the Church Assembly. He was also chairman of the Churches Commission on International Affairs within the WCC, vice-president of the Institute of Race Relations, and many other things. Grubb belonged in the more open tradition of Evangelism, and he was both liberal and Establishmentarian.⁸⁵

In the build-up to WWII Grubb was, in his capacity as public servant, recruited to the Ministry of Information, and became head of section for Latin America. In 1941 he became overseas controller of publicity, covering the whole world except the USA. It was this position that brought him into the highest level of

⁸⁵ Adrian Hastings (1986), 457

debate on foreign policy and war aims, and made him familiar with civil service procedures and the ways of the Foreign Office.

When the end of the war approached Archbishop William Temple thought that Grubbs' experiences could benefit the churches, which faced an increasing necessity of knowledge on international affairs. At the same time, Grubb became involved in the ecumenical initiative on post-war planning, under the initial chairmanship of John Foster Dulles, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. The Commission was jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council. For the first twenty-three years of its life Grubb chaired this commission, composed of laymen prominent in foreign affairs and churchmen of every church except the Roman Catholic, which brought a new level of professionalism to its task and a wider international representation to bear than ever before.⁸⁶ In this thesis we will meet Kenneth Grubb in chapter 4 where, as we shall see, he, as chairman of the USSR sub-committee, played an important role alongside Paton in ensuring collaboration with the American Churches via the Peace Aims Group. His role as chairman of CCIA from 1946, and as chairman of BCC's International Department made him a highly influential character in the preparations for the inaugural assembly of WCC in 1948. Of particular interest in this thesis is his effort to lead BCC and WCC closer to the American perspective of the Cold War via his control over WCC's section on the churches' role in international affairs. We will look at this in chapter 9.

In this chapter, the special characteristics of the Church of England and significant individuals in the church leadership within the time frame of the thesis have been introduced. The chapter has also looked briefly at the Life and Liberty

⁸⁶Philip Coupland (2006), 84; Alan Booth, 'Grubb, Sir Kenneth George (1900–1980),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/31179>

movement as William Temple's initiative which was intended to challenge the establishment, and which had become a cause for discontent in the Church of England during the 1920s and 1930s. The movement was also, it was explained, part of a greater current around the time of WWI and the 1920s, which expressed a feeling of crisis over the Church of England's withdrawn position in British society.

The chapter then turned briefly to the debate about church-state relations, which arose again with the Prayer Book crisis in 1927-8, where Parliament twice rejected the revised Prayer Book of the Church of England. The parliament's rejection of the revised Prayer Book caused great frustration within the Church where it was felt that Parliament's government of the Church of England was ineffective and disrespectful.

The frustrated atmosphere in the Church of England after the Prayer Book crisis found an expression in the rising ecumenical movement, which had grown, alongside Temple's initiatives in the social sphere in Britain, throughout Europe since the ecumenical conference in Edinburgh in 1910.

By the mid 1930s the plan to establish a Christian world council was beginning to take form. At the ecumenical conference in Oxford in 1937 official agreement was reached to form the World Council of Churches. The conference had been largely planned by Joseph Oldham who was part of Temple's group of religious professionals who aimed at spreading the Protestant perspective on world crisis. It is to this conference that the thesis will turn next.

Chapter 2: The 1937 Oxford Conference of the United Council of Life and Work

The rise of Christian thinking on problems of modernity and authoritarianism became clear at the United Christian Council on Life and Work held in Oxford in 1937.¹ In this chapter it will be shown how Christian thinking in these areas was intrinsically linked to the rise of modern ecumenism.

The period between the wars has been widely researched, and there is much disagreement about the development of cultural life and societal thinking.² As explained in chapter one, from 1928 onwards the social problems of modern life were becoming an increasing concern in the churches.³ One area, however, started to loom larger than any other. The background was the postwar settlement, based on the Treaty of Versailles. Instead of a peaceful and prospering world, which could have proved that the war of 1914-18 was the war to end wars, the world seemed for many to have become a harsher place.⁴ Financial disasters, economic recession, unemployment and general suffering were becoming characteristic of the time, and in this situation there began to appear a threat to justice, freedom and peace in the emergence of a new conception of the state. Germany and Italy provided the most obvious signs of this new era. From 1936, the situation in Spain increased tension across Europe. The Spanish civil war was not so easily judged as the Abyssinian war or Germany's military occupation of the Rhineland. As a conflict between forces of the left and fascism, this was complex, which was only strengthened by the lack of

¹ Throughout the thesis the conference will be referred to simply as the *1937 Oxford Conference*

² One can argue that these different viewpoints are encapsulated by the different approaches found between David Reynolds, author of *The Long Shadow*, and Richard Overy, author of *The Morbid Age*, about whether Britain could be seen through essentially pessimistic or optimistic eyes during the 1930s

³ The Reverend Rufus M. Jones, 'Secular Civilization and the Task of the Churches, in *Report of the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, vol. 1: The Christian Life and Message in Relation to Non-Christian Systems of Thought and Life*, IMC 1928, pp. 230-273

⁴ Darril Hudson, *The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs*, LSE 1969, 69 ff.

government control of its allies.⁵ The war involved atrocities on both sides, but the anarchist-Communist left wing and its violent treatment of clergy was particularly horrifying to British churchmen. The Spanish Civil War divided opinion in Europe profoundly and was considered among the most significant international conflicts of its time.⁶

Formally, Britain stuck to non-intervention in Spain, but did not make great efforts to achieve non-intervention of other powers. As Hastings notes: ‘The war failed (...) to achieve across Europe what it might have seemed at one point close to achieving – some general alignment of Christians (or at least Catholics) with fascists against the ‘Left.’ It was (...) essentially the common strategy of Communists and Fascists to make of their conflict the one significant divide in society, and the greater the sense of ‘crisis’ became in any place the more readily could that view of things be adopted.’⁷ The image of Communism and fascism as fundamental enemies had been established. The churches, however, as we shall see, were already discovering that Communism and fascism had to be considered as but different parts of the same monster, against which they were to fight.

The Soviet Union, with a population of 140 million and now defining itself as a secular nation, was regarded with horror by missionaries, as was its anti-religious influence on China. In fact, labour forces all over the world were felt to help constitute secular civilization.⁸ The rise of the Nazi regime with its ideology of ‘blood and soil,’ as well as the shock of the church struggle in Germany, increased awareness of the importance of the new issues emerging between church and state.⁹

⁵ Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity*, London: Collins, 1986, 316

⁶ Hastings (1986), 316

⁷ Hastings (1986), 316

⁸ Jones (1928), 230-273

⁹ Ehrenström, Nils, ‘Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work, 1925-1948,’ in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, London: SPCK, 1954, 578

However, in Britain, other concerns also filled the agenda. The adoption of the Neutrality Acts by the US in 1935 had caused great worry. Britain needed American political support, but isolationism and certain anti-British feelings in the US did not offer much hope. Under no circumstances could Britain afford another war in the mid-late 1930s.¹⁰ Discussion on social and international affairs, and the expanding role and claims of the modern state attracted increasing attention during the 1930s. It was this international situation, which gave the main direction to the activities of the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work during the 1930s.

Along with William Temple, now Archbishop of York, it was Dr. J. H. Oldham, at this time chairman of the International Missionary Council (IMC), who led the reflection on rising problems of modernity, secularism, and totalitarianism.¹¹ Oldham was convinced that secularism was the most serious contemporary threat to the Christian mission, a threat which presented a twofold menace to Christianity. It was argued that, on the one hand, the new totalitarian governments were exercising absolute authority over mankind, which left no responsibility to God. On the other, scientific humanism was capturing their minds.

In sum, both the state in its new paganism, and the community in its loss of religious faith, now stood above Christian belief. Plans to hold a major ecumenical conference on secularization and totalitarianism, therefore, began to take shape in 1934.¹² The theme of the Conference developed from the ecumenical movement's perception of the international and social problems of the time.

¹⁰ Nicholas Cull, *Selling War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 5-6

¹¹ For details concerning Oldham see chapter 1

¹² The Council included individuals such as philosopher and university administrator Walter Moberly, who was also a personal friend of William Temple, Bishop of Chichester George Bell, T.S. Eliot, and Cyril Foster Garbett (at this point Bishop of Winchester), who all contributed to and supported Oldham's ideas. Source: LPL, Bell 2, f. 35, minute of meeting held on June 15, 1936. For information on George Bell see chapter 1. For information on T.S. Eliot see chapter 1, footnote 24; Cyril Foster Garbett (1875-1955), Archbishop of York 1942 – 1955. Garbett was a compulsive traveller, making a succession of visits to Russia, Australia and the Pacific, the United States, the Balkans, and Palestine.

Preparing the Grounds of a New International Order: The Oxford Conference 1934-37

The content of the Oxford Conference was prepared in great detail in advance under the direction of Joseph Oldham and his assistants, Visser t'Hooft and Eric Fenn.¹³ It took three years, from 1934 until 1937, to prepare the foundation of the conference, which was, essentially based on Oldham's emphasis on the importance of secularism to the debates about the rise of totalitarian states.

Oldham's purpose with the Oxford Conference was not to emphasize the differing standpoints of a variety of denominations. On the contrary, Oldham wanted a document, which gave a comprehensive picture of opinion in the churches. For each of the conference subjects, Oldham gathered views which were meant to represent different denominations and different countries. He knew that ecumenical Christianity was divided on many significant issues, and in the struggle between Christianity and secularism, these divisions were, he felt, damaging. It was therefore essential to Oldham that discussion would take place with the aim of bypassing as many

Garbett's trip to Soviet Russia in 1943 had been made at the behest of the Ministry of Information, as part of a campaign to cement allied relations, and he sent back detailed reports on Soviet morale to the ministry. In 1944 and 1945 he made trips to the United States and to the allied troops in the Low Countries. The Foreign Office spotted his usefulness, and encouraged him to act as a sort of anti-communist ambassador after the war. This Garbett did willingly, travelling to Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in 1947, and meeting Marshal Tito. On all his subsequent tours abroad, Garbett publicly denounced communism. See Matthew Grimley, 'Garbett, Cyril Forster (1875–1955)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/33320>; see also Dianne Kirby, 'The Archbishop of York and Anglo-American Relations during the Second World War and early Cold War, 1942-1955,' in *The Journal of Religious History*, 23, 3, 1999, 327-345

¹³ See Graeme Smith, *Oxford 1937: the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work Conference*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004, 113. At the Life and Work meeting at Fanø, Denmark in 1934 Oldham was appointed to the Life and Work advisory commission on research, and became its chair. Eric Fenn (1899-1995) was a Presbyterian minister and broadcaster; conscientious objector in 1917 followed by a prison sentence; theology student at Westminster College, Cambridge; full-time staff at the SCM in London where he in 1936 met Joseph Oldham, who recruited him to work on the 1937 Life and Work Conference in Oxford. In 1939 he became assistant director of religious broadcasting at BBC. Source: Keith Clements, 'Fenn, (John) Eric (1899–1995),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2012. Consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/101335>

controversies as possible.¹⁴ Oldham took three years to get an overview of major areas of potential conflict between denominations, which enabled him to prepare the conference in a way which would hopefully avoid these conflicts dominating proceedings.

To Oldham and Temple, and many of their ecumenical contemporaries, what was essentially the root problem was partly the anarchistic individual created by modernity, and partly the lack of emphasis on the meaningful community. Oldham stressed that Christianity understood human beings as ‘persons’ and not, like modernity, ‘individuals.’ Personal life was also different from collective life. To Oldham, the life of man found meaning only in a community of persons. The church remained such a community of men who had found their way out of a self-centred existence, which characterized modernity. The re-establishment of the Christian community was therefore considered to be the main aim of the ecumenical movement.

Totalitarian ideologies, on the contrary, were grounded in the individualism of modernity. In this thinking, which was advocated strongly in the conference report, nationalism was considered a so-called false community, as opposed to nationality, which was regarded a gift from God. The division of men in nations led to orderly societies without which the individual would have no existence at all.¹⁵ But when nations lost their loyalty to God, then men would turn their loyalty to the nation alone, leading only to despair and sin.¹⁶ To Oldham, then, the expansion of the state was a consequence of modernity. This was not considered a problem in itself but only when

¹⁴ Lambeth Palace Library and Archive (henceforth LPL), Bell papers, volume 2, f. 35, minute of meeting held on June 15, 1936. See also Smith (2004), p. 136

¹⁵ Oldham (1937), 70

¹⁶ Oldham (1937), 67; Temple made a similar articulation of the community, see Grimley (2004), 198 ff; Smith too, in his analysis of Oldham, argues that Oldham was essentially opposed to individualism, which he understood to be a mistaken understanding of human nature. Oldham believed that freedom was found only in obedience to God and he, therefore, had doubts about the importance of democracy and ‘Oldham seemed to be opposed to modernity characterized as liberalism and democracy and to be in favor of a more authoritarian anti-modern set of ideas.’ Source: Smith (2004), 125

the increasing power of the state was utilized to serve a philosophy opposed to Christianity. The problem with totalitarian states, as suggested, was then particularly the centralized state services, which spread the values and ideas of a secular way of life.

Further, if human beings were treated as autonomous, independent individuals' need to live in common found expression corruptly as sort of false collectivism, not 'community' or 'fellowship' bound together by love of God. Both totalitarian ideologies and Christianity reacted to the individualism of modernity. Freedom to Oldham and many of his contemporaries was not the freedom associated with liberalism, but the freedom found through faith.¹⁷ So Christianity was then in essence competing with totalitarian regimes over the right to solve the problem of anarchic individualism of modernity.¹⁸

Ecumenical thinking did not deny that the state had a necessary role to play. States were considered historically given realities of which each was the highest authority in the political sphere, but placed under the judgement of God with the God-given aim of upholding law and order.¹⁹ The state, however, by its 'dominating expression of man's life' and 'by its very power and its monopoly of the means of coercion' had the capacity – and often became an instrument of – evil. The state was in ecumenical thinking seen as an institution with a dual relationship to the church

¹⁷ Oldham's ideas initially came from Rufus Jones at the Jerusalem Conference in 1928, where Oldham himself became inspired to hold a conference on the topic. According to Jones, the human race had become increasingly interested in the world itself (as opposed to the Kingdom of God), and the church thereby ceased to be the centre of interest; then, the growth of nationalism, which had made the country something that people felt was worth living and dying for; these earthly, secular distractions were then all becoming rivals of the church; but the most important factor was the rise of the scientific interpretation of the universe. As the movement for enlightenment progressed, the significance of God diminished. Atheism was, essentially, the final stage of the enlightenment process, Jones argued. Source: Jones (1928), 230-273

¹⁸ Smith suggests that Oldham was actually in favour of a form of Christian totalitarianism (see Smith (2004), 130)

¹⁹ Oldham (1937), 78

both as an order within which Christians had to live, and as an institution, which by its actions could either promote or hinder the mission of the church.

Towards the state the church could then, depending on the historical situation, be called to take positions of co-operation, criticism, or opposition.²⁰ This was the general perspective adopted at the Oxford Conference, a perspective to which the participating denominations committed themselves. As the churches could not demand that the state give back to the churches the authority they felt they had lost, the emphasis on the community becomes clear. The duty of the churches at the present was, then, to cooperate with the state in promoting the welfare of its citizens; to criticise the state when necessary and permeate public life with the spirit of Christ and to train men and women who could contribute to that end.

Further, to put a stop to the process of increasing secularism, ecumenical thinking put a strong emphasis on the need to shift Christian faith from being a private matter to a public one, with a greater focus on *policy* and *efficiency*. This point was to become an important focus for the WCC information after 1937 and Oldham, as well as Temple, Dulles and George Bell, were strong advocates for action moving in this direction. ‘All talk about a better society’ Oldham wrote in 1940, ‘is idle daydreaming till it is transformed into public policy.’²¹ The idea that Christianity had to become practical, visible and influential was present in almost all the conclusions in the official report of the Oxford Conference.

Before turning to the practical outcome of the Oxford Conference in Britain which was the establishment of the British Council of Churches, it is necessary to have a brief look at the specific ecumenical thoughts about Communism and ideology in 1937.

²⁰ Oldham (1937), 79

²¹ K. Clements, *Faith on the frontier: a life of J. H. Oldham*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999, 5

At the 1937 Oxford Conference there existed general agreement between the Anglican Church and the Protestant churches of the US on the ‘diagnosis’ of the crisis of modernity. To the extent that the rising ideological conflict of the 1930s can be seen as a contest over modernity between the US and the Soviet Union, as scholars such as David Engerman and Odd Arne Westad argue, the 1937 Oxford Conference was engaged in this conflict as well. It should be noted in that regard, that although the conference approach to Communism and capitalism was in principle based on a ‘neutral’ Christian perspective, the mindset of the West (if we can define it as such) clearly dominated.²²

The points to be stressed here are twofold; firstly, Communism as practised in the Soviet Union was perceived as incompatible with Christianity; secondly, although most participants agreed that practised Communism was to be seen as a ‘mal-development,’ there were conflicting opinions concerning its roots and ‘cure.’ Oldham, however, who was aiming with the conference at almost complete Christian unity, omitted competing views from the final report. Communism and capitalism as opposing systems were primarily dealt with in the report on the ‘Church and the Economic Order’. The main point of critique concerning capitalism was that the churches had become too involved with the wealthier members of society and thereby alienated themselves from society at large in some countries. On Communism, the report outlined three criticisms, which were considered unacceptable to Christians: utopianism (fulfilment of human existence through the natural process of history); materialism (which derives all moral and spiritual values from economic needs and economic conditions); and the disregard for the dignity of the individual common to

²² David C. Engerman, ‘Ideology and the origins of the Cold War, 1917-1962,’ in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, volume I: Origins*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 20; Odd Arne Westad, ‘The Cold War and the international history of the twentieth century,’ in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, volume I: Origins*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 13

all totalitarian movements. Whereas capitalism was criticised primarily on economic grounds, Communism was seen as problematic both from an economic and political point of view, as it involved ‘the supplanting of irresponsible economic power by irresponsible political power.’²³ To return to the practicalities of the conference, the practical preparation process involved, according to Oldham, ‘a dozen’ small international conferences’ and an ‘interchange of thought’ involving ‘at least three or four hundred persons, including some of the ablest minds of the church.’²⁴

Consideration of social and moral questions began with a conference discussing the economic crisis and continued with a study conference on ‘The Church and the Problem of the Social Order’ held at Rengsdorf, Germany in March 1933.²⁵ The following year a study conference was held in Paris to consider the contemporary relationship between church and state. The rise of the totalitarian state in Germany reinforced the question of where to place the responsibility for setting limits to the demands of the state, and whether this was up to individuals or associations such as the church: this dilemma had always been at the heart of the churches’ engagement with the state, and was unavoidable in the sense that advice needed to be there for individuals, even if the church did not take a coherent institutional view, but with the existing situation in Europe it was felt that the churches now had to take a firm lead.

One of the most significant conclusions of the Paris study conference was, as Darril Hudson notes, that it was discovered that the church in the international sphere was one of few organisations which transcended both state and nation. This placed a

²³ Joseph Oldham, *The Churches Survey their Task: the report of the conference at Oxford, July 1937, on Church, Community, and State*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937, 16

²⁴ Joseph Oldham (1937), 16ff

²⁵ Hudson, (1969), 154 ff.

responsibility on the churches to influence relations between states as well as managing relations between a church and the individual state.²⁶

In practical terms, Oldham's suggestion was that an initial paper was to be written by one author on each subject, which was then circulated among twenty to twenty-five selected people in different countries and from different denominations for comments. The final 'Church, Community, and State' series volumes would then be constructed from the replies. In the end, the papers prepared for the Oxford Conference, the majority of which were published in the 'Church, Community, and State' volumes, adding up to eight books in total, were either directly related to the subjects discussed at the Conference, or theological papers intended to serve as background to the debate. In reality, however, as Graeme Smith notes as well, this was not achieved. The contributions to the 'Church, Community and State' series volume entitled the *Universal Church and the World of Nations*, for instance, were drawn from only three of the five geographical sections, namely Britain, North America and Continental Europe.²⁷ In fact, the volumes taken as a whole can hardly be said to represent international Christianity.

²⁶ It has not been possible to consult the private papers of Joseph Oldham, which are located in Edinburgh. Reflection regarding the preparation process and Oldham's role in it will therefore, at this point, be based on Graeme Smith's book *Oxford 1937: the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work Conference*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004. Although Graeme Smith's analysis is pointed at investigation of whether the Oxford Conference might be categorised as a missionary conference, the reflections concerning the preparation process of the conference still offers insight useful for this thesis

²⁷ Marquess of Lothian et al. *The Universal Church and the World of Nations*, (volume seven of the Church, Community, State series), George Allen & Unwin, 1938

The Church of England and the Oxford Conference of Life and Work 1937

The Oxford Conference took place from the 12th – 26th July 1937.²⁸ The conference was attended by many lay people among whom T.S. Eliot was perhaps the most famous British cultural participant. Along with Adams Brown, John Foster Dulles and Samuel McCrea Cavert were other significant American participants.²⁹

No delegates were present from the main churches of Germany. A delegation from the Confessing Church had been denied participation by the German Government.³⁰ This gave new air to the debate on causes of the development of totalitarian regimes; it strengthened the sense of urgency of the ecumenical movement

²⁸ The Presidium included Dr. William Adams Brown from USA, the Archbishop of Canterbury (Cosmo Lang), the Primate of Sweden (Archbishop Erling Eidem), the Orthodox Archbishop Germanos, and Bishop V.S. Azariah of South India. Lay members included Professor Max Huber from Switzerland (President of the Permanent Court of Justice at the Hague and President of the International Committee of Red Cross), Lord Lothian, Sir Alfred Zimmern, Sir Walter Moberly, Sir John Maud, and John MacMurray from Britain; Francis B. Sayre, John Foster Dulles, and Charles P. Taft from USA.²⁸ William Temple chaired the committee to draft the conference message, John Mott chaired the business committee and conference plenary debates, and William Paton was the conference secretary. See Oldham (1937), Appendix D and E

²⁹ John Foster Dulles (1888-1959) was a lawyer, lay church leader, and secretary of state. Dulles' career in international relations started as a personal secretary at the Hague Peace Conference in 1907 and ended as Eisenhower's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1958. Dulles had a parallel career in the ecumenical movement where he participated in most of the international conferences. Source: Richard H. Immerman in *The American National Biography Online*. Richard H. Immerman, (ed.), *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, Princeton Paperbacks, 1992; Samuel McCrea Cavert (1888-1976) was a Presbyterian minister and ecumenical leader, born in Charlton, New York. In 1921 named a general secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (FCC), and editor the monthly *Federal Council Bulletin*. From 1933 senior general secretary of FCC, the council's top administrator. In the 1930s Cavert was one of the architects of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and in 1937 he was the first to suggest the name that later was officially adopted. He was a member of the provisional committee formed to bring the WCC into existence. After the establishment of WCC in 1948, Cavert was involved at home with the merger of the FCC with seven other major North American Protestant cooperative agencies to form the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America (NCC), becoming its first general secretary. From 1954 he then served for four years as executive secretary of the WCC in the United States. Source: Robert T. Handy in the *American National Biography Online*; William Adams Brown (1865-1943) was a Presbyterian theologian, educator, and activist, born in New York. Served as professor of theology until 1930, when appointed research professor in applied Christianity. Served on the Yale Corporation from 1917 to 1934, and as chair of the corporation's Educational Policy Committee from 1919 to 1930, served from 1919 to 1920 as acting provost. He also served in 1925 as acting president of Union Seminary. During the First World War, he served as the executive secretary of the Federal Council of Churches' General War-Time Commission. He was a member of the planning group for the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work in Stockholm in 1925, and participated in the Oxford Conference in 1937. Similarly, he was a member of the Faith and Order meeting held at Lausanne in 1927, and he helped to plan the Faith and Order meeting in Edinburgh in 1937. Source: Glenn T. Miller in *American National Biography Online*

³⁰ Peter Raina, *Bishop George Bell, The Greatest Churchman. A portrait in Letters*, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 2006, 161

to establish itself as an international political actor, and it fostered a spirit of solidarity with the Confessing Church in Germany. On Bishop George Bell's initiative, the conference agreed on a message to the Confessing Church in Germany, which 'mourned the absence' of their 'brethren in the German Evangelical Church.'³¹ In this way, the absence of the German Confessional Church was, perhaps, more forceful than their physical presence could have been.

The conference operated with five geographical areas; North America, Great Britain and Ireland, the Continent of Europe (east and west), the Orthodox Church, and 'other areas.'³² 400 delegates attended representing close to 120 denominations. If the Continental section is divided between east and west, then North America had the largest number of denominations attending from one region as well as the highest number of delegates per church. Only the Church of England as a single church had a higher number with 18 delegates. The highest number from any other church below this was eight.

The proportion of clergy to laity attending the conference varied between the thematic sections. On the section on 'Community and State', for instance, North Americans had 19 delegates belonging to the clergy and 5 to the laity; Britain had 12 delegates from the clergy and 3 from the laity. In the Economic section, however, North America had 19 delegates representing the clergy and 11 laity, and Britain 5 clergy and 15 lay delegates. The full picture is that less than one third of the conference was lay; it can be noted that the majority of the lay participants carried the title of Professor. The chairmen of the thematic sections were, interestingly, all lay.

³¹ Oldham (1937), appendix A

³² The geographical section 'other areas' consisted of representations from Australia, China, Dutch East Indies, India, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippine Islands, South Africa, and South America. Source: The Churches Survey Their Task, Appendix D

The conference was divided into five sections; Church and Community; Church and State; Church, Community, and State in relation to the Economic Order; Church, Community, and State in relation to Education; and The Universal Church and the World of Nations.³³ Each section was supervised by a chairman who wrote the memorandum to form the final report of the section. All reports were edited by Oldham before publication.³⁴

The Oxford conference was a significant event for the Church of England. First of all, it was here that the fundamental ideas of the ecumenical movement were to be tested in a large institutional setting. It was also here that the new transnational ambitions of the church officially took shape and were woven into the network of churches, if not globally, then at least in the western hemisphere. It was also significant that a decision to establish the World Council of Churches (WCC) was now formally reached, which from then on served to give the movement a transnational institutional focal point. In the years until its official establishment in 1948, WCC-in-formation served as an important frame of reference offering moral templates and guiding normative orientations for the churches; this, as we shall see,

³³ Oldham (1937), Introduction

³⁴ Eight volumes were written in connection with the Oxford Conference. These volumes contained a combination of research papers written before the conference, and conclusions reached during the conference. Those were: Volume I: 'The Church and its function in Society,' by Oldham and Visser t'hoof; Volume II: 'The Christian Understanding of Man,' by T.E. Jessop, R.L. Calhoun, N. Alexeiev, Emil Brunner, Austin Farrer, Walter M. Horton, and Pierre Mayry; Volume III: 'The Kingdom of God and History,' by H.G. Wood, C.H. Dodd, Edwyn Bevan, Eugene Lyman, Paul Tillich, H.D. Wendland, and Christopher Dawson; Volume IV: 'Christian Faith and the Common Life,' by Nils Ehrenstrom, M.F. Dibelius, William Temple, Reinhold Niebuhr, W. Wiesner, H.H. Farmer, and John C. Bennett; Volume V: 'Church and Community,' by Kenneth S. Latourette, Ernest Barker, Marc Boegner, Hans Lilje, Manfred Bjorkquist, Stefan Zankov, Edwin E. Aubrey, and H. Paul Douglass; Volume VI: 'Church, Community, and State in Relation to Education,' by Fred Clarke, W. Zenkovskt, Paul Monroe, Charles R. Morris, J.W.D. Smith, Ph. Kohnstamm, and J.H. Oldham; Volume VII: 'The Universal Church and the World of Nations,' by Marquess of Lothian, Sir Alfred Zimmern, O.H. Von Der Gablentz, Max Huber, John Foster Dulles, V.A. Demant, Wilhelm Menn, Otto Piper, and C.E. Raven. The eighth volume was the main report of the conference, 'The Churches Survey their Task.' This final volume presents the reports of the conference as submitted by the respective section chairmen Sir Walter Moberly from London (Church and Community), Professor Max Huber from Zurich (Church and State), John Maud from Oxford (Church, Community, and State in Relation to the Economic Order), President Henry Sloane Coffin from New York (Church, Community, and State in Relation to Education), and President John Mackay from Princeton (The Universal Church and the World of Nations). See Oldham (1937), Appendix D

was a significant factor in keeping churches close to the ecumenical project during World War II when national war aims made moral considerations more complex.

Second, the Church of England's leaders had, as noted, been engaged in the preparatory process of the conference for several years and had had a significant influence on the framing of the conference; the new transnational ambitions of the conference therefore came largely from the Church of England elite itself. The Conference was, therefore, the first attempt of merging ideas of individuals into this larger institutional setting.

Third, the conclusions of the conference formed, as will be seen in the following chapters, an important basis for the Church of England over time, and provided a focus, which it kept through the tumult of the following years – but which became increasingly contested as the focus of the Church shifted during and after the war. But by 1937 the conference legitimised the more autonomous role for the churches towards their respective governments; a role which the Church of England had long hoped for but which had not met approval by the British government in the rejection of the revised Prayer Book in 1928.³⁵

The results of the Oxford Conferences were compiled to form an ambitious plan of action for the churches, individual Christians, and the ecumenical agencies. With the formal approval of the conference report, the Church of England committed itself to work towards the realisation of ecumenical aims within its own church institution; in church-church relations in Britain; within its relations with the British government agencies and other significant national institutions; and in its transnational tasks. Evidence in this chapter therefore suggests that the Church of

³⁵ For details regarding the Prayer Book debate see chapter 1. See also Grimley (2004), chapter 4

England in 1937 indeed based its own attitude towards Communism on ecumenical thinking.

With the approval of the conference report and the decision to establish the World Council of Churches the ecumenical leaders who had prepared the conference, had now succeeded in establishing an institutional setting for their ideas. This institutional setting was to serve as a common reference for the churches in their tasks ahead in their home countries, and also as a guide in moral, normative, and institutional questions. It was anticipated that the transnational institutional setting of WCC 'in formation' would be a weighty and helpful factor for the churches when engaging in the demanding task of church reform. Given the flexibility of the Church of England as an institution there was not anything exceptional as such about the Church of England clergy's engagement in an initiative such as the Oxford Conference.³⁶ But the programme to which it committed the church was rather far reaching, and suggested internal institutional changes, which had not been attempted before. However, at the Lambeth Conference in 1930, resolutions had already been passed which expressed Anglican goodwill towards the establishment of greater Church unity.³⁷ The resemblances of the 1937 Oxford Conference to the Lambeth Conferences are significant not least because of the size of the conference and the strong presence of the Archbishops.

A significant difference between the two conferences, however, was that in 1937 the Church of England had not formally received the approval from the supreme legislator within the Church of England, the Church Assembly, to commit the church to the ecumenical programme of church reform. The engagement of the two Archbishops as participants in Oxford was an important factor. The Archbishops had,

³⁶ See chapter 1

³⁷ George Bell (ed.), *Documents of Unity, 1930-49*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948, 1-21

as explained in chapter two, the right (but presumably not the duty) to act as ‘superintendents’ of all ecclesiastical matters and to correct the bishops.³⁸ The Archbishops, however, were now potentially committing the Church of England to what may be regarded as activities potentially hostile to the government, which was, as we have seen, at the root of the ecumenical thought. The role of the Archbishops at the Oxford Conference, then, underlines the point that the Church of England leadership found it legitimate to use the ecumenical project to try to distance the church from the state.

The Church of England was undoubtedly aware of the politically charged place in which it found itself as an autonomous body. It was, however, also a part of the state in a time of fierce ideological competition first with fascism and then with Communism. This was to play out in WWII, and then in the Cold War. This was true at home and overseas, with the added complication that, overseas, it is very important to note that it was not clear what its obligations were, and to whom they should be directed in those in states and communities which were under fascist, and then Communist control. It can be argued then, that, to use institutionalist language, the Oxford Conference was part of a larger critical juncture of the time: the crisis of Christianity had led many denominations to pay attention to the ecumenical movement, but it was, arguably, events in Germany and Spain which pushed the churches to come to almost exceptional agreements on a rather radical action plan which involved church reform as well as policies potentially countering the state.³⁹

It is now necessary to look in more detail at the themes of the publications emanating from the conference. Addressing the area of the role of the church in

³⁸ Canon 17(2); each archbishop has his own diocese: in post-1925 measures ‘bishop’ in relation to the diocese of the Archbishops means ‘archbishop.’ Interpretation Measure 1925, s. 3

³⁹ See also John Bennett, ‘Breakthrough in Ecumenical Social Ethics. The Legacy of the Oxford Conference on Church, Community, and State, (1937)’ *Ecumenical Review*, 40, 2, 1988, 132-146

international relations, the report on the Universal Church and the World of Nations had as its main concern the task of achieving a better international order.⁴⁰ The ecumenical articulation of the relationship between states was in essence a continuation of the state-individual argument. The basic claim was that a true perception of international order required recognition of the fact that the state was not autonomous but under the ultimate guidance of God.⁴¹ This was the case whether the state was dealing with its own citizens or with other states and the individuals within them. The state, in other words, was, like the individual, considered a unit responsible to God. Whereas the relationship between individuals and the state to which they belonged was set by law, the relationship between states had not yet been united in any organic connection. History had shown, it was thought, that the relations between states remained unsettled and especially the phenomenon of ‘Great Powers’ was singled out as problematic. Power relations could be regulated in either a federal system or by an organisation like the League of Nations. This solution, however, could not stand alone as it was felt, as explained above, that evil lay deeper down.

It was therefore considered the duty of Christians to ‘bring Caesar to the recognition of his duty to God.’ It was generally recognised that the League of Nations had been meant to solve the problem of irresponsible state behaviour but had failed. It was, as the Marquess of Lothian argued in the report, only ‘a machinery for maintaining unilateral discriminations against Germany.’⁴² It was therefore suggested that a similar although more effective system had to be established in order to control, primarily, the practice of power politics. The establishment of a ‘common ethos’ to stand above any form of international regulation would, it was felt, ensure the sense

⁴⁰ Marquess of Lothian, ‘The Demonic Influence of National Sovereignty,’ in *The Universal Church and the World of Nations*, The Church, Community and State Series, vol. VII, George Allen 1938, 15

⁴¹ Oldham (1937), 171

⁴² Lothian (1938), 15

of morality and responsibility necessary to make international regulation effective. It was here that the church as a supra-national society with a 'profound sense of historical realities, and the worth of human personality' hoped to make a contribution.⁴³

Finally, war was generally considered a 'demonstration of the power of sin in this world' no matter how it was justified. As it was not possible to reach complete agreement on the issue of war, three basic Christian attitudes to war were recorded; the first was that war was always sinful; the second, that some wars were just, so Christians should obey the state and fight; and the third was that Christians should fight in all wars unless absolutely certain that a state was fighting for a wrong cause.⁴⁴ As noted earlier in this chapter, it was Joseph Oldham who had the final word in the preparatory process leading up to the conference; it was he who decided which contributions to include, and which to leave out. In this regard it is relevant to look briefly at three areas where alternative opinions existed, and which Oldham chose to omit. It is important to mention this here, as it adds to the understanding of how the roots of Communism were understood, and how Oldham, from a British perspective, envisaged an ecumenical solution. It is also important because at least one of the areas, namely the idea that democracy in itself is a bulwark against totalitarianism, becomes relevant later in the thesis.

The first area of conflict concerns Oldham's idea about the causal relationship between modernity, secularism and authoritarianism and is illustrated by a disagreement between Oldham and Richard Henry Tawney prior to the Oxford

⁴³ Oldham (1937), 174

⁴⁴ The ecumenists pointed to the fact that war had so far been recognised as a reasonable way to solve conflicts between nations. The idea that peace in itself should be an objective in international relations was therefore considered quite novel by ecumenists at the time and the subject led to some controversy at the Oxford Conference. Although in the end it was decided to state three different viewpoints on Christianity and war, pacifism was generally not promoted in ecumenical thought. See Oldham (1937), 178 ff.

Conference.⁴⁵ The disagreement was over the question of whether capitalism, or Nazism and Communism, posed a threat to Christianity. Tawney did not agree with Oldham's argument that Communism and Nazism were consequences of a crisis in modernity. Instead Tawney argued that they were a consequence of a weakness of the churches, which was a result of the churches' acceptance of capitalism. Tawney felt, and this view was shared by William Temple, that it was not Communism and Nazism which threatened the churches, but rather capitalism, which itself had the characteristics of a counter-religion.⁴⁶ To Oldham, however, the root of the problem was secularism, which was caused by modern forms of organization of the life of the community, made possible by scientific and technical advance.

Another point of conflict was the question of the Treaty of Versailles and the claim that the negotiated peace treaty was so harsh that it had led to the rise of Nazism. The German national identity was frustrated because of the economic disadvantages imposed upon Germany and this found expression in political extremism and nationalism. This type of claim, which was also a critique of Oldham's argument, was made by John Bennett, amongst many others at the time, who suggested that the rise of totalitarian states could be attributed to political rather than religious causes. Bennett, who was in fact chairing the section on economics, also argued that modernity might be a solution to totalitarianism, and not its cause. This again was a questioning of Oldham's argument, yet it was not included in the final report.

The third area of disagreement was related to Oldham's idea that contemporary problems had a religious cause. A challenge to this idea came from Ernest Johnson, whose contribution Oldham excluded from the report. Johnson's

⁴⁵ For Richard Tawney, see chapter 1, footnote 26

⁴⁶ Based on Graeme Smith's analysis in Smith (2004), 142

contribution had highlighted that there was no strong fascist movement in North America, which, Johnson argued, was due to the American tradition of democracy and pluralism. If a fascist state should rise in America it would only be because its citizens were willing to sacrifice its freedoms in return for more security. A solution to totalitarianism, therefore, required a political response. Oldham, however, disagreed that democratic states were not threatened by totalitarian ideologies. Johnson was in fact defending those freedoms which Oldham perceived to be a part of the crisis confronting society.⁴⁷

On this basis we might sum up that according to Oldham, the rise of Communism had a religious cause and demanded a religious solution; that modernity was part of the problem – not the solution; and that democracy and individual freedoms were seen primarily as a threat to established religion, in that it provided a basis for the development of Communism. That Oldham had the power to exclude these perspectives completely from the conference reports also tells us that he had a tremendous impact on the overall outcome of the conference.

Establishment of the British Council of Churches

At the 1937 Oxford Conference the participant churches committed themselves to action. This was to be at the international organizational level, to support the strengthening of the Church Universal in all spheres. It was also to be at the national level, to incorporate the spirit of the ecumenical movement into their respective national societies, following the lines of ‘the General Oxford diagnosis.’⁴⁸ As seen, the decision to establish the World Council of Churches was made at the

⁴⁷ Based on Graeme Smith’s analysis in Smith (2004), 146

⁴⁸ Church of England Record Centre (CERC), files on The Churches Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life (CCFCL), 1/1/3, Notes on visit to Kelham, Eric Fenn, January 24, 1938

Oxford Conference in 1937. As the World Council was to be organized based on national unions of churches, the establishment of some form of unified Christian body in Britain was an inevitable prerequisite. Although the initial steps towards establishing a British representation were taken immediately following the Oxford Conference in 1937, it took five years of testing, negotiating and preparing before the final British Council of Churches (BCC) found its institutional and organizational expression in 1942.

The achievement of institutionalizing the ecumenical agenda in the Church of England was largely due to the work by William Temple.⁴⁹ In his enthronement address in Canterbury Cathedral in April 1942, he spoke of ‘the great new fact of our era’ – the ecumenical community;⁵⁰ with his appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury he was now able to combine his role as ecumenical statesman in Europe with the most powerful position in the Church of England. To the Church of England this was significant; as Edward Carpenter has written: ‘what he is [the Archbishop of Canterbury] many assume the church to be.’⁵¹ Hence, association with the Archbishop added weight to the ecumenical agenda, nationally and internationally.

The institution-building was, as we shall see, complex and expressed in many smaller institutions which may reflect the lack of an over-riding strategy, and which also created a sea of acronym-based groups. The first form that the union among Christians in Britain took was named the Council of Churches on the Relations of Christian Faith to Common Life (CCFCL), which was designed specifically to function as a vehicle for WCC’s work in Great Britain.⁵²

⁴⁹ For a description of William Temple’s role in the ecumenical movement see chapter 1. See also Grimley (2004)

⁵⁰ Adrian Hastings (1986), *passim*

⁵¹ Edward Carpenter, *Cantuar. The Archbishops in their Office*, London: Mowbray 1997, 466

⁵² CERC CCFCL 1/1/3, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a Council on the Christian Faith and Common Life, March 17, 1938

In 1939, the new body was energetic and reflected the idea of Britain playing a significant role in world Christian affairs, which had only been strengthened by the success of the Oxford Conference. ‘Even from the ecumenical point of view, what we do in Great Britain may be, in the present state of the world, even more important than what we do in the ecumenical sphere,’ William Temple, then Archbishop of York, stated.⁵³ His colleagues in the CCFCL agreed; the British churches, and especially the Church of England, had positioned themselves as leaders of the ecumenical movement and, hence, had to set a good example in Britain.⁵⁴

By May 1939 CCFCL had secured formal approval from most of the British denominations, excluding, as expected, the Roman Catholic Church.⁵⁵ Formal acceptance of CCFCL by the respective Church Assemblies was an important and necessary step for the churchmen seeking the adoption of an ecumenical agenda in Britain. CCFCL could not risk being accused of acting as free agents without formal church support, and it was important for the Council to be recognized as a legitimate representative of the churches. From the onset it was feared that the experimental character of the Council would make this task one of ‘exceptional difficulty,’ and members feared that ‘hampering restrictions’ would be placed on the Council’s

⁵³ CERC CCFCL 1/1/1, Statement made at Lambeth Palace on November 24, 1937, not signed but presumably by the chairman, the Archbishop of York

⁵⁴ The other British denominations included in CCFCL were the Church of Scotland; the Methodist Church; the Presbyterian Church of England; the Church of Ireland; the Presbyterian Church of Ireland; the Baptist Church; and the Congregationalists.

⁵⁵ The suggestion to formally establish an interdenominational British Advisory Council on the Relations of the Christian Faith to National Life was put and carried at the Summer session of the Church of England Church Assembly in 1938. Source: LPL, Church of England Church Assembly, Summer session 1938, Minutes of proceedings

In May 1939 representatives to serve on CCFCL had been appointed in the following numbers: the National Assembly of Church of England (5); the National Assembly of Church of Scotland (2); the Methodist Conference (1); the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England (1); the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland (1); the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland (1); the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland (1); the Congregational Union of England and Wales (1) J. Oldham, E. Iredale and E. Fenn were appointed officers of the Council. Mr. Harold Judd, C.B.E., was appointed honorary treasurer of the Council in 1939. Judd had also been treasurer of the British Advisory Council for the Oxford Conference 1937. Source: CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, Report of the Council on Christian Faith and Common Life to the National Assembly of the Church of England for the year April 1938 to April 1939

activities.⁵⁶ The task was therefore to be handled with care, and although the Council was reluctant to roll out the full scheme of the planned ecumenical activities in Britain for the Assemblies, it was also cautious not to leave too much to the imagination of the Church Assemblies as it might turn them against the idea.⁵⁷

In line with the conclusions from the 1937 Oxford Conference, CCFCL felt that the churches had to renew themselves: to create new forms of ministry, but also to develop a defensive policy to counteract the powerful forces of modernisation, which undermined society. The task of initiating this process would require a major collective effort of all Christians, and CCFCL was to be the mastermind behind it all.⁵⁸ Large numbers of persons would be co-opted for the mission, representing a variety of activities and interests, such as, politics, industry, education and social services.⁵⁹ This experiment, and the experimental character of the Council itself, made it of great importance to CCFCL to remain largely free from direct ecclesiastical control.⁶⁰ It is remarkable that, throughout its existence, the Council managed, largely, to stay clear of controversy.

In May 1939 the Council had three co-opted members.⁶¹ Of these members, two - Oakeshott, and Lindsey - had a background in the Pilgrims Trust, which was an

⁵⁶ CERC CCFCL 1/1/2 Memorandum by J. Oldham, December 1937.

⁵⁷ It was particularly feared that the Church Assemblies would react against the suggestion that one third of the Council should consist of lay cooptions, an issue, as we saw in chapter one, which was related to the old internal conflict between Protestants and Anglo-Catholics within the church. Anglo-Catholics generally rejected the idea that the laity should have any influence on the governance of the Church of England. The cooption of high ranging public servants, however, was a core part of the Council's strategy and considered 'key to the Council's success. In fact, all the other focus areas of the council should be grouped around it.' The existing church councils, it was felt, were not unwilling to move forward, but they had to be prepared in some way for the transformation into a 'new' church. See CERC CCFCL 1/1/3, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a Council on the Christian Faith and Common Life, March 17, 1938

⁵⁸ CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, Report of the Council on Christian Faith and Common Life to the National Assembly of the Church of England for year April 1938 to April 1939

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, 'The Christian Faith and the Common Life. Nature and purpose of the proposed effort,' September 19, 1939

⁶¹ Each member church was empowered to coopt ten members representing various spheres of the common life. The three coopted members in 1939 were the Master of Balliol, Alexander Lindsay; W.

Atlantic organization, based in both Britain and the US to promote business and cultural links.⁶² Beside from these, the most active and influential members of the Council were the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Lang; Archbishop of York, William Temple; Joseph Oldham and Sir Walter Moberly from the Church of England; Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn from The Church of Scotland, Dr. J. Scott Lidgett from the Methodist Church, Dr. S.M. Berry from the Congregational Union, and M.E. Aubrey from the Baptist Union.⁶³ All of them had played a role at the Oxford Conference in 1937. The Commission to serve under CCFCL, the Churches Commission on International Friendship and Social Responsibility, (CCIFSR), was also established in 1939 and was meant to focus on two projects specifically; first, church and community and ‘cell action,’ which referred to the ecumenical idea of ‘infiltration,’ and second, Christian unity. The Committee was to consist of 80 members to be appointed by the respective Church assemblies, the majority representing the Church of England.⁶⁴

F. Oakeshott; and Miss M.E. Popham. Walter Fraser Oakeshott (1903-1987): schoolmaster and college head. Served with the inquiry into unemployment sponsored by the Pilgrim Trust (1936-37) and took major part in writing up the findings of the inquiry in William Temple’s ‘Men Without Work’ (1938). In 1939 he became high-master of St. Paul’s School in London; in 1945 headmaster of Winchester College. Source: Keen, M.H., ‘Oakeshott, Sir Walter Fraser (1903–1987),’ rev. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/39817>. Alexander Dunlop Lindsay, first Baron of Birker (1879-1952), educationist, served in France during WWI as lieutenant-colonel, Master of Balliol (1924-49), early friendship ties with William Temple and R.H. Tawney as they were undergraduates together at Oxford University. Dedicated work to the importance of international law and the higher education of working people. Connected with the running of clubs for unemployed and with the survey sponsored by the Pilgrim Trust (1936-37), which led to William Temple’s ‘Men without Work.’ He was adviser to the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress on educational matters. Source: Gary McCulloch, ‘Lindsay, Alexander Dunlop, first Baron Lindsay of Birker (1879–1952),’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/34537>

⁶² Nicolas Cull (1995), 7

⁶³ The remaining members were (1939): Church of England: the Bishop of Bristol, the Bishop of Winchester, the Bishop of Monmouth; Church of Scotland: E.J. Hagan; The Presbyterian Church of England: G.L. Brander; Church of Ireland: The Bishop of Down; Presbyterian Church of Ireland: Professor J.E. Davie. Source: CERC CCFCL 2/2/1 ‘Report to the Church Assemblies,’ April 1939

⁶⁴ CCIFSR consisted of 21 members representing The Church of England; 20 members representing the Free Churches in England; 2 members from Society of Friends; 2 representatives from the Salvation Army; 10 members from interdenominational agencies; 10 members from Churches in Scotland, Ireland and Wales.⁶⁴ The Archbishop of York was chairman, Rev. A.C. Craig and R.E.

The Church of England took up the majority of places in both CCFCL and CCIFSR, and the role of the Church of England's leadership in these agencies can hardly be overstated. Not only did the Archbishops of Canterbury and York draft an extensive amount of the input, they were also, by all denominations and lay members, considered fundamentally necessary for the Council to be effective and win round communities. It is also quite possible that the fact that CCFCL was associated with the Archbishop of York, William Temple made the process of achieving formal recognition by the Church Assemblies easier.⁶⁵ But Temple did have to overcome hostility from the Church Assembly, largely due to fear that World Christianity might pose a threat towards what some regarded as the 'essentials of Catholic Order.' Arthur Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester and chairman of the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations until 1945, was one of the fiercest opponents to the idea of WCC. Although this opposition to some extent influenced the Church Assembly, Temple managed to achieve formal approval of the Council in 1942.⁶⁶

The objectives of the CCFCL developed over time, but from the outset the aim was first, to cooperate with and further the purposes of the ecumenical movement. Second, the CCFCL sought to help the churches in Britain to relate their activities more directly to the forces moulding the life of the nation. This was considered a task of criticism, in the light of Christian understanding of life, of what was being done in the social sphere, and a task of active participation in the efforts of the community for the redemption and improvement of human life. The third aim was to help to build bridges that were, it was felt, currently lacking, between Christian faith and actual

Burlingham were secretaries. Elmslie was chairman for the International friendship section; Mr. Urwin for the section for social responsibility

⁶⁵ ERC CCFCL 1/1/2, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches, the conference met at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 14 January 1938.

⁶⁶ Carpenter (1997), 473. The debate regarding the Catholic Order will not be pursued further in this thesis

life, by enlisting the help of ‘the best minds in thinking out the ethical implications of Christian faith for life.’ The last aim was to help in enlisting leaders of the many lay activities of the common life in the service of the Christian cause and in promoting lay initiative and responsibility in its advancement.⁶⁷

The problem of England, it was felt, was that while the mind of its people instinctively rejected the ‘pagan systems,’ Nazism and Communism, it was not clear what, positively, England stood for. The old liberalism had lost its hold over the younger generation and nothing short of a national rebirth was called for to give rise to a new faith.

This could not, however, be a specifically Christian faith in a community where the majority were not professing Christians. Rather, the Council imagined a political faith ‘largely inspired’ however ‘by the Christian understanding of life and embodying many Christian values,’ which would transcend political parties.⁶⁸ This idea developed well before the outbreak of WWII, but it seems quite clear that CCFCL was working not only to interpret the conclusions of Oxford to fit a British context; it was composing new material to establish the western front from a British perspective against ‘backward systems of continental Europe and Asia’ which the Soviet Union appeared to be moving towards, as it distanced itself culturally from European tradition.⁶⁹ Although respect was paid to the German Church and its strong theological traditions, which had influenced Britain too, the mainstay of British ecumenism was Anglo-Saxon at its core, and this tendency was, as we shall see, only strengthened by the war.

⁶⁷ CERC CCFCL 1/1/2 Memorandum by J. Oldham, undated

⁶⁸ CERC CCFCL 1/1/2, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches, the conference met at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 14 January 1938

⁶⁹ CERC CCFCL 1/1/2, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches, the conference met at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 14 January 1938

The issue of greatest importance for the newly formed Council was seen not so much as the question of the relationship between church and state in Britain directly, but between church and an all-embracing community life which now claimed to be the source of all human activity.⁷⁰ Such a moral community had to develop from within, and from below, and could not be imposed by the state.⁷¹ In order to achieve increased control over communities the Council envisaged a strategy based on what might be called infiltration or ‘cells;’ an idea developed by Oldham. As organized religion had lost its direct power over man’s mind, new methods had to be applied. The quest, therefore, to gradually ‘win over’ individuals in key positions in British society became a core mission to the Council and, as shall be shown more clearly in the next section of this chapter, was applied very actively by the Council itself as well as other representatives of the ecumenical movement, towards the British government and towards what were considered key areas of British society.

The official language for this quest was, as mentioned, ‘bridge-building’ and it was launched given the necessity to work out a new relationship between secular organizations and the churches for their mutual benefit, and for the churches to consider the position of its bodies in the ‘body of politics’ in the future.⁷² The main task of the CCFCL was therefore to be bridge-builder between the Church and lay people. This is part of the reason why it was thought that the Council should consist of both Churchmen and laymen. CCFCL was to assist in the task of interpreting to the common man what Christianity was, and in fostering the growth of a Christian

⁷⁰ CERC CCFCL 1/1/1, Statement made at Lambeth Palace (Oldham), November 24, 1937

⁷¹ Discussed also by Grimley in Grimley (2004)

⁷² CERC CCFCL 1/1/2, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches, the conference met at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 14 January 1938

philosophy of man and society in the light of modern knowledge and conditions.⁷³ The Council saw itself, in other words, as a sort of parallel government. The church was essentially competing with the state over the power to lead the communities, and what was at stake for the church, it can be argued, was a position, which would make it impossible to separate the church from the national identity itself.⁷⁴

In the CCFCL considerable attention was paid to the perceived crisis of democracy and it was feared that a more totalitarian state would also develop in Britain itself, although it was often stated that ‘we [in Britain] are not as other men.’⁷⁵ English institutions and community life, it was felt, was still diverse and strong and thereby might continue to be a ‘safeguard against the imposition of a totalitarian system upon England.’⁷⁶ Taking into account the amount of attention paid to the subject during the CCFCL meetings, however, indicates that the Council members were not entirely convinced. Religious interest was perceived still to be present, but now divorced from the institutions of the churches, which had, for too long, lost contact with the ‘common man.’ The opportunities, which the Churches felt to be there, were threatened by the totalitarian developments in Russia and Germany and the churches in Britain were increasingly concerned by these international developments.

On the other hand, CCFCL also regarded the totalitarian regimes of Germany and Russia as a learning opportunity. As Oldham explained, ‘[w]hat the totalitarian

⁷³ It was also considered the task of the Council to encourage the study of modern society and its changes in the light of Christian canons of judgment, and to help to focus public attention to ‘malign’ features of society, such as unemployment; to bring organized religion into closer connection with the multiplying forms of social service; to promote a clearer understanding of the meaning of Christian responsibility in the discharge of the various functions and offices in society and in the relations between groups; to enable existing agencies and efforts to become more effective, by making it possible for those conducting them to see their work in the light of a commanding, unifying objective. See CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, Minutes of Council meeting, memorandum B, November 10, 1938

⁷⁴ A similar conclusion is drawn by Grimley in Grimley (2004)

⁷⁵ CERC CCFCL 4/4/1, Memorandum for Conference of Younger Clergy and Ministers, December 1938

⁷⁶ CERC CCFCL 2/1/2, Minutes of fifth CCFCL meeting, July 9, 1940

state is doing for us is to throw a search-light on forces that are operating in the world as a whole.⁷⁷ Russia and Germany, it was felt, were both determinative of the future of Western civilization but the churches could also learn from these two countries as they threw light on ‘the whole crisis of our western world.’⁷⁸ The Oxford idea that totalitarian regimes were a way for God to open the eyes of and test the churches was present in CCFCL too.

It should be noted that the ideas of Oldham and his ecumenical contemporaries in Britain were concerned with the strengthening of a British civil religion with, what Grimley refers to as a religiously sanctioned code of civil obligation.⁷⁹ It was an elite phenomenon, stressing that the nation needed education permeated with elite values. It affirmed the role of religion in national life by drawing a distinction between state and nation, but emphasizing the nation more than the state. It is in this light that Oldham’s ‘militant democracy’ should be understood rather than as an idea of increased state or church authority as such. New and durable forms of national communities were to be constructed to hold together the nation in the modern age and the churches saw for themselves a key role as agents in their formation.⁸⁰

CCFCL was not, it seems, surprised by the advent of war in 1939. Indeed, it seemed that there was an additional opportunity for action, as a result of the outbreak of war. The tone in the Council, however, did become more urgent, organizational matters were pushed to the background, and attention was lifted from what had been a more intense emphasis upon change at home to the question of relations among states, ideas of international law, the relationship between issues of security, economic

⁷⁷ CERC CCFCL 1/1/1, Statement made at Lambeth Palace (Oldham) November 24, 1937

⁷⁸ CERC CCFCL 4/4/1, The Task of the Christian Ministry in the Present Collectivist Age, York Conference of Younger Ministers, December 1938

⁷⁹ Grimley (2004), P. 225

⁸⁰ Grimley (2004), p. 225

regulation and social concerns, and, finally, speculation regarding Britain's international role after the war.

CCFCL was ready to engage in the war effort in its own way, by fighting on the 'spiritual front.' From the onset, this front was primarily battling with questions of how to possibly influence the war's outcome, and those concerning the possible outline of the post-war situation in Britain and abroad. For the immediate moment, it was felt by the Council, and Oldham in particular, that Britain was facing two perils: first, an external threat to its very existence; and the second 'that we may lack the spiritual purpose and power to make anything of victory if it is granted to us.'⁸¹

It can be argued that the war strengthened the Christian idea of a national 'rebirth,' and a strategy of how to use the war to initiate this 'birth' was extensively articulated in and through the Council. Oldham's idea of a 'militant democracy' was radical but was now well received by his colleagues. The British people had to 'become possessed of a new spirit in the same way as Germany has become possessed by the evil spirit of Nazism,' Oldham suggested. It was observed that the formation of the party in Communism, fascism and Nazism brought new vitality into the national life, and churchmen, led by Oldham, were considering if not certain elements characteristic of the party were pertinent to the ecumenical purpose, although the church would not aim at exercising direct political power. But, as Oldham stressed to his colleagues in CCFCL: 'There is little hope of achieving a Christian Order of society without a body of people animated by a common purpose, committed to certain principles, striving to translate them into action, and keeping them in focus of

⁸¹ CERC CCFCL 2/1/2, Memorandum prepared by Oldham to the CCFCL, July 5, 1940

public interest.’⁸² By 1940, the revolutionary character of Oldham’s ideas was becoming quite clear.

The pro-active tone used within the Council extended into the proposed methods of achieving the transformation. Education was once again targeted as a crucial area for Christian influence. For some time the ‘problem of the universities’ had been considered critical in ecumenical circles. Teachers in schools and universities had, it was felt, ceased to ‘convey their students a faith of life.’⁸³ It was therefore proposed to form active Christian cells among headmasters, headmistresses and schoolteachers to ensure Christian influence. Propaganda was to be used through close touch with editors of daily newspapers and there needed to be, it was agreed, the closest possible collaboration with BBC, which proved doable, particularly after a Council member, Eric Fenn, was hired to work for its Religious Department in 1939.

The ‘infiltration’ was to continue into the Social Service agencies, to those in leading positions throughout the country in industry, commerce and finance and to leaders and movements among the labouring classes. As Oldham noted, ‘We have to deal with the new phenomenon of a mass society and to influence such a society it is necessary to avail ourselves of the powerful new social techniques and of a growing psychological knowledge.’⁸⁴ Oldham’s ideas of the role of Christianity in mass society, however, as we shall see, became highly contested after WWII when American Protestantism forcefully began advocating a different approach. We shall return to this in chapters four and five.

⁸² CERC CCFCL 2/1/2, Memorandum prepared by Oldham to the CCFCL, July 5, 1940

⁸³ CERC CCFCL 2/1/2, Minutes of fifth CCFCL meeting, July 9, 1940

⁸⁴ CERC CCFCL 2/1/2, Memorandum prepared by Oldham to the CCFCL, July 5, 1940

The Council on Christian Faith and the Common Life

The strategies of the Council on Christian Faith and the Common Life (CCFCL) are informative when attempting to understand the mindset of its members and the future institutional role they saw for organized Christianity. This section will therefore examine the strategies and methods now deployed by the Council and its leading entrepreneurs.

At the beginning of the Council's existence in 1938 it was felt that time was not 'ripe for something like the Federal Council of Churches,' and this was not what the founding members were aiming at either. The individuals who initially drafted the basis of CCFCL saw more benefit in a Council working behind the scenes, which would support the initiative of its individual members and prepare the ground for action by others with minimum of publicity for the Council itself. The Churches were aware that they could not authoritatively alter the minds of the British, or dictate any specific action: the days when the Church held such powers had long passed. Instead the Council planned to use the back door. If it could secure enough representatives in all sectors of society, it could, the argument went, change society. A new society presupposed, as described, a fundamental change of outlook, which could take place only in the minds of individuals.⁸⁵ It could be brought into existence 'only if many hundreds of thousands of persons, up and down the country,' were 'working in their own spheres for its realization.' It was deemed impossible for any central body to reach the mass of the population directly; the operation through Christian cells was therefore deployed. This, it was felt, could best be done by meeting with people in

⁸⁵ CERC CCFCL 1/1/2, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches, the conference met at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 14 January 1938

small groups.⁸⁶ Meeting people in small groups was precisely what The Churches' Commission on International Friendship and Social Responsibility was doing. The Commission, which, as explained above, had been set up set up in 1939 was an amalgamation of the Christian Social Council and the British Christian Council to work in collaboration with CCFCL on 'ground level.'⁸⁷

The united British Christians, and the CCFCL in particular, were moving into the political arena, and they were very much aware of it. They were developing 'a new technique,' something that was not specifically Christian in the sense that it was equally applicable in secular spheres but which, if it was a sound technique, might 'make possible certain things in the life of the churches which would be impossible apart from it.' It would enlist cooperation of the Christian laity who carried most weight in the councils of the nation, in a large variety of quarters. The envisaged Christian movement, which would rise from CCFCL's effort, was hoped, then, to challenge radically the conventional ideas and practices of society.⁸⁸ Following the device that 'a recall to religion is of necessity a recall to politics,' CCFCL and CCIFSR worked intensely to influence political decision-making, and various groups, which might be labelled pressure groups, were formed on the initiative of Council and Commission members.⁸⁹ Oldham and the CCFCL were essentially becoming norm entrepreneurs to modernize the churches in Britain, and to prevent the secular arm of

⁸⁶ CERC CCFCL 1/1/2, Minutes of conference convened at Lambeth Palace to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches, the conference met at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 14 January 1938

⁸⁷ The primary aim of the Commission was to help educate the members of the churches in the international and social responsibility of the Churches (with particular reference to the subjects of the Oxford Conference of 1937), and to transmit to the constituencies of the Churches the experience gained in the new activities initiated by the Council and by these means to facilitate united Christian action. The Council worked in two departments concerned respectively with international friendship and social responsibility; hence, it had a national and a transnational arm. See CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, Report of the Council on Christian Faith and Common Life to the National Assembly of the Church of England for year April 1938 to April 1939

⁸⁸ CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, Report of the Council on Christian Faith and Common Life to the National Assembly of the Church of England for year April 1938 to April 1939

⁸⁹ CERC CCFCL 2/2/1, Minutes of Council meeting, memorandum B, November 10, 1938

the state from monopolizing ‘society,’ as this could mean either the loss of traction in that sphere, or the possible arrival of authoritarianism in Britain, or both. It becomes clear, as Hastings notes as well, that the very considerable institutional achievements of this time had roots in an ecumenical more than denominational context.⁹⁰ Ecumenical leaders – Oldham, Paton, and Temple – were becoming ecumenical statesmen of Protestant Europe, creating the structures for the church of the future.⁹¹

This chapter has examined the ecumenical conference of Life and Work held in Oxford in 1937, as well as the outcome of the conference in Britain; the British Council of Churches and its other preparatory committees. It was stressed that the Church of England’s role at the conference was very significant and paved the ground for further autonomous activities for the British churches in the UK and transnationally. The Church of England had thereby effectively set in train a development towards more autonomy for itself. It had also established a Christian framework within which it could address the challenges of Communism and fascism.

In the next chapter focus will turn to the role of the Church of England during WWII. It will be examined to what extent the war and the 1941 alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union altered the track on which the Church of England found itself after the 1937 Oxford Conference.

⁹⁰ Hastings (1986), 302

⁹¹ William Temple, Joseph Oldham, and William Paton are introduced in chapter 1

Chapter 3: The Church at War

In the previous chapter the Church of England's engagement in the ecumenical movement in Britain in the late 1930s was examined. It was stressed that the church now, through newly established ecumenical channels in Britain, sought to strengthen its influence in British society and beyond, since it viewed modernisation of the state, as well as totalitarianism, as dangers to its own position. This strengthening was to be achieved through a new form of mingling with the lower classes of society, where industry chaplains and local study groups were inserted to increase awareness of Christianity in society. At the parliamentary level, increased church influence would be ensured by attempts increasingly to impose Christian perspectives on government decision making; a large number of the political elite and public servants would be coopted to serve in ecumenical as well as the Church of England committees and Christians should seek political influence to the widest possible extent. Finally, the World Council of Churches (WCC) 'in formation,' was established with offices in Geneva and London to coordinate transnational efforts to strengthen the ecumenical agenda, and attempt to give a voice to united Christian responses to international conflict.

This chapter will examine how the new and practical political aspirations of the Church fared once the nation entered WWII. Particular attention will be paid to the collaboration between the British Churches and the Religious Division of Whitehall's Ministry of Information to formulate policies and propaganda primarily directed towards the Soviet Union and the US, but also to the international community as a whole. It will be noted that, although the Church of England had, as concluded in the previous chapter, shaped its own attitude towards nazism and

Communism in accordance with ecumenical thinking, it was influenced by Whitehall's war strategies.

The particularly difficult task of navigating between the Soviet Union, Germany and the US after the establishment of the military alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union in 1941 will be the main area of focus, as will the churches' response to the highly political role in which the Church of England found itself. The responses and initiatives of the British churches, drawn from the insights and influence they gained from their important role in Religious Division, will be looked at and connections made between the last chapter on the establishment of the British Council of Churches, to see how the initiatives of the churches in the political arena reflected their aims related to the united Christian Church, and the envisaged new Christian agenda for Europe as developed at the Oxford Conference in 1937. It will also be seen how the churches used their own global ecumenical network to play into the political arena and influenced the course of events in the war between 1941 and 1943, where the churches were drawn increasingly into the planning of peace and post-war reconstruction. The question of how the relationship between church and state in Britain was affected by the events of WWII will be reflected upon in the final section of the chapter.

This chapter will thus give insights into the role of church-church and church-state relations in Britain during WWII and the agenda-setting powers of the churches in this intense period of British wartime politics. It will be argued that the Church of England saw the war as an opportunity to further its own ecumenical agenda. In the eyes of the leaders of the ecumenical movement the War should ultimately be perceived as a war of faiths; between orderly and Christian societies on one side and pagan and atheist ones on the other. Hence the distinction between Communism and

nazism was not profoundly important from a Christian perspective as both systems conflicted with the form of organized Christianity of which the Church of England perceived itself as a leader; when distinctions were made between nazism and Communism this was largely, to the churches, a political distinction. The chapter will also show, however, an increasing divide between the Anglo-American section and the Continental European section of the ecumenical movement. This division, as we shall see, came largely from the forceful effort of American Protestants, led by John Foster Dulles, to increase the Churches' focus on international organisation and individual liberties, a focus which largely turned attention away from Europe.

Looking at these perspectives, it is hoped that the chapter will give insights on the Church of England's institutional and moral incentives to engage politically in the war and formulate what might be called a very early Cold War policy of the Churches in Britain. It will hopefully become clear that it was the early ecumenical resistance against secularism and totalitarian states, which helped shaped the Church of England's anti-Communist strategy, and that the process of formulating this strategy took place in an important interchange of ideas between influential individuals, nationally and internationally, to shape and influence key institutions in Britain and abroad, in the church sphere and beyond.

The ambitious ecumenical agenda, which was agreed upon by a world-wide Christian community of Churches at Oxford in 1937 was soon to be shaken by international events at the end of the decade. In September 1939 Britain declared war on Germany. Appeasement now came to an end and Britain entered into the so-called phoney war, which lasted until Germany overran Denmark and Norway in 1940.¹ In

¹ The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, believed that appeasement was the best way to avoid war with Germany. This meant that he was prepared to agree to Hitler's demands, in the hope that this might help secure peace. Chamberlain, and the prime ministers of France and Italy, agreed to sign the Munich Agreement in September 1938, which gave Germany parts of Czechoslovakia in

May 1940 British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned and gave room for the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill to lead the battle ahead, just at the moment when Germany invaded Belgium and Holland and broke through the French lines at Sedan.

Italian leader Benito Mussolini committed Italy to the war on Hitler's side. In May 1940 German forces pushed back the French army and in June Philippe Pétain, at this point head of the French government, handed over the north of the country to German occupation. The south was then to be ruled by a puppet government in Vichy.²

Hitler occupied much of Western Europe, and Britain was by now desperate to have the US join the war. In July the Battle of Britain, the air campaign waged against Britain by the German Luftwaffe, was launched and in September the airfield attacks reached London. The continuing German bombing of Britain, also known as 'the blitz' went on from the summer of 1940 and for most of the first half of 1941. Britain, however, was never invaded. Having survived the fall of France and the blitz, and with Churchill behind the wheel, the nation was committed to nothing short of victory, however unrealistic this goal seemed to have been at the time.

The fall of France and the blitz had an effect on public opinion in the US. Roosevelt could now speak openly of 'Britain as America's front line of defence' and by early 1941 the Lend-Lease Act allowed the president to loan or lease weapons to countries whose survival he thought necessary for America's defence.³

In June 1941 Hitler launched his plan 'Operation Barbarossa' as part of his 'Generalplan Ost' to secure 'Lebensraum' for the Germans. The non-aggression Pact

return for peace. Source: David Reynolds, *The Long Shadow – The Great War and the Twentieth Century*, Simon and Schuster 2013

² David Reynolds (2013), (e-book), location 4675

³ David Reynolds (2013), (e-book), location 4943; Loewenheim, Langley and Jonas (eds.), *Roosevelt and Churchill. Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, Barrie & Jenkins, 1975, 80

between Germany and the Soviet Union had been broken, and this meant a turn in Britain's fortune; the basis for an Anglo-Soviet alliance was established. Japan's attack on the US Naval Airbase at Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941 then enrolled the US fully into the war.

Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union could not be defeated; Britain was finally on the winning side. There was now a hardening of the Allied war aims into one of unconditional surrender, which became Allied policy at the Casablanca Conference between Churchill and Roosevelt in January 1943. The Anglo-Soviet alliance was a necessity to get Britain on the winning side in the war. The alliance, however, put the Church of England in a challenging position between its national loyalty and the anti-Communist and anti-totalitarian line to which it had committed itself in the ecumenical movement. It is to this dilemma that we shall turn next.

The Church of England, the Anglo-Soviet alliance and the development of British-American Peace Aims

In this section the role of the British churches during WWII will be examined. The way in which the churches collaborated with the British Ministry of Information (MoI) and the British Foreign Office (FO) to articulate the British alliance with Russia from 1941 will be investigated as well as the churches' effort to secure a wartime alliance with the US.⁴ The churches' engagement in the planning of post-war peace was intimately linked to this and will be addressed in the chapter as well.

⁴ The Ministry of Information was re-established with the outbreak of war, following a break in its existence during the interwar years. The Ministry's function was to promote the national case to the public at home and abroad in time of war by issuing national propaganda and controlling news and information. Harold Macmillan was appointed Minister in 1939. Source: United Kingdom National Archives, Kew, henceforth UKNA, CAB 16/127, Report of the MOI Planning Subcommittee, July 27, 1936

From the beginning of the war in 1939 religion had been used as a theme by Germany.⁵ To meet the need for religious propaganda, the British government established a Religious Division under the Ministry of Information in 1939. The Division initially had a Protestant and a Roman Catholic Section, and later on in 1939, when a need for directing British propaganda towards the Orthodox churches in the Balkans increased, a section for the Orthodox and Old Catholic churches was established as well.⁶ By 1941 the Religious Division had worked effectively to establish itself. It now served the Ministry, and thus took part in defining new opportunities; often with an eye to the Church's own agenda.

The Religious Division largely consisted of coopted churchmen. The Church of England Council on Foreign Relations had been a good source from which to recruit, and which, willingly, offered its members to the Ministry.⁷ Churchmen were also recruited from other denominations, the most influential being William Paton of the Presbyterian Church of England.⁸ The active role of churchmen in the Religious Division was considered an advantage by the churches. This position enabled them to follow closely government policies and to have some control over the information used for propaganda.

The 1941 alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union proved a difficult challenge to the Religious Division. It was felt that the religious record of the Soviet Union hampered 'the whole spiritual case' of the Division.⁹ The government,

⁵ Dianne Kirby, 'From Bridge to Divide: East West Relations and Christianity during the Second World War and Early Cold War,' *The International History Review*, January 2014, 1-24

⁶ The British National Archives (UKNA), INF, 1/398, 'Memorandum on contact with Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches, October 25, 1939

⁷ See chapter 1 for details regarding the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations

⁸ Paton was also secretary of the International Missionary Council (IMC) from 1927-1943 and in 1938 he became general secretary of the provisional committee of the World Council of Churches. Paton was highly active in the ecumenical Movement. Source: Margaret Sinclair, *William Paton*, London: SCM Press 1949. For more detail on William Paton see also chapter 1

⁹ UKNA, INF, 1/790, Memorandum: 'The Question of Religion in Russia – its bearing on Allied propaganda', July 30, 1941

however, needed the help of Church leaders to strengthen the claim that they were fighting against Germany to preserve the Christian foundation of European civilization. The challenge was how to justify this claim after entrance into an alliance with the world's largest atheist power, and, not least, how to handle German propaganda pointing at precisely this discrepancy. The FO and the MoI hoped for religious improvements in the Soviet Union, which, it was felt, would be tremendously helpful in justifying the British war effort to the international community, even if this seemed subversive to the Soviet Union itself. The Ministry had the vague impression that religious conditions in the Soviet Union had improved in recent years, but generally lacked information. The task of getting information was, therefore, essential.

With the claim to be rescuing the Orthodox Church from the atheist Soviet regime, Germany had already made many efforts to win over the Orthodox clergy in the Balkans and elsewhere. This, along with the fact that the Soviet Union too needed to maintain good relations with Britain and the US, had put pressure on the Soviet government to alter its religious policies. By 1941, therefore, every step taken by the Soviet government and the Russian Orthodox Church was carefully followed and considered by the MoI, the FO and the churches in Britain and USA. The MoI actively sought evidence of the improved religious situation in the Soviet Union, but encouraging news from Sir Stafford Cripps, then the British Ambassador in Moscow, did not arrive. On the contrary Cripps reported to MoI that opposition to religion was still notoriously a part of the Soviet ideology. He also warned against propaganda, which would make the religious situation look better than it really was. 'The Soviets would not thank us for such propaganda since they have no more wish to renounce their principles than have His Majesty's Government to renounce theirs,' he wrote to

the MoI in July 1941.¹⁰ Further, government orders as to what the Division was allowed to do prevented it from twisting the religious situation in Russia to look better, even if it wanted to ignore Cripps' opinion.

The basis of British cooperation with the Soviet government had been clearly stated by the Prime Minister: the Religious Division was not to imply any approval of Communist theory or practice, and certainly not in relation to religious persecution, but the present situation was not to be used to put pressure on the Soviet Union to modify its religious policy. No bulletin published by a government department should indicate critique or any detailed exposure of the Soviet policy towards religion.¹¹ Church leaders accepted the official claim that the Soviet Union was a victim of aggression, but remained worried.¹²

Then in August 1941 'Soviet War News,' published by the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy in London, produced a pamphlet on the Religious Communities in the Soviet Union. The pamphlet claimed that in the Soviet Union, religion was not only tolerated but actively supported by the government.¹³ In Britain this was considered a sign that the Soviet was now prepared to use religion in its international propaganda. Further proof seemed to materialize in 1942, when the Metropolitan Nicolai of Kiev and Galicia, during a visit to the diplomatic corps in Kuibyshev, suggested an exchange of visits between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of England. The FO was informed by the Embassy about the proposal but was advised that this should not be taken as a sign of a significant change in the relationship between the Soviet authorities and the Orthodox Church. 'Any mission

¹⁰ UKNA, INF, 1/790, Stafford Cripps to Ministry of Information, July 26, 1941

¹¹ UKNA, INF, 1/398, Functions of the Orthodox Section of the Religious Division, December 22, 1941

¹² Lambeth Palace Library and Archive (LPL), CFR/G/9/1, 'The Religious Situation in Russia,' Notes of an informal meeting of the Russia Group under Paton's initiative, held on January 27, 1942, f. 7

¹³ UKNA, INF, 1/769, 'Soviet War News' publish by the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy in London – pamphlet on Religious Communities in the Soviet Union, August 22, 1941

which comes to England' it was stated, 'will not consist of free agents, but of men who are ready, possibly with the best intentions, to use the reputation and authority of their Church for the political purposes of the Soviet government.'¹⁴ The FO nevertheless set out to examine the political aspects of an exchange and consulted the Americans.

It should be explained here that it was an important part of the Religious Division's task to secure American support for Britain's war efforts in the US, where the influence of Christians on public opinion was considered significant. It was recognized that the USA had the largest Protestant community in the world with 75,000,000 adherents represented through over 200 denominations. Although it was well known that religion exercised a powerful influence on public opinion in the USA, the British government also knew that Americans resented propaganda from Britain. The Ministry of Information had therefore declared that 'none will be coming from this side.'

Discussions about the Soviet proposal then took place between the FO, the Ambassador to Moscow, Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, the MoI, and the Archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁵ Although it was feared that a Soviet delegation was intended as a propaganda scheme by the Soviet government itself, the FO and the MoI saw the exchange as a political opportunity. It was then planned that a delegation from the Church of England should visit Moscow in 1943. The exchange was kept secret and not even presented to CFR as it was thought that its members might question whether it was such a good idea, based on the highly political purpose of the visit.¹⁶ The visit was to be presented officially as one purely of goodwill, but behind the scenes there

¹⁴ UKNA, INF, 1/790, Baggallay on behalf of the Ambassador, British Embassy, Kuibyshev to Eden, September 20, 1942

¹⁵ UKNA, FO 371/36961, Warner to Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, 8 February, 1943

¹⁶ UKNA, INF, 1/769, Garbett to Temple, July 17, 1943

were plenty of political motives for the visit. For example, a public survey had revealed that among ‘the more intelligent members’ of all sections of the British public as many as 72% singled out Soviet treatment of religion as the main obstacle to a good understanding between the UK and the Soviet Union.¹⁷ Clearly, to win public support for the Anglo-Soviet alliance, this issue had to be addressed; re-establishing contacts between the Church of England and the Russian Orthodox Church was a good opportunity to do so.

It was Cyril Garbett, then Archbishop of York, who insisted that the delegation should consist exclusively of members of the Church of England and not an interdenominational group as was first suggested. Garbett had himself offered to go, which was considered very advantageous by the FO who applauded the adding of prestige to the exchange. But Garbett would only go if the visit was a purely Anglican enterprise.¹⁸

Contrary to Garbett who supported the political aspect of the visit, Temple tried to convince the FO to give the religious aspect of the visit more weight. He was concerned that the Church of England could become too politically involved.¹⁹ He was particularly worried that relations with the German Churches would be affected by the Church of England’s engagement in what he saw as a purely political arrangement with the Orthodox Church.²⁰ Temple was, after all, one of the driving forces in the ecumenical movement, an area to which he had long been devoted. By accepting the FO’s political line, Temple would have felt that the Church of England was taking on a great risk. Another reason for Temple’s reluctance was no doubt his own personal contacts with the Orthodox Churches. He had for long had a deep

¹⁷ LPL, Temple 57, Martin to Temple, undated but mid-1943

¹⁸ UKNA, FO, 371/36961, Notes of conversation with the Archbishop of York on June 24, 1943 with regard to proposed visit of an Anglican delegation to the Orthodox Church (Waddams), June 25, 1943

¹⁹ LPL, CFR, G/6/1, Temple to Martin, May 27, 1943; see also Coupland (2006), 146

²⁰ LPL, CFR, G/6/1, Temple to Martin, April 20, 1943

interest in advancing Anglican relations with the Orthodox Church, a task he had tended to himself, as Carpenter writes, in an ‘intimate and personal way.’²¹ Although Temple did assist in preparing Garbett for his meeting with the Russian Orthodox Church, he might have felt that much would be lost if the meeting turned out to be a failure. Finally, having the Church of England work as the prolonged arm of the FO and MoI did not quite reflect the spirit of increased Christian influence in moral and political matters envisaged by Temple. In this case the Church was, rather, running a political errand for Whitehall, which, apart from the implications in itself, obviously compromised the Church’s own anti-Communist line.

The Church was, it was now clear, still constrained by its embedded role in the British state, and when called to support Whitehall’s foreign policy it did not openly question if it should. Temple was, it seems fair to conclude, torn between what Hasting has called his ‘profound national loyalties,’ and considerations for what he saw as the best hope for a more peaceful future, namely the long-term ecumenical goals of the churches. But, as noted in chapter 1, Temple was not the sort of Archbishop to openly oppose government policies.²²

In this situation, Temple, and his colleagues in CFR decided to make the best of the situation. There were, after all, opportunities for the Church in the Anglo-Soviet alliance; new information could now be obtained about conditions in the Soviet Union, and renewed contacts could be made with the Russian Orthodox Church, an area, which the British and American Churches were keen to pursue.²³ So,

²¹ Carpenter, E., *Archbishop Fisher – His Life and Time*, Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1991, 473-474

²² See the section on William Temple in chapter 1; see also Adrian Hastings, ‘William Temple, 1881-1944. Archbishop of Canterbury,’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/36454?docPos=6>

²³ The Anglo-American relationship to the Orthodox Church will be looked at in more detail in chapter 7

it might be claimed that the Church was engaged in a trade-off with Whitehall, which it reluctantly accepted. Political influence came with a price.

On 19 September 1943, the Archbishop of York, Cyril Foster Garbett, flew to Moscow accompanied by Herbert Waddams, and Francis House, the Overseas Assistant of the Religious Broadcasting Department of the BBC. For the British government it was still paramount to keep the Soviet Union in the war. It was therefore hoped that Garbett and his team's visit would have a positive effect on the public, at home and abroad.

Garbett and his team's visit to Moscow received as much press coverage as hoped for, and the visit sparked new optimistic tones on the religious situation in the Soviet Union. The *New York Times* reported that Stalin had now approved the calling of a congress in a step advancing reconciliation of the Russian State and the church 'estranged for twenty-five years since the revolution.'²⁴ 'New signs of amity' were reported between UK and the Soviet Union on the 'controversial matter of freedom of religion,' as the Archbishop of York had arrived in Moscow for a 'strictly ecclesiastical and non-political' visit' to which 'neither the Soviet government nor the British government' was 'officially linked up.'²⁵ It was also noted that this was a sign that the Church of England was relaxing its conservative pre-war condemnation against materialism, that the Archbishop of Canterbury now put the 'full weight of the Anglican Church behind the move to establish friendly relations between the Church of England and Russian churches,' and that the Anglican Church had had 'a liberal attitude toward Russia for some time.'²⁶ *The Times* similarly reported that the

²⁴ 'Russian Church Acts: Bishops to Meet Within Week to elect a Patriarch,' *New York Times*, 7 September, 1943

²⁵ 'Prelate of York visiting Moscow: Liberal Archbishop goes to the Soviet on invitation of Orthodox spokesman,' *New York Times*, 16 September, 1943

²⁶ 'Canterbury hails bonds to Russians,' *New York Times*, 18 September, 1943; 'Archbishop of York's Visit to Russia,' *The Times*, 18 September, 1943

Archbishop's visit 'prepared the way for other fruitful contacts in the future' and that it demonstrated 'the strength and sincerity of Russian purpose to sweep aside ancient prejudices and draw closer the bonds of friendship between the two countries.'²⁷

The FO was content with the outcome of the visit. It was noted that the visit, helped along by extensive publicity, had had the hoped effect on public opinion.²⁸ The positive stress on religious ties between Russia and Britain enabled the British government to justify the Anglo-Soviet war alliance without endorsing the Communist regime. It also effectively dealt with German propaganda. In spite of Temple's worries, in the Church of England itself the visit was thought of as a success. A visit from the Anglican Church, it was felt, would make it very difficult for Stalin to undo the recent concessions to the Church, especially the official reestablishment of the Patriarchate, which had happened only a few days prior to the visit.²⁹ It now seemed to be expected, rather than hoped, that transnational relations would be established with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Garbett managed his double role well. In his Presidential address to the Convocation of York he stressed that the visit was primarily religious.³⁰ In practice, however, he had done everything the Foreign Office and Ministry of Information had asked for and made sure, in line with government policy, to make a distinction between the Russian nation and the Communist regime. Garbett, however, at one point stated that 'in speaking privately I have made it very plain that the state is still atheistic.'³¹

²⁷ 'The Russian Church,' *The Times*, 17 September, 1943

²⁸ Dianne Kirby, 'The Archbishop of York and Anglo-American Relations During the Second World War and Early Cold War, 1942-1955,' *The Journal of Religious History*, 23, 3, 1999, 327-345, passim

²⁹ LPL, CFR, G/6/1, document titled 'Summary of discussion,' undated but immediately after Garbett's visit to USSR in 1943

³⁰ Kirby (1999), passim

³¹ UKNA, FO, 371/36963, Garbett to Warner, November 23, 1943

The Russia Group

The alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union led William Paton in 1942 to establish the 'Russia Group.' Garbett, who was well informed on issues of government policies, and who was at this point Bishop of Winchester, was appointed chairman. The establishment of the Group was based on some uneasiness among ecumenical churchmen about the British endorsement of the Soviet Union. The matter, it was felt, had to be investigated from a church perspective. Lacking other means to influence the situation, the Church once again established an agency to think and investigate.

The Russia Group consisted of members who participated in their private capacity and the overlap with individuals who worked with the Council on Christian Faith and the Common Life (CCFCL) was, expectedly, significant. Paton had two practical aims with the group; first, to get facts and information about the religious situation in the Soviet Union, and second; to educate the British people on the whole range of Soviet relationships, particularly from the standpoint of the churches.³² Although CCFCL members recognised the strategic necessity of the Anglo-Soviet alliance, it was agreed that the alliance would be tolerated only for as long as it was absolutely necessary. The group agreed that action to correct public impressions on the Soviet Union should be taken as soon as circumstances would allow it.

Paton wanted to collect a number of people who had a connection with the 'Russian problem,' and who were 'deeply concerned about the religious aspect of it and who, while 'wishing heartily to take full advantage of such new opportunities for intercourse between Britain and Russia as may open up, definitely desire that the

³² LPL, CFR/G/9/1, Paton to Williams, June 24, 1942, f. 12

religious issue shall be fairly faced and accurately understood.³³ Paton targeted the Religious Division of MoI for this task. The Group was not, in the first place, to oppose official government policy. Only when sufficient information on the situation in Russia had been collected and with an eye to the development of the war, would a public statement be considered.

In addition to the practical aims of the group, as mentioned above, the Russia Group considered whether it was possible actually to influence the Soviet government to improve religious conditions in the Soviet Union. It was hoped that the UK-US-USSR alliance would bring about positive change in the Soviet Union, particularly after the War; if the Soviet government was to be drawn into the wider planning of the reconstruction of Europe it would, it was hoped, become more in line with Western thinking. It was also hoped that the British and American governments would put pressure on the Soviet government to increase religious freedom, although they knew in 1942 that this was against FO policy. A discouraging message was also delivered to the group when members of the Russia Group met with former British Ambassador in Moscow, Sir Stafford Cripps in 1942.³⁴ His message was that Christian intervention in Soviet religious affairs would not be encouraged and neither would any attempt from the churches to interfere with government negotiations regarding post-war planning.³⁵

After Garbett and his team's visit to the Soviet Union the Russia Group was dissolved. Attention was turned instead to the US and the question of peace aims. Garbett was now requested by Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador to Washington

³³ LPL, CFR/G/9/1, Paton to Waddams, July 1, 1942, f. 14

³⁴ Sir Stafford Cripps (1889-1952) was appointed by Churchill to serve as British Ambassador to Moscow from 1940-1942. He was succeeded by Sir Archibald Clark Kerr (1882-1951) who held the post from 1942 until 1946

³⁵ Dianne Kirby (1999), *passim*

and Brendan Bracken, now the Minister of Information, to visit the US.³⁶ As this has already been comprehensively dealt with by Kirby, the focus here will turn instead to the Peace Aims Group (PAG).

Anglo-American collaboration and the Peace Aims Group

After the defeat of France in June 1940, for many months Britain was primarily concerned with survival, rather than reconstruction and the possible shape of the post-war world. Britain also needed American aid, not only to pursue the war; but also to rebuild afterwards.

An alliance between Britain and the US was considered the only solution to the war. Not only because of American economic and military power, but because there was an overlap between American and British ideals and outlook. Although Continental Europe had the potential to form a cultural community to which Britain would have ties, it was felt that the continent would be too weak and divided to be a viable cultural or political unit.³⁷ The US, then, had to be persuaded to form an alliance with Britain.

In September 1943 the Minister Without Portfolio in Churchill's War Cabinet, Arthur Greenwood, declared that the time was ripe to employ various media propaganda for what he referred to as 'the end.' The growing interest at home and in the USA for peace aims, he declared, was now to be met. The theme of the peace aims would be democracy; reconstruction propaganda should now be closely knit to this theme. The propaganda task was to 'continuously connect defeat of the destructive assault of what we have and the story of how we won it' with the future extension of freedom and security. This should all, he declared, be related to the

³⁶ Dianne Kirby (1999), *passim*

³⁷ Philip Coupland, *Britannia, Europa, Christendom. British Christians and European Integration*, New York: Palgrave, 2006, 47

Atlantic Charter. In this context it was considered important to show social improvements in Britain and to contrast this to Hitler's order. Propaganda should aim at discussion and debate to give room for reconstruction from below - the 'plain man' should speak.³⁸ William Paton had as early as 1940 started his own initiative to formulate peace aims. At this point in time, the American public was still largely hostile to British propaganda. Roosevelt had sympathy for the British case but it was an election year and the mood of the public could not be ignored.

The sub-committee of CCFCL on ecumenical relations, out of which the PAG was born, met to consider a call on the British government for action. In the first place, this was particularly a consequence of the European blockade as it was felt unreasonable to 'lightly inflict untold suffering on millions of guiltless men and women' without a word about what Britain was hoping to achieve with the war, not least in Europe.³⁹ German anti-British propaganda was, as described above, very active and the ecumenical sub-committee felt that a note of comfort to Allied nations hit by the blockade would be a small but helpful step to minimize the effect of German propaganda.⁴⁰

On the government side, representatives of the American and Religious Divisions of MOI, on July 4 1940, decided to get Henry Pitney Van Dusen and his group to project a positive image of the British Churches in America.⁴¹ The group

³⁸ UKNA, INF, 1/785, Home Planning Committee, Publicity for Reconstruction, a note by Mrs. Hamilton, September 18, 1941

³⁹ Church of England Record Centre (CERC) CCFCL 2/3/1, Memorandum by Oakeshott, June 1940

⁴⁰ The sub-committee on ecumenical relations was formed by British members serving on the Provisional Council of WCC and was to report to BCC. Members were: the Archbishop of York, Aubrey, Dr. Barbour, George Bell, Cockburn, Newton Flew, Archbishop Germanos, professor L. Hodgson, Joseph Oldham, Mr. Moberly, Mr. Carter, and Thompson Elliott. William Paton held the secretaryship

⁴¹ UKNA, INF, 1/775, Report of discussion between Sir Frederic Whyte and Professor Basil Mathews of American Division, and Maclennan, Martin, Hope and Williams of the Religious Division of MoI, July 4, 1940; Pit Van Dusen was an American Theologian who worked closely with Dulles and Adams Brown in the American section of the ecumenical movement, see, e.g., John Nurser, *For all People and all Nations. Christian Churches and Human Rights*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005

referred to was the American Commission to Study the Bases of a Just and Durable Peace, led primarily by Van Dusen and John Foster Dulles.⁴² The group, it was recognised, and a large number of influential friends in the leadership of the American Protestant Churches, had already been generous with money, time, energy and guidance on the American policy of the Religious Division and MOI.⁴³

Hugh Martin, Director of the Religious Division in the MoI between 1939 and 1943, turned his attention to peace aims as well and felt that the changing war situation called for a new propaganda approach.⁴⁴ Men's minds were now on the post-war issues. Even from the point of view of keeping men efficiently in the war, he felt, the government now had to talk largely of post-war terms.⁴⁵ This was true, he claimed, whether concerns were with keeping people in good heart at home or with securing the continued whole-hearted cooperation of Allies. The Religious Division should therefore now aim to show the religious world that British Churches were equally determined to win a complete military victory and establish a more just, free, and peaceful world. This was of course in line with the Casablanca Declaration agreed upon by Churchill and Roosevelt in January 1943, and the now official doctrine of unconditional surrender.⁴⁶ It was now important that the Religious Division was keeping up-to-date the story of religious persecution, to remind people of the kind of enemy the Allies had to face and as a counter to what was considered premature peace

⁴² For detailed information on John Foster Dulles see chapter 2, footnote 28

⁴³ UKNA INF 1/775, Memorandum: The BIS and religious organization in USA (Martin), November 24, 1941

⁴⁴ Hugh Martin (1890-1964); ecumenical student leader and publisher. Martin chaired the preparatory committee of Temple's COPEC initiative, which, it can be argued, initiated new attitudes to social affairs and politics in British church life. Hugh Martin persuaded the Student Christian Movement to establish its publications department as a separate limited company, to be known in 1929 as SCM Press. After the outbreak of war Martin became director of the religious division in the Ministry of Information (1939-43). He returned to the SCM Press as managing director in 1943, and succeeded William Paton, who died in that year, as Free Church leader of the newly formed British Council of Churches. Source: Cecil Northcott, 'Martin, Hugh (1890-1964),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/34905>

⁴⁵ UKNA, INF, 1/117, Martin to Gates, August 13, 1943

⁴⁶ Reynolds (2013)

moves. It also involved the introduction of a new emphasis on reconstruction. The Religious Division should now present what responsible leaders and representative bodies in the churches were saying about post-war plans. Other nations, Martin claimed, were longing to hear about Britain's intentions when victory was won. In the total answer to this question, Martin stated, the Church should not be left out. Religious circles throughout the world, but especially in USA and Latin America, were not only intensely interested in peace prospects and reconstruction, but also anxious.⁴⁷

The Peace Aims Group held their first meeting in January 1941 to consider a strategy for proposing a document on peace aims. The group considered itself to be strictly informal, and, as a first thing they wanted to put together Church leaders with Chatham House, and the British think tank Political and Economic Planning (PEP) to think about peace aims.⁴⁸ That the group strongly resembled a pressure group was acknowledged by Paton.⁴⁹

Protestant American aims, as represented by Van Dusen and Dulles, were intended to alter American public opinion towards the role it should take in international politics. The American public did not at this time have particular interest in Nazi Germany; neither was it in favour of American intervention in another European war. Since the churches were among the most influential institutions in American society, it was believed that religion could play a decisive role in influencing American public opinion. The American Commission to Study the Bases

⁴⁷ UKNA, INF, 1/117, Martin to Gates, August 13, 1943

⁴⁸ Members at this point were: Archbishop of Canterbury (chair), M.E. Aubrey, the Rev. Dr. S.M. Berry, the Very Rev. Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn, the Rev. Dr. A.C. Craig, the Rev. W.T. Elmslie, the Rev. J.E. Fenn, Mr. Kenneth Grubb, Dr. A.D. Lindsay, Mr. Dennis Routh, professor A.J. Toynbee, the Rev. J. Pitt Watson, Sir Alfred Zimmern, Rev. Dr. W. Paton (secretary), professor John Baillie, the Bishop of Chichester, Mr. A.D.K. Owen, Sir John Hope Simpson, and professor R.D. Whitehorn

⁴⁹ LPL, Temple 57, Paton to Temple, December 23, 1942

of a Just and Durable Peace (CJDP) itself was not without influence, e.g., its first book 'A Just and Durable Peace' had a run of 450,000 copies.⁵⁰

Van Dusen was already an active collaborator with MOI, and was a leader in the WCC debates on peace aims throughout the war. He was also well acquainted with British Church leaders, with whom he had collaborated in the ecumenical work before the war, most specifically at the Oxford Conference. Van Dusen was also involved, via his involvement in the American 'Century Group,' in developing the idea, which became the Lend-Lease (or destroyers-for-bases).⁵¹ According to Heather Warren, it was the Century Group, which persuaded the British Ambassador to Washington, Lord Lothian, to recommend the idea to Whitehall;⁵² Van Dusen and Dulles were indeed highly influential individuals.

During a meeting between Dulles and PAG in Oxford in October 1941, Dulles explained that the peace aims were of great importance with regard to the USA: first because the Americans needed a clearer idea about the War in order to become inclined to enter it, therefore peace aims had to come before war aims. Second, a positive policy would be necessary to draw the US out of isolationist policies.⁵³ Britain would never get American co-operation in Europe 'on the basis of holding Germany down,' Dulles explained.⁵⁴ The best way to deal with Germany, he continued, was to encourage 'every possible separatist tendency', which had not been aimed at in the last war because of the policy of reparations.⁵⁵

Due to the American public's dislike of British propaganda, it was agreed that a campaign would have to be covert, informal, and based on friendship ties between

⁵⁰ Philip Coupland, (2006), 56

⁵¹ Coupland (2006), 52. See also Heather A. Warren, *Theologians of a New World Order: Reinhold Niebuhr and the New Christian Realists, 1920-1948*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997, 96-97

⁵² Warren (1997), 97

⁵³ Coupland (2006), 57

⁵⁴ UKNA, INF, 1/399, Notes from conversation between Law and Dulles (Law), July 23, 1942

⁵⁵ Ibid

Britain and the US. The aim was to create some form of expression which would ‘commit the US beyond the point to which (...) the political parties would commit the nation at the moment.’⁵⁶ A joint statement between American and British Protestants was considered appropriate to meet this aim. The American Protestants saw the proposed joint statement on peace aims as intimately connected with the question of American policy in the post-war period, the importance of which was fully clear to the PAG in Britain. But although Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, then the British ambassador in Moscow, had told Paton that he urged the Group to ‘go as far’ as it possibly could ‘to meet the Americans,’ the PAG had difficulties accepting the American drafts, particularly on issues concerning the colonies.⁵⁷

The final joint statement, which was drafted by Temple, was published in April 1943 and was considered a success by churchmen and government alike; the statement had managed to create a perception of a common Anglo-American mission in the post-war world. It should be noted here, that the 1943 statement of the PAG was the second public gesture in which the Church of England stepped back from the ecumenical agenda, the first having been the public endorsement of the 1941 Anglo-Soviet alliance, which, we have seen, took place in spite of some reluctance from the Church. The PAG statement, however, was supported whole-heartedly by the majority of the Church leadership. It should also be noted, that its success owed much to Paton’s pro-Protestant, and pro-American beliefs as well as to his close relationship with the American elite; but also capitalised significantly on the Church of England’s institutional advantages as a state church. The success and accuracy of the PAG statement could not have been achieved without intimate knowledge about FO and MoI thinking.

⁵⁶ LPL, Temple 57, Minutes of meeting in Peace Aims Group, February 3, 1943

⁵⁷ LPL, Temple 57, Paton to the members of the Peace Aims Group, January 27, 1943

In BCC too, the collaboration with the American Churches was strongly supported, as were American efforts to influence the war's peace aims.⁵⁸ The Executive Committee of BCC 'warmly' welcomed the statement, which was also seen as a satisfactory comment on the so called 'Six Pillars of Peace,' written by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, and published in the US in March 1943.⁵⁹ The 'Six Pillars of Peace,' was intended as a 'manifesto' for discussion throughout the churches, for submission to the US President and other political leaders.⁶⁰ The Executive Committee of BCC particularly welcomed CJD's suggestion to secure individuals everywhere the right to religious and individual liberty. Interestingly, the language had now changed from a focus on the dichotomy between state and community, and the value of the religious 'person,' to an emphasis on nations, citizens, individuals, and rights.⁶¹ We shall look more closely at this change in chapters 7 and 8.

Christian Ideas and the Future of Europe

The Anglo-American joint statement on peace aims was a great disappointment to Bishop George Bell. Not only did the statement neglect the voice of the Continental part of the ecumenical movement, it also, he felt, missed the opportunity to inform the Continent, and Germany in particular, about the Allies' post-war intentions. In August 1943 he therefore wrote a warning letter to Paton. Bell was concerned about the Free

⁵⁸ CERC, BCC Minutes and Papers. Council meetings 1942-1947, minutes of meeting held 13 April, 1943

⁵⁹ CERC, BCC Minutes and Papers. Council meetings 1942-1947, minutes of meeting held 1 October 1943

⁶⁰ The 'Six Pillars of Peace' stressed the need for a political framework for continuing collaboration of the UN and of neutral and enemy nations; supervision of economic and financial acts of national governments; the autonomy for subject people; the control of military arrangements 'everywhere' and the rights of individuals everywhere to religious and intellectual liberty. See e.g., John Nurser, 'The "Ecumenical Movement" Churches, "Global Order," and Human Rights: 1938-1948,' *Human Rights Quarterly*, 25, 4, 2003, 841-881

⁶¹ CERC, BCC Minutes and Papers. Council meetings 1942-1947, appendix to minutes of meeting held 1 October 1943 entitled 'A Christian Basis for Reconstruction,' written by the Peace Aims Group

Germany Movement and the danger looming over Europe if a clear Allied policy on Europe remained absent.⁶² The Allied attitude to the enemy nations was of supreme importance, Bell felt, and the weakness of the British and American position in not having a constructive statement on its idea of the future of Europe and of Germany in Europe had a very negative effect on this attitude.⁶³

As he had done repeatedly during the war, Bell emphasized the necessity of drawing a distinction between the Nazi regime and the German nation in order to get in contact with the German opposition and offer them an alternative. The distinction between ‘nation’ and ‘regime’ in Germany had already been made by Stalin, and this, Bell felt, had implications which ought to be made plain both to Germany and in general.

The National Committee of Free Germany, Bell explained, was rooted in Moscow and its message differed from the general terms of the Atlantic Charter and the policy of unconditional surrender. The National Committee of Free Germany was currently the most hopeful alternative to Nazism in Germany, and its aim, Bell warned, was genuine Communist penetration. If the Allies remained silent on the future of Europe, there was a danger that the Soviet Union would enter a welcoming Germany.⁶⁴

The PAG agreed to draft what was to become its second wartime statement: ‘The Future of Europe.’⁶⁵ Although Temple’s first draft met Bell’s objectives quite well by condemning the ‘Red terror’ as a possible replacement for Nazism in

⁶² The Free Germany Movement was a leftist movement with alleged ties to the Soviet Communist Party with the aim of overthrowing the Nazi regime during WWII. Source: Kai Schoenhals, *The Free Germany Movement: A Case of Patriotism or Treason?*, Praeger, 1989, passim

⁶³ LPL, Temple 57, f. 359, George Bell to Paton, August 5, 1943

⁶⁴ LPL, Temple 57, f. 359, George Bell to Paton, August 5, 1943. See also Ronald C.D. Jasper, *George Bell, Bishop of Chichester*, London: Oxford University Press, 1967; Peter Raina (ed.), *Bishop George Bell. House of Lords Speeches and Correspondence with Rudolf Hess*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2009; Peter Raina, *George Bell: The Greatest Churchman – a portrait in letters*, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 2006

⁶⁵ UKNA, INF, 1/399, Notes from conversation between Law and Dulles (Law), July 23, 1942

Germany, and labelling it as ‘the enemy of all that orderly European society considers sacred, just and worth striving for,’ and also by calling for Allied peace aims in Germany, the final version of the statement was strongly modified.⁶⁶

The statement was not published until 1944 to coincide with the invasion of occupied Europe. It was, as Coupland notes, in many ways the result of Bell’s work but it was also a disappointment to him because the statement once again emphasized the historical links between Britain and USA.⁶⁷ Instead of addressing the need for a coherent plan for Europe and Germany, the statement emphasised in more general terms the need for European governments to recognise ‘basic human liberties.’ In regard to Germany the statement stressed that although the menace of German aggression had to be removed ‘once and for all’ it was urged that ‘a mood of vengefulness (...) or to punitive measures against the entire German people’ should be resisted as it might ‘frustrate the hopes of peace and unity in Europe.’⁶⁸ The statement, however, did not offer anything specific on the Allies’ peace aims in Europe, nor did it offer any Christian perspective on what these peace aims ought to be. Although Temple had written a bold draft statement, by 1944 he was himself increasingly ill and died, unexpectedly, on 16 October 1944. Bell had now lost his most significant ally for his efforts to uphold the ecumenical agenda in Britain.

The general political agenda, however, had by now shifted to focus on the post-war world. This, as we shall see in the next chapters, was a task in which the churches still saw a major role for themselves, although a divide between the Anglo-American clergy, and the European clergy was, by the end of the war, becoming more and more visible.

⁶⁶ LPL, Temple 58, f. 372, *Thoughts on the European Situation* (Temple), Fall 1943

⁶⁷ Philip Coupland, ‘George Bell, the Question of Germany, and the cause of European unity, 1939-50, in Andrew Chandler (ed.), *The Church and Humanity, the Life and Work of George Bell*, Ashgate 2012

⁶⁸ ‘The Future of Europe,’ *The Times*, 27 March, 1944

In this chapter the beginning of the shift in the Church of England's – and BCC's – thinking on international conflict during WWII has been examined. It was noted that the 1941 Anglo-Soviet alliance posed a difficult dilemma for the Churches; on the one hand the Church of England felt an obligation to honour its national if not patriotic loyalty; on the other hand an Anglo-Soviet alliance of its very nature challenged the Church's anti-Communist and anti-totalitarian line, a line to which it had committed itself at the 1937 Oxford Conference.

The chapter has noted that the advent of war in 1939 led the British government to establish a Religious Division under its Ministry of Information and to recruit churchmen to work for the Division. The fact that key members of the Church elite served in the Ministry meant that the perspectives of Whitehall, as the dominant institution, became increasingly absorbed into the Church's thinking.

When the Church of England was given the opportunity to play a political role in MOI's Religious Division it offered itself willingly. This willingness of churchmen to serve in the Ministry was not based on national loyalty alone; it also reflected the new Christian institutional setting as envisaged by CCFCL; political influence, as we saw in chapter 2, was an important part of its legitimate, formal objective. The position of the Church within the Ministry, however, also proved difficult in practice, and Temple particularly found it difficult to support some of the political tasks which the Church was asked to carry out. This was particularly the case with the proposed Church visit to Moscow in 1943, the purpose of which was purely political. In the end, it was noted, Temple accepted the initiative and followed it up by using the opportunities of the visit to the Church's own advantage. Renewed ties with the Russian Orthodox Church were generally seen as an opportunity for the ecumenical

movement for enrolling the Orthodox Church into WCC, an opportunity seen by the Church of England, the American Churches, and the Continental Churches alike.

The uneasiness about the Anglo-Soviet alliance felt by the Church of England and BCC was addressed in the Russia Group, an unofficial inter-church body established by Paton. The Group was largely motivated by a distrust in official propaganda concerning the Soviet Union, and its aim was, therefore, to gather as much information as possible about Soviet religious conditions in order to be ready, as soon as the political climate would allow it, to correct British public opinion and demand government action. The Group, however, also hoped that collaboration between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union would gradually draw the latter closer to Britain and the US.

It was also noted that the Peace Aims Group, an informal British body consisting of both clergy and lay, and led by William Paton, worked behind the scenes to secure support and then hopefully to ensure continued American engagement in Europe after the war. Through two widely published public statements on allied peace aims and the future of Europe, the British Churches now positioned themselves alongside the American Protestant Churches, led by Dulles' influential Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, in their perspective on post-war planning. Although now ignoring the Continental part of WCC as well as British leaders such as George Bell and Joseph Oldham, who had for decades been the leading minds of modern ecumenism in Britain, the Church of England and BCC now supported the American 'pillars of peace,' which were primarily based on individual rights and international organisation.

With the death of William Temple in 1944, one of the leading forces in ecumenical thinking in Britain was lost. His death also initiated a process of change

within the Church of England leadership. The new Archbishop, Geoffrey Fisher, was now, with his visions, which were quite different to those of Temple, to lead the Church into the postwar years. 1945 brought not only a new Archbishop of Canterbury, and a new Labour government in Britain; it was also the year where the first steps were taken to establish an image of the Soviet threat in Europe. It is to the institutional implications of these events that the thesis will turn next.

Chapter 4: The Church of England in 1945

In the previous chapter the collaboration between the British churches and the Religious Division of Whitehall's Ministry of Information during WWII was examined. It was noted that the church became increasingly involved in government affairs and that a profound understanding developed between the church and the Foreign Office as they increasingly coordinated their efforts during the war. It was noted, that although the church was challenged by Britain's alliance with the Soviet Union from 1941 onwards as this cast a shadow on the Church of England's leadership role in the ecumenical movement, it nevertheless officially supported the Anglo-Soviet alliance by producing positive propaganda on the religious situation in the Soviet Union. The Church of England in return 'capitalised' on these seemingly friendly relations to the Soviet Union by attempting to strengthen its ties to the Russian Orthodox Church, which it hoped to be able to draw closer to WCC after the war. The idea to use the Orthodox Church as a door into the closed Soviet Union, and as a possible route to influence the Soviet population, had been alive within ecumenical circles since the 1937 Oxford Conference. It was also hoped that it might be possible for the US and Britain, as formal Allies, to put pressure on the Soviet government.

In this chapter the focus will shift to the Church of England's position by the end of WWII. First, it will be investigated how the Church of England handled the significant change in the church's own leadership, including that of the central church body for foreign relations, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), while at the same time managing and adapting to the change of government in Britain. Second, the chapter will look at the changes in the international situation in 1945 and investigate

how the Church of England and its key bodies CFR, the British Council of Churches (BCC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC), perceived the increasing tensions with the Soviet Union, and the transition from one enemy to another.

The military defeat of Germany in May 1945 put an end to the German threat to the security and peace of Europe, a threat that the victorious Allied powers; the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union had been determined to remove. Germany was occupied by the Allied forces and was placed under foreign political and military control. At the outset the Allied forces were determined that the solution to the German problem was to be a permanent one.¹

At the Potsdam Conference of July-August 1945, the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union confirmed the military occupation of Germany (and Berlin) through the British, American, Soviet and French Zones.² The Allied Control Council (ACC) was now the body in charge of all on-the-ground decisions affecting Germany's future. The Potsdam Agreement laid down the principles for the occupation with emphasis on demilitarization, denazification, democratisation and deindustrialisation.³ The Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) was established, which met five times between 1945 and 1947, in London (September 1945), Paris (July 1946), New York (December 1946), Moscow (April 1947), and finally in London (November-December 1947) in order to negotiate the future of Germany.

¹ Hermann Graml, *Die Alliierten und die Teilung Deutschlands 1941-1949*, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988; Wolfgang Benz, (ed.), *Deutschland unter alliierter Besatzung 1945-1949/55*, Akademie Verlag, 1999

² At the request of the Soviet Union, France was, however, not present at the Potsdam Conference. According to Anne Deighton, the Soviets feared that the presence of a third Western power might tip the balance against the Soviet Union. Source: Anne Deighton, *The Impossible Peace. Britain, the Division of Germany, and the Origins of the Cold War*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, 36

³ See, e.g., David Welch, 'Priming the Pump of German Democracy' in Ian D. Turner *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany. British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones 1945-1955* Oxford: Berg, 1989, 222; Anne Deighton, *Cold War Diplomacy: British Policy Towards Germany's Role in Europe, 1945-9*, Ian D. Turner *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany. British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones 1945-1955*, Oxford: Berg, 1989, 15ff

Peaceful collaboration between the Allies did not last for long. Shortly after the war's end, disagreement over Europe, and Germany's post-war future emerged, and the occupying powers began to seek separate solutions. German territory became de facto divided. The 'German question,' was now to dominate European politics and the Cold War in Europe for several decades to come.

In 1945, the aim of British policy in Germany was to ensure that Germany would no longer be in a position to wage war against Britain and her allies. Security was also a main concern, and the problem, as it was seen immediately after the war had to do with the inherited character of the Germans and their thirst for conquest and dominance so often demonstrated through the ages.⁴ This view was promoted by the British Lord Vansittart, and, although it gradually changed during the post-war years as the realisation of the need to have a Germany that was economically and politically viable, although it had supporters across the political spectrum in Britain, and also within the Church of England.

In Britain, Churchill's wartime coalition government was in 1945 replaced by Clement Attlee's Labour government. Labour had won an absolute majority in the House of Commons and had managed to win the wide support of the British middle class. The new Labour government was faced with tremendous tasks, both at home and abroad. On the home front, the agenda was to put an end to the social misery of the interwar years by keeping unemployment at a minimum and improving national health and housing. The coalmines, the railways and the Bank of England were now to be nationalized.⁵

⁴ Ian Turner, 'The British Occupation and Its Impact on Germany,' in Ian Turner, (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany. British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones 1945-1955*, Oxford: Berg, 1989, 4

⁵ Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity*, London: Collins, 1986, 404

The international arena in the immediate post-war situation was marked by tensions caused by the Allies' different war fortunes and peace aims. The war had brought Britain to the brink of financial disaster. The Soviet Union had suffered, but also hoped to gain by the peace. The US had suffered little and came out of the war as the dominant economic power. During the war, the US had supported British war efforts through the Lend-Lease agreement, established in 1941 and intended by Roosevelt as an American defence measure. Through Lend-Lease, the US had supplied the UK with defence articles such as munitions, food, and transport without which the UK would have been poorly equipped to play an effective role in the war. But with the conclusion of the war, Lend-Lease came to an abrupt end. Britain, however, needed to retain much of the Lend-Lease equipment for post-war use, and agreed to a loan to purchase the items and for capital purchases.⁶ This, however, did not solve Britain's post-war financial difficulties and far more substantial American support was hoped for. Britain's post-war situation was therefore characterised by a continuing quest to lobby the Americans; a task in which the churches became highly involved as well.⁷ First, however, the Church of England needed to take immediate steps to settle its own leadership after the unexpected death of Archbishop Temple in 1944.

The New Church of England Leadership

Archbishop Temple's unexpected death on 26th October, 1944 after only two and a half years as Archbishop of Canterbury was a shock to the Church of England and beyond. Temple had been admired and appreciated by lay and church people alike. He

⁶ See, e.g., David Childs, *Britain since 1945. A Political History*, London: Routledge, third edition, 1992, 22ff

⁷ Adrian Hastings (1986), 405

had also represented a national church, which was in tune with the democratic state itself and for which he had had many original and progressive ideas. Temple had, perhaps above all, contributed to the creation of a discourse for social and political change in Britain, in which Christianity was a natural part, and his personal leadership had been of paramount significance to this development. His sudden death, therefore, threw the Church of England into unexpected uncertainty about the path ahead. Succeeding Temple as Primate of all England would not be an easy task.

It was the role of the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, to appoint a new Archbishop. Three candidates were considered possible: The first was Geoffrey Fisher, who was liked by many members of the Conservative Party who were impressed by Fisher's performance as Bishop of London.⁸ The two other candidates were Cyril Garbett, who had succeeded Temple at York, and George Bell, the Bishop of Chichester. Garbett, however liked and respected he was, was getting too old for the demanding post as Archbishop. But George Bell was the perfect age for the post, and due to his position as secretary to Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury 1903 – 1928, he knew Lambeth inside out.⁹ He had also been assistant secretary at the 1930 Lambeth Conference, presided over by Archbishop Cosmo Gordon Lang. After William Temple, Bell was by many considered the most highly regarded Anglican in the international religious community.

Had Temple died one year later, and had it been Attlee, and not Churchill, who had to make the decision, it is plausible that Bell would have made it to Canterbury. But Bell had criticized the government's War policy and compared Allied war methods to those of the Axis, particularly in Allied bombing of German

⁸ Andrew Chandler and David Hein, *Archbishop Fisher, 1945-61. Church, State and World*, Surrey, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012 (e-book), location 1117 of 6068

⁹ Archbishop Davidson resigned after the Prayer Book debate in 1928. For the Prayer Book debate, see chapter 1

civilian goals. In fact, Bell knew himself that it would be unlikely for Churchill to place him in a more influential position.¹⁰

Churchill chose Geoffrey Francis Fisher, then Bishop of London, who became Archbishop of Canterbury on 2 January 1945. Fisher had a reputation as a skilled executive, and Churchill might have had the opinion that what was needed most was an outstanding administrator to manage the Church of England after the war.¹¹

The appointment of Geoffrey Fisher as Archbishop of Canterbury left vacant the important diocese of London. Owing to the chaos spurred by the war's end, it took five months to find Fisher's replacement and, as the extensive correspondence between Fisher and Churchill shows, was not without difficulties. Presumably drawing on his own experiences as Bishop of London and his own close relations with Archbishop Temple during this time, Fisher was looking for a candidate with whom he would be able to work closely and who would be able to support him at Canterbury.¹² Fisher had himself always been able to fit in with different factions of the church, Protestant and Catholic, and Fisher stressed that the new Bishop of London should, preferably, be able to balance high and low church wings within the church.¹³

¹⁰ R.C.D. Jasper, *George Bell. Bishop of Chichester*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967 285-287; see also chapter 1

¹¹ For more detailed information regarding Geoffrey Fisher see chapter 1

¹² Lambeth Palace Archives (LPL), Fisher 3, f. 320, Fisher to Bevir, 17th January, 1945

¹³ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 320, Fisher to Bevir, 17th January, 1945; The expression High Church, High Churchmen or the High Church Movements, which is still sometimes used and which also divided the church within the time frame of this thesis, refers to this particular faction of the Church of England who were against modernisation of the Church of England and what they saw as the erosion of church's traditionally privileged role in English society. This erosion, it was thought, was fuelled by developments distancing the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church, as High Churchmen in some areas supported practices from the Roman Catholic Church. High Church has traditionally been opposed to any inclusion of laymen in Church decision-making. The opposite expression Low Church refers to the faction of the Church of England who sought reform and greater liberalisation. As High Church has an Anglo-Catholic emphasis, Low Church is associated with Protestantism and Evangelicalism. Finally, the term Broad Church refers to a much broader religious liberalism inclusive of Evangelicalism.

Once again George Bell was difficult to avoid as an obvious candidate. Fisher himself recommended Bell, attempting to explain Bell's critique of the British government during the war with his 'sensitive conscience.'¹⁴ Also, the Archbishop of York, Garbett, strongly supported Bell for London, and, according to Garbett, this had been Cosmo Lang's opinion as well. To Garbett, it would be in the Church of England's best interest to have Bell at London. With his usual strategic approach to things he stressed that Bell's semi-political utterances, with which Garbett disagreed 'profoundly,' would, in two or three years, when peace had come, have been forgotten, and he would be remembered on the Continent as the man who above all others did his best for the refugees and the destitute, and urged that Britain should show mercy to Germany. This, Garbett felt, would prove to be an asset.¹⁵

George Bell was indeed widely known for his conciliatory approach to conflict and his humanistic values, which he often emphasized in public. As indicated by Garbett, this view was not considered helpful in the immediate postwar years, which, presumably Churchill thought as well. It should be noted here, that although WWII was coming to an end, Churchill's focus on security was not relaxed. To him, the transition from one foe to another was clear before the actual ending of the war.¹⁶ Churchill's concerns about Soviet intentions in Europe, and questions of how to effectively limit Soviet influence from spreading, did not make him inclined to seek out conciliatory forces to work close to government. The church, it should be remembered, still had an important role to play as a forceful mechanism to influence the public, in Britain and abroad, and 1945 was not, to Churchill and the majority of his colleagues, a time to project Britain as a soft player.

¹⁴ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 320, Fisher to Bevir, 17th January, 1945

¹⁵ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 317, Garbett to Fisher, 4th January, 1945

¹⁶ Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley, and Manfred Jonas (eds.), *Roosevelt and Churchill. Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1975, 509

So, Churchill was not willing to take advice from Fisher and Garbett, and Bell remained at Chichester. Although Garbett urged Churchill not to take any risk with the appointment to London, the diocese above all others, Churchill went against the advice of both these senior churchmen. It was generally felt that the new Archbishop should have someone at London whom he knew and could work with. But Churchill, in the end, chose Dr. Wand, Bishop of Bath and Wells, an appointment which Fisher argued strongly against.¹⁷

Following the election in the summer of 1945 Archbishop Fisher was thrown a new challenge. With the Labour Party now in power, he was facing a new government, and a new Prime Minister, and he soon discovered that everything he had learned about his old Prime Minister's preferences in regard to the Church of England could be forgotten. Clement Attlee had different ideas about the role of the Church of England and particularly about the qualities he would like to see fill the bench.

Fisher, it should be noted, had not been part of the modernising wing of the church, and had not been involved in the ecumenical advancements, which the Church of England had made during the preceding decades. Fisher had, rather, been shaped by his many years as headmaster of Repton, and then by his role as bishop in the rather quiet diocese of Chester for seven years. It is true that Fisher held the bishopric of London from 1939 until 1945, but these years were, particularly for the London Bishop, characterised by practical tasks demanded by the war, such as effects of the blitz and the general wellbeing of Londoners under these conditions. The changes that had occurred in the Church of England under William Temple were, then, presumably, not something which Fisher himself felt a part of.

¹⁷ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 336, Churchill to Fisher, 8th June, 1945

Fisher, a rather conservative traditionalist, preferred bishops who possessed some of the same qualities as he did: he regarded age as a qualification; he preferred candidates that had proven themselves to be sound administrators like himself; candidates that were calm and predictable, whose opinions he was familiar with and could trust. A firm believer in the established Church, Fisher did not appreciate too much the church meddling in government affairs. His job was to run the church in an orderly and predictable manner, and unknown and potentially radical churchmen in leadership positions could challenge this work unnecessarily.

Clement Attlee had a different opinion. The ‘elderly,’ were perhaps more suited for routine appointments and would surely lack the ability to ‘arouse enthusiasm,’ a quality which Attlee wanted like to see far more of in the Church of England bishops in general.¹⁸ Attlee demanded ‘shock troops’ and ‘commanders in the field,’ rather than ‘good staff officers or technicians.’ Something more was needed on the bench than average personalities. After the attack on the whole basis of moral values during the past ten years by fascists and Communists, he explained, the material fight had been won but it was yet to be seen if the spiritual fight would be won as well. The first appointments after the war would therefore have to show a real touch of imagination. Attlee clearly saw a front role for the Church of England bishops in this fight.¹⁹ He therefore wanted to see ‘boldness’ and readiness to take risks. He would also like to see someone who had grown up in the troubled times from 1914 and onwards rather than the older generation who had grown up in the securities of the Victorian age. The times, Attlee wrote, called for a crusading spirit in the Church of England, and he should like to see this exhibited in appointments to the bench.

¹⁸ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 356-359, Attlee to Fisher, 28th September, 1945

¹⁹ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 356-359, Attlee to Fisher, 28th September, 1945

Fisher was not happy. He wrote to Attlee criticising his military analogy. A bishop was not, he wrote, a Commander in the field, but rather a chief of staff stressing that the bench of bishops should include ‘technicians’ to the extent that theologians could be called that. Fisher wanted canonists and other specialists in theology; Attlee wanted activists and figures likely to arouse public enthusiasm.²⁰

It is, as alluded to above, interesting that by 1945, church and government in a sense became opposites of what they had been on the eve of WWII. With Labour in power, the church was now offered what Temple had in so many ways fought for during his time; social reform, church modernisation, and a freer hand in making church appointments. To Fisher, however, this was a nuisance rather than a victory. One can only speculate what Temple would have made of this opportunity had he lived to see it, but a dominant Labour Party would presumably have been a more attentive audience to his Christian socialist ideas than conservative predecessors had been. To Fisher, however, church modernisation lay not in questioning the place of the Church, or in revolutionising the role of Anglicanism in English communities, but rather, which is rather telling, in seeking to improve the administration of the church, its finances, and its canon law.²¹ Whereas Temple had been engaged in efforts to challenge the governance of the church in a rapidly modernising world, (which involved questioning the role of Parliament itself), Fisher stuck to the uncontested sphere of church administration.

The new Labour government did not, however, challenge the church by bringing about many unexpected changes in 1945. In fact, most of the top ministers were already well-known public figures, experienced in office, ensuring a

²⁰ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 377-381, Attlee to Fisher, 14th December, 1945

²¹ On Fisher’s work to improve Church of England’s laws and finances see Chandler and Hein (2012), 1226 of 6068; on the Church Commissioners see Andrew Chandler, *The Church of England in the Twentieth Century. The Church Commissioners and the Politics of Reform, 1948-1998*, Boydell Press, 2009

continuation of wartime thinking into the postwar world.²² Clement Attlee himself had held a number of posts in the Churchill coalition government between 1940 and 1945. He had been Deputy Prime Minister from February 1942 onwards. In addition to Attlee, Ernest Bevin, Arthur Greenwood, and Herbert Morrison had served in the War Cabinet, and, also in the War Cabinet, Stafford Cripps and Hugh Dalton had held posts under Churchill.²³

In Attlee's government Ernest Bevin became Foreign Secretary; the contender for the Foreign Office, Hugh Dalton, got the Exchequer; Attlee's rival and former wartime Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison was appointed Deputy Prime Minister. Of the other cabinet ministers, Stafford Cripps should be mentioned here. Cripps, who had held office under Churchill, had been expelled from the party in 1939 for advocating a 'popular front' with the Communists, but readmitted after the war, was a Christian and, as we have already seen, had often been in touch with the Church of England, the Peace Aims Group, and various ecumenical bodies during the war. It was also he who was Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1940 to 1942. Cripps was in 1945 given the Board of Trade.²⁴

The number of individuals who had served in the coalition government and continued to serve the Attlee administration meant that the transition from the wartime coalition government to the post-war Labour government did not lead to an abrupt end of wartime thinking and planning. From the church perspective it also meant that, in spite of the different ideology of the new government, the role which the church had played during the war was well known to individuals such as Cripps, and the contacts between church and administration were not questioned or disturbed.

²² Anne Deighton (1993)

²³ David Childs (1992), 18

²⁴ David Childs (1992), 22

Changes in the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations

If Archbishop Fisher and the Labour government in 1945 seemed to be at odds with one another regarding the role and character of bishops and the role of the church, the changes which took place in the Church of England Council on Foreign Affairs (CFR) 1945 perhaps more harmoniously mirrored that of Labour now in power.

As explained in chapter one, CFR had been appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in February 1931 and held status as a ‘non-statutory’ body in the Church of England. Hence, the council was not a Church Assembly organisation, and was not under Church Assembly’s direction in any way.²⁵ The CFR was from its birth loosely defined as to its practice and functions and the Council found its shape over time. This feature of flexibility allowed the Council to take different measures depending on the political situation in Britain and abroad.

In chapter 1 the shape of the council in the first decade of its existence was examined. Canon John Albert Douglas, a conservative anti-Evangelical, served as the first Secretary General of the Council from 1933 until 1945. Due to the loosely defined framework of the council at its inception, it was largely Douglas himself who gave the Council its shape and character in his period. The primary function of the Council was to maintain church relations, to act as a clearing-house for opinion, and to advise the Archbishops.²⁶ By 1945 the world was different from that of 1933, and so was the Church of England’s role in it. The changed position in which the Church of England found itself in 1945 called for changes in CFR. The most profound change in the church was the weight of the interdenominational and transnational ecumenical community of which the Church of England was now both a driving force and a leader. With the formal establishment of BCC in 1942 the church experienced an

²⁵ LPL, Temple Papers, 17, ff. 16-17, Douglas to Temple, 1943

²⁶ LPL, Temple, 17, f.59. See chapter 1 for further detail

increase in questions concerning not only issues related to churches and denominations abroad, but questions of world politics inside and outside the religious domain; the world in which the Church of England found itself seemed to be becoming increasingly transnational and international.

The increased focus on human rights, in which the Christian churches took interest and felt ownership; the establishment of the United Nations; questions of post-war relief help in Europe; decolonisation and third world development; the question of post-war reconstruction in Europe, an area the church had planned for during the war and hoped to be able to influence; and finally the rising tensions between the west and the Communist Soviet Union were areas which imposed new demands on CFR's work. These were also areas in which the church saw an opportunity for itself to exert influence, and it was expected to do so by its partners in BCC and WCC.

Another important aspect, which had for some time called for changes in CFR was the increased integration of churchmen in areas of British foreign policy. As we have seen, the hiring of bishops and priests from the Church of England and other denominations in Britain into the Ministry of Information, and the close collaboration between the Church of England and the Foreign Office had become common practice during the war. Douglas' council was no longer sufficient to meet the strongly increased focus on foreign affairs in the Church of England and it was felt by some that Douglas' bilateral methods were becoming rather an obstacle to efficient collaboration with the Foreign Office. The church urgently needed to increase its capacity to handle complex issues of foreign relations, and to make a bolder appearance than had previously been the case.

Finally, the Church of England's position at the centre of the global Anglican Community, of which the Archbishop of Canterbury was the supreme leader, in itself demanded that the church was well informed on international questions. Questions of colonial independence were increasingly looming, and the question of what to do with the Anglican Churches within certain countries, such as India, would soon have to be addressed.

By 1945 Douglas and Headlam were both, although reluctantly, on the way to retirement. The post-war transformation of CFR therefore had as its most important starting point a change in leadership. This post was now a highly commanding one and would require a person with a very broad knowledge of international affairs, ecumenical history, and government policies. With Churchill out of the picture to block the promotion of George Bell, he quickly became the leading candidate, although the internal debate about succession and recruitment to CFR was not without conflict. In general, the clergy was divided between those who very much hoped to see Bell as chairman, and those who most certainly did not. There were still council members who hoped that the council would revert back to its 'old form' after the war, a hope which was particularly held by Headlam and Douglas.²⁷ Hoping to influence the future direction of the council they both lobbied Fisher quite strongly either to keep them on board until 1947, or at least to forget the idea of appointing Bell as chairman.²⁸ They were, however, unsuccessful. Fisher knew that CFR had to change.

Although Fisher's role in the recruitment process is perhaps best characterised as insecure – Fisher had gained no experience in either international or ecumenical matters in his previous posts – he engaged in the task with his usual sense of structure and justice. Even Fisher was aware that Douglas had to be replaced, if for no other

²⁷ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 215, Headlam to Fisher, 24th April, 1945

²⁸ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 241, Douglas to Headlam, 16th June, 1945

reason than because Fisher did not appreciate his methods; he had his fingers in too many pies; he was inclined to intrigue and pull strings; and above all he had developed an obstructing sense of ownership over the council, which had become an increasing point of complaint from council members who felt that Douglas was more likely to give his own opinion than that of the council.²⁹ But what had become the greatest nuisance by 1945 was Douglas' and Headlam's obvious resistance to the ecumenical movement and the World Council of Churches.³⁰

Fisher's files at Lambeth indicate that he took the selection of a new CFR leadership very seriously. Fisher's own preference was that the chairman should be a diocesan Bishop.³¹ With Fisher's usual practical eye on things he felt that a diocesan bishop would be most able to give a lead on matters on foreign relations when they arose in Convocation.³² He drew up lists of pros and cons for each possible candidate and discussed his list with trusted colleagues. What Fisher lacked in experience he possessed in organizational skills and willingness to consult. Fisher, although aware that his decision would be controversial in some quarters of the church, offered the chairmanship to Bell. At Bell's own suggestion, Herbert Waddams was appointed Secretary General. Unsurprisingly, Douglas and Headlam had advised strongly against both. Fisher also knew of some of Bell's opinions, his personality and his ideas. He did have some concerns that Bell might 'rope the council into too many of his own enthusiasms.'³³ But Fisher also knew that Bell would renew the council and that his approach was rather different from that of Douglas and Headlam.³⁴

²⁹ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 218, Fisher to the Dean of Westminster, 5th May, 1945

³⁰ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 233, Fisher to Douglas, 13th June, 1945

³¹ LPL, Fisher, 2, f. 213, Fisher to Headlam, 16th April, 1945

³² LPL, Fisher 2, f. 218, Fisher to the Dean of Westminster, 5th May, 1945

³³ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 238, Fisher to the Bishop of Winchester, 13th June 1945

³⁴ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 266, Fisher to Headlam, 23rd July, 1945

As expected, Bell set out to establish himself as the chairman he felt CFR needed, and this was quite different from Douglas' ideas. Upon his appointment he wrote to Fisher:

*'With regard to my own function as Chairman of the Council, I take it that in the main I should be asked to look after relations with foreign churches, and keep you informed, discussing questions of fundamental policy with yourself, and taking your directions. I take it also that your asking me to be chairman implies that you do so knowing my general views, and being prepared to trust my common sense.'*³⁵

The truth was that Fisher was poorly equipped to take the front line in foreign affairs himself, as he simply did not possess the knowledge or insight.³⁶ So the prospect was that Bell would be taking the lead in foreign affairs, not Fisher. Attlee had requested of Fisher that the church should be bold, and that 'men with fire in their souls' should advance in the church hierarchy.³⁷ It is possible that it was Attlee's words which gave Fisher incentive to appoint Bell. As a man driven by passion rather than thirst for personal advancement, Bell had proven to be all that. Evidence, however, leaves no insight into what Attlee thought of Bell's wartime critique of government or his ideological convictions in general. We do, however, know that George Bell and Ernest Bevin disagreed profoundly over the question of European unity, to which we shall turn in the next chapter. The extent to which Fisher in 1945 was truly aware of Bell's controversial opinions in the international field is not entirely clear, but evidence hints that he was not.

Although Bell had thus far been sceptical about some of the results coming from the increased wartime integration between the Church of England and the MoI, one of the first things he changed as chairman of CFR was Douglas' practice of excluding members of certain other organisations from full membership of CFR. This

³⁵ LPL, Fisher 2, f.292v, Bell to Fisher, 23rd August 1945

³⁶ Andrew Chandler and David Hein (2012), location 2331 of 6068

³⁷ LPL, Fisher 3, f. 356-359, Attlee to Fisher, 28th September, 1945

was particularly the case with the Student Christian Movement (SCM), which had been a highly progressive forum for ecumenical thinking with personalities such as William Paton; but also individuals working for the BBC or the MoI. Bell had important allies in all these places, and in fact, CFR's new Secretary General, Herbert Waddams, had been a valued employee in the MoI during the war.

Although it has not been possible to establish why Bell changed this practice, it can be speculated that he did so for several reasons: first of all, the gathering of information was key to CFR's success, not only did CFR need information about conditions in the Soviet Union, it was also paramount that the council had accurate knowledge about government thinking. This should therefore not necessarily be taken as a sign of CFR's increasing subservience to the MoI and FO, but as a sign that Bell needed reliable information on government thinking in order to adjust CFR's policies accordingly. The two other organisations, the BBC and SCM were minor in comparison to MoI, but presumably Bell needed to get rid of any barriers to gather his allies around him. Many of these allies, such as Eric Fenn, had played significant roles at the 1937 Oxford Conference, and had ties to the BBC and SCM.³⁸

Amongst the Church of England elite it was believed that the European countries looked to Britain for moral leadership after the war, and that the churches on the Continent looked to the Church of England with hope for encouragement and support.³⁹ To Bell, it was CFR's role to meet this challenge as the foreign department of the Church of England, an area which had grown in scale and importance greatly over the years and was now destined to grow still further.

In 1945 Bell's ecumenical idealism regarding the prospects of a united Europe built on Christian principles had been shaken, but was still alive. His perspective did,

³⁸ For details on Eric Fenn see chapter 2, footnote 13

³⁹ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 285, Bell to Fisher, 1st August, 1945

however, become challenged by new tensions rising between east and west over the question of Germany. The question of how to rebuild all of Europe on peaceful and lasting terms became secondary to a new security paradigm to meet what was seen as a new enemy on the rise; suspicion towards Soviet intentions was not only winning ground within Whitehall but also, increasingly, within the Church of England itself. It is to this question that we shall turn next.

The Church of England and the Changing Enemy

1945 was a chaotic year in Europe. Hitler was gone, and the Soviet Union, although a difficult partner, had not yet openly begun its quest to implement a Communist system in the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany. It was a year in which each of the four victorious Allied countries were waiting to see what the others might do, while trying to get an overview of the chaos of refugees and material damage on the European continent after the war. It was also the year when the first steps were taken in the Allied governments' dealings with Germany; with each other; and with their home states, which eventually led to a hardening of relations between the Soviet Union and the west. It can be argued that some of the impulses which eventually led to the Cold War had their roots in the almost impossible task of dividing Germany between four very different powers; but there were other sources as well. Britain itself went into the postwar period predisposed to a suspicious and hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union. This hostility was not new, but had steadily grown within Whitehall during the war. Already in the summer of 1944, Churchill was looking with one eye on the retreating Germans and the other on the advancing Soviets.⁴⁰ And to some, hostility towards Soviet ideology, Communism, had existed at least for a decade

⁴⁰ Loewenheim et al., (1975), 509

before the war, as was particularly the case for the churches to which Communism was naturally seen as the atheist anti-thesis to Christianity.

In this section we will look at how the Church of England responded to the changing enemy in 1945. The main question is to what extent the churches perceived the transition of the enemy from Nazism to Communism as a transition at all, or if the enemy, regarded largely as the totalitarian ruler, had changed colour and simply moved further east geographically. This involves the question of whether the role of the churches during the war had altered their perspective on what constituted the enemy.

In 1945 the Church of England was particularly concerned about three things in the international arena. The first was how to deal with the Soviet Union, which was still a source of uneasiness for the Church; the second was Germany, both the question of German guilt, and the question of how Germany was to be managed; and the third was the future of Europe at large. Further, concerns about how the UK, the US and the Soviet Union were dealing with the challenges of refugees and suffering in Europe were dominant at the meetings in CFR and BCC from 1944 and onwards, as this was a pressing task for which the churches felt responsibility. The humanitarian work of the churches will not, however, be dealt with in this thesis.

The attitude of the Church of England and BCC towards the Soviet Union from 1945 can be summed up with four core arguments: First, church and ecumenical thinking on the Soviet Union and Communism in 1945 was largely a continuation of prewar thinking, but consideration for British foreign policy objectives and considerations concerning how to maintain strong ties with the Orthodox Church still posed a considerable constraint for the Church of England. As we have seen, the Church of England was highly challenged during the war, when it had to contain its

anti-Soviet attitudes in order to support the Anglo-Soviet alliance.⁴¹ Although the Church of England used the alliance to strengthen its ties to the Russian Orthodox Church, it and the BCC kept their critical focus on the Soviet Union by seeking and sharing information via Paton's Russia Group. The main aim of the committee was to be prepared to counter Soviet propaganda as soon as the political situation would allow it.⁴² As the war came to an end, CFR and BCC intensified their planning for a postwar strategy towards the Soviet Union and Communism. Although this strategy was a continuation of prewar ideas, as established at the Oxford Conference in 1937, it is evident that Communism was increasingly singled out as the main threat to peace. Whereas at the Oxford Conference, Communism, Nazism, and capitalism had all been identified as 'false communities,' which, with their materialist basis, fed secularism, by 1945 Communism had taken over the church agenda in Britain as the main concern of the churches. An open declaration of Whitehall's intentions towards the Soviet Union did, however, not surface in 1945 and the church was largely left to wait and speculate, and to some extent attempt to influence the government's negotiations for a peace settlement.

Second, with the Christian rejection of war and power politics as a solution to international conflict, the churches wished to work towards peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union but hoped for a gradual change within the Soviet Union via the ecumenical network; but it also had the hope that the Soviet leaders would learn from and adapt to its Western allies. As early as in 1944, the Controller for Overseas Propaganda, Kenneth Grubb, reminded the PAG that the real war for the Christian mind was the war against that very secularism which the Soviet Union had so largely

⁴¹ See chapter 3

⁴² See chapter 3

achieved.⁴³ The church leadership was hoping that the Soviet Union would change after victory. It even felt that the regime was moving away from previous patterns and now showed tendencies towards a kind of cultural liberalism.

George Bell, who was the strongest supporter of the peaceful approach in Britain, spoke in the Lords about the united church and the church in Russia, ‘the greatest of all the Orthodox Churches’ and of the Christian hope that the Orthodox Church would take part in the Christian reconstruction of Europe alongside the World Council of Churches. Bell was using the enthusiasm of the war’s end to attempt to expand the scope of the relationship with the Soviet Union. It should be noted that in 1945 the Church of England still enjoyed good contact with the Russian Orthodox Church and it was still hoped that the Orthodox Church would take full part in WCC. We will look at this in more detail in chapter 7.

Third, it was felt to be the role of the churches to educate the British public about the true nature of the Soviet Union and inspire the population to reject Communism.⁴⁴ This, however, was impossible as long as the British government had not given clear indications of Britain’s standpoint towards socialism at home, and towards Soviet Union abroad. To the relief of the majority of church leaders in the Church of England, Attlee was not as such seeking a continuation of the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union.⁴⁵ Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, who ‘instinctively distrusted Communists,’ was, as early as in 1944, like Churchill, concerned that Soviet ambitions might become problematic to the postwar settlement and felt that not only Germany but also the Soviet Union could threaten peace in Europe.⁴⁶ Bevin’s

⁴³ LPL, CRF G/9/1, f. 59 memorandum by Kenneth Grubb, written for PAG 3 April 1944. For details on Kenneth Grubb see chapter 1

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Church of England Record Centre (CERC), minutes from 1945 in the collection ‘BCC Executive Council Meetings 1942-1947, volume I’

⁴⁵ Hastings (1986), 406

⁴⁶ Deighton (1993), 14-15

and Attlee's attitude towards the Soviet Union, therefore, was in line with the British churches in 1945. But although the church had no reason to fear that the Labour government would embrace either the Soviet Union or Communism in 1945, the international situation was still unsettled and Bevin would not allow initiatives, which might upset the Soviet leadership. Until 1947, there was also widespread support for the wartime crushing of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union by 'Uncle Joe' Stalin and the Soviet people. From the church perspective, the matter was complicated further due to considerations of the ecumenical strategy to keep the Orthodox Church within the WCC framework; if the Church of England started a national re-education campaign against Communism, this project was doomed to fail.

The fourth and final point which influenced the Church of England's and BCC's perspective on the Soviet Union was the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945. This international perspective was strongly advocated by the American Federal Council of Churches (FCC) and the Committee to Study the Bases of a Just and Durable Peace (CJDP), with which BCC was becoming increasingly integrated; this is emphasized by the fact that methods to 'promote regular contacts and increased mutual understanding between the churches of Great Britain and those of the United States' was now discussed as a specific point on BCC's agenda.⁴⁷ Further, BCC debates about Christian influence on the peace settlement were, by 1944, exclusively dealt with through a joint Anglo-American approach.⁴⁸

We have already looked at CJDP's collaboration with PAG during the war, where the two agencies worked in tandem to project a positive image of Britain in the US. In 1945, with the San Francisco Conference to set up the United Nations

⁴⁷ See, e.g., CERC, minutes from 1945 in the collection 'BCC Executive Council Meetings 1942-1947, volume I' minutes of meeting held 27 April 1944

⁴⁸ See, e.g., CERC, 'BCC Executive Council Meetings 1942-1947, volume I,' minutes of meeting held 27 April 1944, paper B 'Department of International Friendship: General Report to Council and Resolutions

dominating the Christian international agenda, CJDП was working towards the integration of human rights in the post-war settlement, with a particular emphasis on religious liberty. In this process, the churches' claim for human rights and religious liberty as a foundation element in Christian post-war goals became further manifested, particularly through the American initiative to establish the Churches' Commission on International Affairs (CCIA) in 1946. CCIA will be looked at in more detail in chapter 7; here it is sufficient to note that whereas in Europe, the language applied to the envisaged post-war world mostly referred to the re-establishment of a historic 'Christian civilization,' the American Churches were increasingly campaigning for human rights to be the Christian hallmark of global order. Within BCC references to human rights began entering the agenda forcefully in 1945, and in March the Council put forward a statement on the position of BCC in the post-war situation stressing that

*'[W]hile the state has a right to require the loyal obedience of its citizens (...) its claims must be limited by recognition of the inherent principles of natural justice, which demand respect for fundamental human rights. Recalling that a threat to these rights made by a state claiming total and unlimited obedience from its citizens and seeking to extend the claim over citizens of other countries has been the principal factor in plunging the world into the most cruel and destructive war in history. (...) International order will be soundly based only if it protects and promotes the freedom of the individual to use his gifts to the full.'*⁴⁹

The British churches' engagement in the American human rights scheme indicated another shift away from the conclusions drawn at the 1937 Oxford Conference; particularly in the now firm focus on the individual. As explained in chapter 2, within the Oxford framework, as developed by Joseph Oldham 1934-1937,

⁴⁹ LPL, Fisher 2, f. 76, 'The British Council of Churches – Christian Witness in the postwar situation,' March 1945

the 'individual' as opposed to the Christian 'person,' was considered vulnerable to extremist tendencies such as Communism unless grounded in an organic, Christian community, uncontrolled by the state; and further, the 1937 Oxford interpretation of the concept of freedom was not to be provided by the state, but was rather an inner condition based on faith. By 1945, however, the American understanding of the individual as a free agent protected by state-provided rights was officially supported by the Church of England and BCC. Although the relationship between American liberalism and human rights is a distinct scholarly area, which will not be addressed in this thesis, it is fair to conclude that the British churches took significant steps to embrace the American understanding of Christian ethics as expressed via human rights, leaving behind the alternative framework for Christian authority and morality to which they had contributed so significantly at the 1937 Oxford Conference.

Although certain developments had been set in train by 1945, it should be noted that the postwar situation was largely one of uncertainty and chaos, not only for the Church of England, but for the Continental Churches and the ecumenical movement alike. The complexity of the points raised above, however, largely explains why the Church of England found itself in a waiting position in 1945.

The WCC in formation did not share all of the Church of England's and BCC's perspectives on the Soviet Union. In fact, matters became even more complex due to the fact that WCC was increasingly beginning to divide internally. Whereas Britain was busy nurturing its relationship with the US, and was thinking strategically about how to protect its own borders from Communism without committing itself too closely to the rest of Western Europe, the continental members of WCC were becoming increasingly alarmed about the prospect of falling under Soviet influence.

Secretary of the WCC in formation, Visser t'Hooft, who had during the War been located in Geneva and who had been in close touch with the German resistance movement, strongly favored a united Europe of which the UK was part; a view shared by George Bell early on. T'Hooft found the BCC's attitudes to the Soviet Union to be naïve and unrealistic, and predicted that all of Eastern and much of Central Europe would be locked behind 'almost a 'Chinese wall' as far as contact with the West was concerned. He predicted that

'while Britain and America may (...) have something to do outside the Continent, the European scene at least is going to be dominated by Russia.' The hope of a continental Europe was for 'a very firm attitude on the part of Britain and America to this wave of nationalistic and imperialistic forms which is sweeping over Russia and the extension of zones of influence (...)'⁵⁰

So, although both factions of the ecumenical movement wished to avoid confrontation and war with the Soviet Union, they were divided over which peace aims would be best. The majority of PAG and part of BCC favored an Anglo-American alliance with Britain outside of Europe, but hoped that Europe would remain united. Human rights, it can be argued, was now increasingly used as an indirect way to criticize the Soviet government and to create a distinction from Communism. The continental arm of the WCC feared Soviet dominance in Europe and saw a strong British-American presence as the only hope to keep the Soviet regime at bay.

In the CFR, the tone was slightly different. In case of disagreement between Britain and the Soviet Union on approaches to peace and the question of Germany, CFR anticipated that, generally, Christian opinion would support the British view, and would 'confine itself to an effort either to smooth any obstacles between Russia and Britain, or to support Britain in its stand against Russia in the case of a difference of opinion.' It was also thought to be conceivable that the British government and Russia

⁵⁰ LPL, Temple 57, Minutes of meeting in the Peace Aims Group, 7 November 1944

could agree to do something which would conflict with Christian conscience.⁵¹ In any case, the main objective of both the CFR and the BCC was to launch a public campaign to correct the public image of Communism and the Soviet Union. In 1945 both agencies were considering how to influence the British government in this direction.⁵²

Meanwhile, in the Church of England, Fisher was still taking a vague and diplomatic approach to the Soviet Union. Although Fisher did not speak publicly about Soviet policies, he responded to a letter from an upset German, who was worried about Soviet-friendly statements made in the press by the Dean of Canterbury, Hewlett Johnson, by some nicknamed ‘the red dean.’ In his reply Fisher stressed that the Dean was entitled to his own opinion, but that they truly were his opinions, in no way reflecting that of the Church of England. Although it had many ‘misgivings’ about the Soviet Union, particularly related to Poland and other nations bordering Russia, the most important thing was ‘to keep the three Powers working in friendly co-operation’ in the hope that the Soviet government would ‘learn something from its two Allies and work towards more democratic ideas of free government.’ Fisher further stressed that he was convinced that the Russian Orthodox Church was now enjoying far more freedom than had previously been the case, indicating that the Soviet Union was moving closer to the West.⁵³ So, in spite of pressure from his own institution to start a public anti-Communist re-education campaign, Fisher followed the line of Whitehall, which, as we shall see, meant that the Anglo-Soviet alliance was not officially abandoned until late 1947.

Despite all these doubts and new dividing lines between WCC-in-formation, the British, and the American churches, 1945 was a busy year for organized European

⁵¹ CFR G/9/1, f. 60 memorandum by Kenneth Grubb 15 April 1945

⁵² CFR G/9/1, f. 60 memorandum by Kenneth Grubb 15 April 1945

⁵³ LPL, Fisher 1, Fisher to Dr. R. H. Borkent, 24 August, 1945

Christians. The churches' standpoint towards the new rising international crisis would not begin to fall into place until late 1947. In the meantime the churches dealt with one question upon which they could all largely agree, namely the need to transfer the general view of Germany as an inherent war monger into an acceptance of Germany as a nation central to Europe's future. This will be looked at in more detail in the next chapter.

In summing up how the churches reacted to the 'changing enemy' in 1945 it is most accurate to conclude that they were uncertain, and now increasingly divided; ecumenical unity had been marked by the war, and so had the churches in Britain.⁵⁴

The Continental core of WCC in formation, led by Visser t'hoofst felt increasingly threatened by the Soviet Union due to the fear that a large part of Europe would fall under Soviet dominance. The BCC's silent attitude in 1945 therefore caused frustration in continental WCC circles, from concern that Britain and the US would bail out of Europe. In the main, the WCC stuck to the Oxford line emphasizing that although the master had changed, the enemy was the same. The enemy had to be kept back by the Western states, just like Germany had been. This, however, was a task for governments; not for the churches. If WCC was to single out Communism at this point, it would only increase tensions within WCC itself; Cold War hysteria had to be prevented. The idealistic and ambitious program of European Unity, which the ecumenical movement had envisaged, thus met new challenges in 1945. Although European unity was on the minds of Western politicians the motive was now rather driven by a security paradigm against the East and not a genuine wish for a strong and United Europe to prosper in its own right. Hence, the ecumenical movement was trapped between visions of unity but opposition to the new security paradigm, which

⁵⁴ 'The changing enemy,' is also the title of Noel Annan's book addressing his experience, of the transformation of British policy towards Germany between 1941 and 1946. Noel Annan, *Changing Enemies: The Defeat and Regeneration of Germany*, Cornell University Press, 1997

was seen as a continuation of the old world, against which the churches had so strongly reacted in 1937.

In Britain, the churches had, by maintaining their critical focus on the Soviet Union, themselves been engaged in developing this new security paradigm, and by 1945 it became increasingly difficult for them to manage their own aims, stuck in the middle of everything as they were. To the churches in Britain, and the Church of England in particular, a characterization of Communism as a distinctly dangerous foe had begun to develop even before the war; a perspective which became stronger in the postwar years. This, as we saw in the first part of the chapter, was challenged by the change in church leadership, where the conservative Fisher wished to move the church back to a more traditional standpoint within the state.

We shall return to this theme in the last part of the thesis, where focus will be on the Church of England's Cold War strategies. It should be noted, in conclusion, that the lines of division were not necessarily very clear-cut as the international situation to most agents was a source of great confusion and gave rise to conflicting feelings in all the parties involved.

Chapter 5: The Church of England and post-war European Unity

In the previous chapter the Church of England's position by the end of World War II was looked at, showing how it managed the significant change in the church leadership, including that of the central church body for foreign relations, CFR, while coping with the change of government in Britain in 1945. Second, post-war changes in the international situation were looked at, and it was investigated how the church and its key bodies, CFR, BCC and WCC, perceived the increasing tensions with the Soviet Union.

Earlier, in chapters two and three, the concept of unity in transnational Christianity during the 1930s and 40s was examined. Unity as a concept was understood partly as a Christian *community*; including the idea that a united Christian community had the potential to transcend national borders and construct a moral framework which would influence sovereign states. In Britain this understanding of unity was brought forward by William Temple in particular, who sought to construct a Christian framework in the UK and abroad where the churches became the moral backbone of a national community and thereby inseparable from both state and society.¹ At the international level, the Christian community would transcend national borders and function as a uniting factor among nations, embodied in the WCC.²

The other dimension of the unity idea was related to the Realpolitik of the time; the unity of the American, British and Continental churches, which was established because world events, such as Nazism and World War II seemed to have brought them closer together. It was American and British Christian leaders who

¹ Matthey Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England. Liberal Anglican Theories of the State between the Wars*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004

² Matthey Grimley (2004); Jurjen Zeilstra, *European Unity in Ecumenical Thinking, 1937-1948*, Boekencentrum, 1995

initially established the ecumenical movement and religious leaders from these countries formulated the idea of Christianity as bearer of the Western civilization. It was the latter form of 'practical' Christian unity, which became a temptation for political leaders in the US and Britain; the rising Cold War tensions called for new alliances in world politics, and new measures were necessary to enable international change. There were, in other words, two Christian ideas of unity; the transnational community between all Christian countries ideally globally embodied in WCC; and the unity between specific countries with a common Christian legacy, the 'bearers of Western civilization,' the countries of Western Europe, the UK, and the US.

It is important to distinguish between the two ideas of unity because, as we shall see, as new tensions arose internationally, with increasing western resistance to the Soviet Union and a new security debate about the Western countries began, a conflict arose between the two ideas of unity. On the one hand, the ecumenical movement was eager finally to fulfil its long planned for idea of global Christian unity and the establishment of WCC. It had from the onset been an important aspect of this idea that the Eastern Orthodox churches should be included, and that the Council should transcend divisions in world politics. On the other hand, however, rising Cold War tensions jeopardised the ecumenical idea of a peaceful and united Europe in which the ecumenical movement had planned a superior role for itself. The churches were torn between, on the one hand, old ecumenical ideas of complete unity, free from political divisions, and, on the other, involvement in the Cold War conflict, which would exclude the Orthodox churches and turn WCC into an institution of the emerging Western bloc. This dilemma became further complicated for at least three reasons: first, the main leaders of the ecumenical movement, William Temple and William Paton, had passed away during the war. Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher, did not

possess a deep understanding for the main ideas of the movements; secondly, anti-Communism had been strong in the churches and in the ecumenical movement since its early days, as Communism was seen as one expression of secularisation caused by the modern state. In Britain, anti-Communism in the churches had been contained during the War in order to support the British government. By the end of the War it became increasingly difficult to maintain a 'neutral' line in the church rank, especially since Temple was not present to control this; thirdly, to maintain the influence in government policies to which the churches had become accustomed during the war, the churches had an incentive to back government policies. These three factors were the main difficulties for the ecumenical movement, particularly in Britain, and these factors caused a further split between the British-American section of the movement from the continental section, a split, which had already started to develop during the War.

In this chapter we shall look at church reactions to events affecting the ecumenical ideas of unity after World War II. The primary areas to be looked at are first the United Europe Movement as brought forward by Winston Churchill; and second the idea of a Western Spiritual Union as brought forward by Ernest Bevin as part of Western Union. Finally, we must ask how the question of Germany influenced church opinion about the future of Europe. As the question of European unity has been dealt with in detail by Philip Coupland, and to some extent Dianne Kirby and Tom Lawson, this chapter will incorporate their conclusions while only employing primary material to add missing perspectives from these accounts.

Geoffrey Fisher and the United Europe Movement

Shortly after the end of WWII in 1945, Winston Churchill began to advocate a ‘United States of Europe’ to unify the European Continent. A united Europe was, Churchill believed, the only way to prevent a future European war.³ Due to his concern about European security in the face of the Soviet threat, Churchill called for the West to take a firm stand. To build a defence against possible Soviet aggression, Churchill believed, close collaboration between Britain, the US and a united Europe was essential.⁴ On March 5, 1946 Churchill made his now famous ‘Iron Curtain’ speech in Fulton. To a crowd of 40,000 people he laid out his fears about a division between East and West. Churchill spoke powerfully about the necessity of ‘fraternal association of English-speaking peoples’ by which he meant a ‘special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States of America’ based on friendship and mutual understanding, as well as military cooperation. To Churchill, the security threat was clear: ‘[e]xcept in the British Commonwealth and in the United States where Communism is in its infancy, the Communist parties or fifth columns constitute a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilisation.’ This challenge, however, could be solved if the US and the UK decided among themselves to build a ‘temple of peace,’ backed by the armed forces of the UN.⁵

Churchill’s United Europe Movement was in part conceived as a security measure against Soviet’s territorial and ideological expansionism, to ‘guard the homes of the common people from the horrors and miseries of another war.’⁶ On 19

³ See, e.g., Martin Gilbert, *Churchill. A Life*, London: Pimlico, 2000, 843-871; Philip Coupland, *Britannia, Europa, Christendom. British Christians and European Integration*, New York: Palgrave, 2006, 90; David Childs, *Britain since 1945. A Political History*, London: Routledge, third edition, 1992, 57

⁴ Philip Coupland (2006), 90

⁵ The text of Sir Winston Churchill’s ‘The Sinews of Peace’ speech is quoted in its entirety in Robert Rhodes James (ed.), *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches 1897-1963* Volume VII: 1943-1949, New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1974, 7285-7293

⁶ Martin Gilbert (2000), 843-871

September 1946 Churchill spoke at Zurich University. In this speech he now emphasised the European Continent as ‘the fountain of Christian faith and Christian ethics... and the origin of most of the culture, arts, philosophy and science both of ancient and modern times.’ Yet it was from Europe that had sprung that series of frightful nationalistic quarrels, ‘originated by the Teutonic nations, which we have seen even in this twentieth century and in our own lifetime, wreck the peace and mar the prospects of all mankind.’ To prevent a recurrence of these quarrels he called for his ‘United States of Europe,’ beginning with a partnership between France and Germany.⁷ So, by 1946, Churchill was not only speaking of a defence community; but also of Europe’s common, cultural past. But at the same time, Churchill was unwilling to jeopardise Britain's privileged relationship with other English-speaking nations by joining in a European federation. In 1947 and 1948 he sought to link the united Europe initiative in Britain with like-minded continental groups. He founded the United Europe Movement in Britain, served as its president and, unsuccessfully, sought Labour’s support for it. UEM was supported by the US, and Churchill envisaged, just as Bevin would do later, that Britain would lead the initiative to establish European unity, though without being a part of a European union.⁸

The Church of England and the BCC played an active role in the history of European integration, and as the political process of working towards greater unity in Europe was similar to the ecumenical goals, many churchmen followed Churchill’s UEM with interest. It is to this we will now turn.

Churchill himself had envisaged an important role for non-governmental organisations in the campaign for European unity. But although UEM held mass meetings, it was not a popular body as such; the Movement was primarily directed

⁷ Martin Gilbert (2000), 730-35

⁸ Coupland (2006), 89

towards influencing and mobilising elite opinion in the UK and internationally.⁹ The UEM was a non-party body, but was almost exclusively Conservative in its allegiance. Besides Churchill it included most of the shadow cabinet.

The Church of England started engaging with UEM in 1946. On 28 December 1946 Churchill wrote a private letter to Fisher, stating that

*'if we are to avoid the catastrophe of a third World War we must somehow contrive to bring order out of the chaos in Europe, break down national hatreds and suspicions and foster by every means in our power the essentials of unity and the practice of co-operation. To attain this end we must arouse the fervour of a crusade.'*¹⁰

Churchill further asked Fisher to add his name, in a private capacity, to a declaration for European Unity. 'It is essential' Churchill wrote to Fisher, 'that from the outset we should have the support of the churches throughout Europe.'¹¹ At this point, Fisher had already answered supportively to a letter from Churchill's Conservative colleague Leo Amery in January 1946. He claimed to support Amery's ideas of greater European cultural unity, replying that 'intellectual and spiritual affinities' were the necessary basis for progress.¹²

In January 1947 Leo Amery wrote to Churchill with reference to a conversation he had had with Fisher. According to Amery, Fisher was 'anxious' that UEM would 'keep it to the broad conception' and not make commitments to 'any constitutional scheme.' He explained: 'He has doubts about actually coming in as a signatory, partly because he is not sure that he ought officially, at this stage at any rate, to commit the Church as a whole to a project which in some quarters is being

⁹ Coupland (2006), 91

¹⁰ The Churchill Archive, CHUR 2/25 A, Churchill to Fisher, 28 December 1946

¹¹ The Churchill Archive, CHUR 2/25 A, Winston Churchill to Geoffrey Fisher, 28 December 1946

¹² Lambeth Palace Archive (LPL), Fisher papers, 27, f. 347, Leo Amery to Geoffrey Fisher, 25 January, 1946

criticised as anti-Russian.¹³ As we saw in the previous chapter, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin was not prepared to openly antagonise the Soviet Union until late 1947. Hence, in early 1947 Fisher was not prepared to counter government strategies by having the head of the Church of England commit to an open anti-Soviet line.¹⁴ Although Fisher found that he was unable to sign the declaration himself, he arranged for the Dean of St Paul's, Walter Matthews (1881-1973) to sponsor the initiative.¹⁵ Fisher then wrote to Churchill: 'With the purpose which you have in mind I have the utmost sympathy, and I hope that the efforts of this group under your leadership will be effective in restoring a sense of cultural and spiritual unity among European states.'¹⁶ Churchill's answer to Fisher reported 'an encouraging response both here and abroad from people with widely differing political outlooks. Apart from some regrettable hesitancy among the heads of the Labour Party organisation (...) we have received strong evidence of sympathy and in any case fervent support.'¹⁷ Churchill then went on to ask Fisher if he would consent to lend his 'powerful support' by taking the chair at the upcoming mass meeting in Albert Hall. Fisher's presence would, Churchill stated, 'help to emphasise the moral character of the appeal we are making to the spirit of international brotherhood.'¹⁸ After contacts with Amery and Churchill, the archbishop agreed to chair the inaugural meeting of the United Europe Movement (UEM) at the Albert Hall in May 1947.

The UEM was formally constituted at the mass meeting in the Albert Hall on 14 May 1947. The meeting was attended by leading personalities from different

¹³ The Churchill Archive, CHUR 2/25 A, Leo Amery to Winston Churchill, 10 January, 1947

¹⁴ See chapter 4

¹⁵ Walter Matthews, who wrote a Sunday sermon for 24 years for the Daily Telegraph had a history of writing Christian philosophy in line with that of William Temple and John Baillie. Source: H. P. Owen, 'Matthews, Walter Robert (1881-1973),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/31426>

¹⁶ The Churchill Archive, CHUR 2/25 A, Geoffrey Fisher to Winston Churchill, 17 January, 1947

¹⁷ The Churchill Archive, CHUR 2/25 A, Winston Churchill to Geoffrey Fisher, 8 March, 1947

¹⁸ The Churchill Archive, CHUR 2/25 A, Winston Churchill to Geoffrey Fisher, 8 March, 1947; LPL, Fisher papers, 27, f. 370, Churchill to Fisher, 8 March, 1947

branches of public life, members of the diplomatic corps and many foreign representatives. It was given much attention by the press. The BCC broadcast the main speeches, which were delivered by Winston Churchill himself; George Gibson, former chairman of the Trades Union Council; Lady Violet Bonham Carter, president of the Liberal Party Organisation; V. Gollancz, publisher; the Rt. Reverend L.M. Richardson, Moderator of the National Free Church Federal Council; and the Rt. Hon. O. Stanley. The meeting was concluded with a resolution underlining the need for a united Europe in which Britain should play a full part.¹⁹ Although the Movement was intended to have non-party character, Victor Gollancz and Earl Bertrand Russell, both members of the Labour Party and of the executive of the UEM described the Movement as ‘overwhelmingly non-Labour, and largely anti-Labour,’ for which reason Gollancz considered resigning. It was felt that Churchill and the Conservatives used the Movement for purposes of domestic politics and to fill its key posts with members of their own party.²⁰

Churchill’s UEM also played a significant role on the European scene, with its engagement in the European Congress at the Hague in 1948. Although the Movement did not support a union with federal structures, it strongly advocated the idea of creating a European assembly, which was to be the leading force in a formation process for a European identity.²¹

As we saw in the previous chapter, Fisher supported the Allies’ aim of breaking the German ‘war machine.’ After the war, Fisher was also convinced that the

¹⁹ Walter Lipgens and Wilfried Loth (eds.), *Documents on the History of European Integration*, De Gruyter-Recht, 1988

²⁰ Walter Lipgens and Wilfried Loth (1988)

²¹ See, e.g., Sandro Guerrieri, ‘From the Hague Congress to the Council of Europe: hopes, achievements and disappointments in the parliamentary way to European integration (1948–51),’ in *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 34, 2, 2014, 216-227

evil in Germany could not be allowed to grow again.²² As a realist and a conservative, Fisher had supported Churchill's war strategy and had not, like George Bell, criticised the Government's war efforts in Germany; neither the bombing of German cities, nor the policy of complete surrender. Fisher's support for Churchill after the war might be explained by his personal convictions, but possibly also by the fact that it was Churchill who appointed Fisher to Canterbury in 1945, and that Fisher felt obliged to show his loyalty. Finally there might also be an element of truth in Sarah Stockwell's claim that 'Fisher's natural inclination to defer to authority and his dislike of open conflict' was a decisive factor in the decisions he took as Archbishop.²³ That Fisher preferred Conservative solutions, or at least had more trust in Conservative politics, is further indicated by his more lukewarm support of Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin's initiative of a 'Western Spiritual Union,' an initiative, which in many ways paralleled Churchill's United Europe Movement. We shall turn to this next.

Western Spiritual Union

Bevin's concept of a spiritual Western Union provides insights into two important post-war issues for Britain, which had an impact on the Church of England and its ecumenical ambitions: the nature of the Anglo-American alliance and Britain's attitude toward European unity.

According to Ritchie Ovendale, Britain was facing three options: it could attempt to lead a united Europe as a force in world politics; it could seek to establish the Commonwealth as an alternative power bloc; or it could try to prolong the

²² Edward Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher – His Life and Times*, Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1991, 151-152

²³ Sarah Stockwell, ' "Splendidly leading the way?" Archbishop Fisher and Decolonisation in British Colonial Africa,' *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36, 3, 2008, 545-64, 560

wartime Anglo-American alliance as a bulwark against the Soviet Union.²⁴ There is an ongoing scholarly debate concerning Bevin's post-war priorities, but it is possible, as some have argued, that the main aim was to re-establish Britain as a world power independent from both the US and the Soviet Union, and that there was a belief in the Foreign Office, that British weakness was only temporary.²⁵ The British Foreign Office believed that Britain 'belonged by right to the ruling trinity.'²⁶ The scholarly debate concerning Bevin's post-war objectives for Britain will not be replicated here, but it should be noted that there were voices in the church leadership, primarily Archbishops Geoffrey Fisher and Cyril Garbett, and the circle of advisors around them, such as Kenneth Grubb, John Collins, and Arnold Toynbee, who held the belief that Britain would regain its strength, not only as an economic power, but even more so as a spiritual and moral force. As we have seen in previous chapters, the majority of the work done in BCC was based on this assumption, and the strategic collaboration with the American Federal Council of Churches, so carefully planned and carried out by William Paton, underlines this point.²⁷ It is not the aim of this thesis to assess whether foreign secretary Ernest Bevin's proposed 'Western Union' of 1948 represented a sincere wish to engage in European integration or if it was merely a tool to manifest Britain as a world power. In any instance, the options were not mutually exclusive, and Britain's wider alliances did not preclude it from also taking a leadership role in Europe.

²⁴ Ritchie Ovendale, *The English-Speaking Alliance: Britain, the United States, the Dominions, and the Cold War, 1945-51*, London: Routledge, 1985, 21

²⁵ Anne Deighton, (ed.), *Britain and the First Cold War*, Basingstoke: Macmillan 1990, 165-83

²⁶ Anthony Adamthwaite, 'Britain and the World, 1945-49: The View from the Foreign Office,' *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs), 61, 2, 1985, 223-235, 225

²⁷ See chapter 3

Integral to Western Union was the notion of it as a ‘spiritual union’ or ‘spiritual federation.’²⁸ Hence, Bevin recruited as cold war warriors those institutions whose area was the spiritual: the British churches. That ‘spiritual union’ was more than a loose idea is shown by the way in which Bevin outlined his thinking in detail in the Commons on 22 January 1948. After summarizing the failed attempts to establish an agreement with the Soviet Union, Bevin went on to state that since 1945 the government had ‘striven for the closer consolidation and economic development, and eventually for the spiritual unity, of Europe as a whole.’ This he contrasted with the unification of Eastern Europe by force. According to Bevin the Soviets were ‘not in keeping with the spirit of Western civilization.’²⁹

After the end of the war, Bevin felt, it was ‘not a question of sitting down together, as it was at Versailles, and then at the end signing a treaty.’ This time it was systems, conceptions and ideologies, which are in conflict: ‘I do not want to take an irrevocable step, which will make future generations pay, just because I was over-anxious to gain a settlement for settlement's sake. This time it has to be a real settlement which lasts for a long time.’³⁰ A Western ‘organism,’ Bevin stated, had to be spiritual, based on the basic freedoms and ethical principles ‘for which we all stand.’ This unity could not ‘be written down as a rigid thesis or in a directive. It is more a brotherhood and less of a rigid system.’³¹ To achieve this, Bevin explained, the support of the US was necessary: ‘The United States and the countries of Latin America are clearly as much a part of our common Western civilisation as are the

²⁸ Dianne Kirby, ‘Divinely Sanctioned: The Anglo-American Cold War Alliance and the Defence of Western Civilisation and Christianity, 1945–48,’ in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35, 3, 2000, 385–412

²⁹ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Commons, 22 January 1948, cols. 407–8. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/jan/22/foreign-affairs>

³⁰ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Commons, 22 January 1948, cols. 408–9. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/jan/22/foreign-affairs>

³¹ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Commons, 22 January 1948, cols. 407–8. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/jan/22/foreign-affairs>

nations of the British Commonwealth. The power and resources of the United States (...) will be needed if we are to create a solid, stable and healthy world.’³² What Bevin explained in his speech to the Commons is what Deighton has identified as the ‘dual policy,’ which existed between Britain and the US from May 1946. In this scheme, the appearance of great power cooperation was maintained publicly, while in reality, the focus of British policy was focused on establishing a Western alliance to contain what was perceived as Soviet aims, primarily in Europe and Germany.³³

By 1947, as part of the emphasis on building on cultural ties in Europe, religion began to play a more direct role in the government’s policies towards Germany. Immediately following the Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow in March-April 1947, Lord Pakenham visited Germany where he also met briefly with Bevin who made a stop in Berlin on his way back to London from Moscow. Lord Pakenham, then newly appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and head of the UK section of the German and Austrian Control Commission, had been in Germany on a ‘fact finding mission’ to meet among others with German Church leaders. Upon his arrival he stated ‘I come in a spirit of goodwill. My political outlook is founded on Christianity, both regarding justice and mercy – remembering the past, but with an eye mainly on the future.’³⁴ Further, in a meeting with the Evangelical leaders in Cologne, Pakenham stressed that he ‘attached the very highest importance to religion’ which he regarded as ‘infinitely more important than politics’ he also felt that ‘political principles only had value insofar as they gave expression to the

³² Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Commons, 22 January 1948, cols. 402-3. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/jan/22/foreign-affairs>

³³ Anne Deighton, *The Impossible Peace: Britain, the Division of Germany, and the Origins of the Cold War*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, 6-7

³⁴ ‘GOODWILL TO GERMANS,’ *Cairns Post*, 29 Apr 1947, consulted online: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article42509647>. During his visit, Pakenham also met with Konrad Adenauer, chairman of the C.D.U. to discuss the British occupation and the relationship between the German Protestants and C.D.U. This is, however, an area, which will not be dealt with in this thesis. See also The British National Archives (UKNA) FO 945/187, ‘Interview with Dr. Adenauer, Chairman of the C.D.U.’ 25 September, 1947; see also Lord Pakenham, *Born to Believe*, Jonathan Cape, 1953

Christian faith.³⁵ Pakenham was of course speaking against the background of the Moscow Conference, which had ended in a further hardening of relations between East and West on the question of Germany. This had led the Soviet controlled German Newspaper *Neues Deutschland* to write that ‘Russia stood firm in Moscow for a united, democratic, and independent Germany against reactionaries, imperialists, ‘Lords of Monopoly’ and the great landed proprietors whose efforts were directed to the splitting of Germany.’³⁶ The Soviets were responding to the proposed merger of the British and American zones in Germany, which was announced around the same time as the Moscow Conference.

Including German Christians in reconstruction after the war was based on necessity, as the Anglo-American plan to restore normal conditions in Germany had to rely on constructive forces within Germany itself; but a common footing was also found necessary to meet the great bitterness felt not only by German churchmen, but by the German population in general, that once again ‘the exclusive guilt of all this evil is burdened on the German people, which has to bear the punishment and cannot count on any sparing.’³⁷

Following Bevin’s and Lord Pakenham’s visit to Germany, the bizonal plan was activated, aiming at a political and economic fusion of the British and American zones ‘anxious to make Germany more self-supporting as soon as possible.’³⁸ A detailed account of the Bevin Plan and the creation of the British-American bizon

³⁵ UKNA FO 945/187. ‘Note on Lord Pakenham’s meeting with the Evangelical leaders at Cologne on Thursday, 25 September (Dr. Stoltenhoff, Dr. Buckmann)’, September 1947

³⁶ ‘Next Phase of Policy in British Zone,’ *The Times*, 28 April, 1947

³⁷ UKNA 1050/1619, ‘Open letter to the English and American church leaders’ from E. Rohde, Superintendent and Pastor of the Paulus church, Hanover, June 1945. Although this area will not be explored further in this thesis it should be noted that Foreign Office files, as well as the Church of England records, witness that many attempts were made by German clergy to stress this point, which, on several occasions made politicians abroad question if German repentance was genuine.

³⁸ ‘Western Germany,’ *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 13 May 1947, 5, consulted online: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article95524174>; ‘Restoring German Economy,’ *The Times*, 30 May, 1947

has been established elsewhere and we will return to it briefly in chapter 9.³⁹ Here it is sufficient to note that the Christian element played a significant role in ‘selling’ the Anglo-American alliance at home, but also in Germany, where church leaders had become increasingly drawn into German reconstruction, partly as a consequence of the efforts of British as well as ecumenical Christians during and immediately after the war.

The beginning of the cold war meant, as Churchill had anticipated, that Britain needed Western Atlantic and European protection against the Soviet threat. A rebuilt and militarily reinforced Europe was therefore essential, and only the US had the resources to achieve this. Both practically, and according to US demands, the reconstruction of continental Europe required Britain’s full participation, but this was seen in Whitehall to conflict with its wider interests. In terms of political power, economic interest, and cultural identity, Britain was still, as mentioned earlier, a global and imperial power. A fear was that to draw closer to the Continent would send out a signal to the dominions and lead to a further loss of Britain’s world power to the United States. Therefore, foreign policy required some means of drawing Europe together and a conduit for British involvement, which did not threaten the political and economic bases of its wider global interests. As Avi Shlaim has suggested, this ‘created a very low ceiling of European integration beyond which Bevin was not prepared to advance.’⁴⁰

At the same time, the FO had to consider the mood of the American public, and therefore endorsed US President, Harry Truman’s characterisation of the Cold War as one of history’s great religious wars, where the defence of ‘morality’ and

³⁹ Anne Deighton (1993)

⁴⁰ Avi Shlaim, *Britain and the Origins of European Unity, 1940-51*, Reading: University of Reading, 1978, 141; see also John Callaghan, ‘The Foreign Policy of the Attlee Government, 1945-50,’ in Paul Cothorn and Jonathan Davis, *British Labour Party and the Wider World: Domestic Politics, Internationalism and Foreign Policy*, I.B. Tauris 2007, chapter 5

‘western civilisation and Christianity’ was at stake. The FO, therefore, used religion to show Truman that Britain supported his policies, while at the same time convincing Bevin’s cabinet colleagues that his policies were in line with Labour’s socialist aspiration.⁴¹

In March 1948 the Brussels Pact between Britain, France, and the Benelux countries was signed.⁴² It was around this time that Bevin and Foreign Office began to construct the basis for a new form of coherence in Europe based upon common values and policies, and led by Britain.⁴³ Article III of the Brussels Pact was considered a ‘big opportunity,’ which the Secretary of State was ‘keen to make use of.’⁴⁴ To seek common factors uniting the Western Union countries, other than political, strategic and economic ones, Bevin established a working party in the Foreign Office’s Information Policy Department.⁴⁵ Included in the working party’s studies were the ‘spiritual and cultural’ factors, which were the third of four practical steps to implement Bevin’s Western Union, which was outlined by Frank Roberts, Bevin’s principal private secretary. It was this initiative, which led to a renewed strategic engagement with the churches and other agencies with cultural force after WWII.⁴⁶ Intellectuals, such as Isaiah Berlin, were also drawn into the work of finding the

⁴¹ Dianne Kirby (2000), 389

⁴² The Brussels Pact, also called the Treaty of Brussels or the Brussels Treaty, was initiated by five countries in Western Europe after World War II had weakened much of the military power of these countries. Its aim was to set out terms for economic, social and cultural cooperation, and especially, collective self-defence. The spirit and mandates of the Brussels Pact served as the basis for the establishment of the Western European Union, a defence union similar to NATO but excluding the USA and Canada. The Brussels Pact was signed on 17 March 1948

⁴³ Anne Deighton, ‘Don and Diplomat: Isaiah Berlin and Britain’s early Cold War,’ *Cold War History*, 13, 4, 2013, 525-540

⁴⁴ Article III of the Brussels Pact read: ‘The High Contracting Parties will make every effort in common to lead their peoples towards a better understanding of the principles which form the basis of their common civilization and to promote cultural exchanges by conventions between themselves or by other means.’ Source: UKNA FO 953/147, Draft minutes, Working Party on Spiritual Aspects of Western Union, 7 May, 1948

⁴⁵ UKNA FO953/144, C. F. A. Warner to Orme Sargent, 13 February 1948

⁴⁶ See, e.g., UKNA FO 953/147, ‘Working Party on Spiritual Aspects of Western Union,’ draft memorandum, B.C. MacDermot, 20 May, 1948

spiritual and cultural ideas and material, which should bind the countries of Western Europe together.⁴⁷ Here, however, only the churches will be examined.

Part of the background for Bevin's Western Union can be found in the outcome of the European Congress at the Hague in May 1948, which was partly a result of the efforts of the various movements, such as Churchill's UEM, that advocated Western European integration as a way to prevent new wars.⁴⁸ Although the Congress will not be examined in detail here it should be noted that the Congress provided an important framework to which Britain was committed, and to which the European churches had been assigned a part as well, particularly in the cultural area. The General Secretary of the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, Herbert Waddams, attended the Congress as a member of the Cultural Commission under the Spanish diplomat Dr. Madariaga. After the Congress, Waddams reported back to CFR and BCC that references to Christian values had successfully been included in the Conference report. There had also been general agreement on the importance of human rights and religious liberty and it was emphasized that 'the present danger for the citizen came from his own government:' an international court had therefore been advocated to which the individual citizen should appeal against his own government.⁴⁹

Back in Britain, the task of finding a coherent spiritual dimension of Western Union was considered problematic. Particularly difficult, it was felt, was the diverse religious landscape of Europe, where, in many countries, religious affiliations were still closely associated to nationality, hence, a denominational basis for the approach

⁴⁷ For a detailed account of Isaiah Berlin's role in Foreign Office see Anne Deighton (2013)

⁴⁸ See, e.g., Sandro Guerrieri (2014)

⁴⁹ Church of England Record Centre (CERC), BCC DIA 2/1/1/2, BCC International Department, minutes of meeting held 13 May, 1948

was considered difficult.⁵⁰ In 1948, almost precisely a year after Churchill had held his mass meeting in the Albert Hall to inaugurate his United Europe Movement, chaired by Archbishop Fisher, the Albert Hall was to host another mass meeting in the name of European unity; only this time the purpose was to mobilise the churches in Britain and in Europe to support Bevin's spiritual aspects of Western Union.

It was Lord Pakenham, chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and minister responsible to the Foreign Office for the British zones of occupation in Germany and Austria, who unofficially approached his friend John Collins to organize a meeting at the Albert Hall.⁵¹ Collins, who was later, against Fisher's rather strong opposition, but on Attlee's insistence, appointed Canon of St. Paul's, was in 1948 Dean of Oriel College, Oxford, and had become a socialist in the 1930s.⁵² During the war he served as a Royal Air Force chaplain, and at the war's conclusion he endeavored to bring Christian faith to bear on public issues through the Fellowship of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, an undertaking in which Stafford Cripps and his wife Isobel were engaged as well. In December 1946, Collins organized a meeting under the slogan 'Call to Christian Action in Public Affairs.' It was out of this that Christian Action emerged, to encourage 'the application of Christian principles in national and international affairs.'⁵³ It was also the aim of Christian Action to 'break down isolation of Germans,' and to further the principle of reconciliation in British policy, particularly towards Germany.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Anne Deighton (2013) 525-540

⁵¹ Diana Clavering Collins, *Christian Action*, London: Gollancz, 1949, 76-77

⁵² LPL, Fisher 49, Bevir to Fisher, 11 June, 1948; Fisher to Bevir, 15 June, 1948; Attlee to Fisher, 25 June, 1948

⁵³ Collins (1949) 22-30, 36; John Collins, *Faith under Fire*, Frewin, 1966, pp. 101-2

⁵⁴ 'Christian Action Movement,' Letter to the editor of *The Times* from Lord Halifax, Stafford Cripps, Lindsay of Barker, W.D. Ross, Elizabeth Pakenham, Quintin Hogg, J.W. Heading (Mayor of Oxford), and John Collins, 3 April, 1948

In March 1947, the Oxford Committee for Promoting Friendship and Understanding with Europe was set up by Christian Action.⁵⁵ The Committee had grown out of a Town Hall meeting in Oxford, where resolutions about Germany and other needy European countries were discussed. The Committee had Lord Lindsay and the Mayor of Oxford as its presidents, and as its Vice Presidents Lady Pakenham, Sir David Ross, and M.P. Quintin Hogg.⁵⁶ A resolution was moved which concerned Christian action in public affairs at home. Subsequently Collins asked Lord Halifax and Stafford Cripps to serve as patrons of Christian Action, which they accepted.⁵⁷ The movement was intended to include all the churches and to work across political parties. It was also a perfect platform from which to launch Bevin's initiative of a spiritual union in Western Europe.

Although the suggestion for the Albert Hall meeting came from Lord Pakenham, Collins organized it with Cripps's help, to whom he sent a detailed memorandum detailing its aims.⁵⁸ The memorandum reveals that it was felt to be necessary to 'persuade the leaders of the churches' to be present at the meeting, but 'as far as possible the speaking should be done by lay people.' The purpose of the meeting was to 'stir up Christians' to give full support to the policy of a union of western Europe and 'to demonstrate to Europe that such a policy (...) needs behind it a Christian ideology to support it and to inform it.'⁵⁹ Collins also noted in his memorandum that '[F]or the benefit of Continental Catholicism it is, I understand, vital that Mr. Bevin should speak out plainly for a Christian basis to his policy. The

⁵⁵ LPL, Collins Papers, MSS3290, f. 7, Collins to Halifax, 26 February 1948

⁵⁶ LPL, Collins Papers, MSS3290, f. 7, Collins to Halifax, 26 February 1948

⁵⁷ LPL, Collins Papers, MSS3290, f. 7, Collins to Halifax, 26 February 1948; 'Christian Action Patrons,' *The Times*, 12 March, 1948

⁵⁸ LPL, Collins Papers, MSS3290, f. 11, Collins to Cripps, 12 March 1948; MSS3290, f.12– 13, 'Plans for a Meeting to Get the Christians in Support of a Union of Western Europe,' undated but March 1948

⁵⁹ LPL, Collins papers, MSS3290, f.12– 13, 'Plans for a Meeting to Get the Christians in Support of a Union of Western Europe,' undated but March 1948

Catholic parties of the left feel snubbed,' and further 'the aim of showing a united progressive Christian front in Britain in support of the present Labour government's experiment in social democracy should not be lost sight of.'⁶⁰ Interestingly, Christian Action was pictured in the media as a pressure group to 'influence British policy towards Germany,' being 'concerned with the union of western European nations in an effort to direct it along Christian lines.'⁶¹ In reality, however, the movement strongly reflected Bevin's ideas on how to strategically use Article III of the Brussels Pact. Although it has not been possible to locate in the archives evidence of a direct link between the Foreign Office working party on spiritual Union and the idea to hold a mass meeting at Albert Hall promoting the spiritual basis of Western Union, the fact that Cripps was organizer provides some indication of the political and strategic aims of the meeting. Bevin's deliberate distance from Christian Action and the Albert Hall meeting was presumably based on caution, particularly since religious leaders from all over Europe were the main target group.

The list of speakers for the Albert Hall meeting indicates how much weight was given to win the minds of religious leaders in Europe as a whole.⁶² Once again,

⁶⁰ LPL, Collins papers, MSS3290, f.12– 13, 'Plans for a Meeting to Get the Christians in Support of a Union of Western Europe,' undated but March 1948

⁶¹ 'Christian Action and European Union,' *The Times*, 23 April, 1948

⁶² The speakers for the Albert Hall meeting were: Lord Halifax (chairman), patron of Christian Action and Conservative party member; Herr Karl Arnold, The minister-president of North Rhine Westphalia, member of C.D.U. in Germany, Catholic, trade unionist and involved in the 1944 plot against Hitler; Sir Stafford Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer and patron of Christian Action; Dr. Egbert Emmen, General Secretary of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, Protestant and member of Dutch resistance movement during the war; Herr Dr. Adolf Grimme, Minister of Education in Lower Saxony, member of S.P.D. in Germany, Protestant, active in German resistance movement during the war; Baron Carl Hamilton, Governor-General of Oestergoetland, Sweden, Protestant, formerly permanent under-secretary of Swedish Foreign Office; Miss Florence Hancock, Chairman T.U.C., Congregationalist; Signor Iginio Giordani, member of the Italian National Assembly, Catholic, politician; Richard Sullivan, chair of the Catholic Social Guild; Monsieur André Philip, Socialist member of the French National Assembly, Protestant, Doctor of Law, at time of occupation he was attached to the British Expeditionary Force as liaison officer, after liberation he held a post as Minister of Finance; Monsieur Maurice Schumann, member of the French National Assembly, Catholic, journalist, liaison officer with British Army, leader of the Popular Republican Movement; Monsieur Auguste de Schryver, leader of the Christian Democrats in Belgium. Platform support: Mr. J.D. Woodruff (Sword of the Spirit); Miss Baeta (African Christians); Sir Frank Willis (Y.M.C.A.); Miss May Curven (Y.M.C.A.); the Mayor of Westminster; Lady Pakenham (Christian Action, Oxford); The

Archbishop Fisher was to take the stage, only this time not as chairman, but, as the leader of the Church of England to say prayers, which, however, had to be approved in advance to make sure that no denomination, particularly the Catholics, would be offended. Both the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Moderators of the Free Churches and the Church of Scotland were present at the Albert Hall meeting.⁶³

Neither Attlee nor Bevin took part in the Albert Hall meeting as it was not officially sponsored by the Labour Party. It is significant to note, however, that while planning of the meeting was in high gear in March 1948, two other significant events took place, both in the context of the Soviet take-over in Czechoslovakia. The first was that Bevin addressed the Cabinet with his suggestion to involve the churches actively in the establishment of a spiritual union.⁶⁴ The second was that Bevin asked for a meeting with Rev. J.M. Richardson, Moderator of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches to ‘discuss certain questions connected with ‘our present foreign policy.’⁶⁵ Bevin then met with Richardson, Cardinal Griffin, and Archbishop Fisher before the Albert Hall meeting.⁶⁶ Bevin then appointed Cripps to assume

Assistant Chaplain R.A.F; the Chaplain of the Fleet; the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster; the Archbishop of Canterbury; the Moderator of the Free Church Council; the Chaplain General (War Office); Lord Pakenham; the Bishop of Chichester; Mrs. Fisher (Mother’s Union); Dr. Chen Chung Lu (Chinese Christians); Dr. Malaiperunam (Indian Christians); Reverend Oliver Tomkins (WCC); Lieutenant Colonel Ward (Salvation Army); Reverend D. Say (BCC); Sir G.F. Tyrrell (the British and Foreign Bible Society); Mr. F.B. Drakenstein (President, the Grail); Mr. P. Keegan (Young Catholic Workers); Alderman Ackroyd (Brotherhood Movement); Reverend A.R. Booth (Student Christian Movement); Reverend S.M. Berry (Congregational Union of England and Wales); Lieutenant Colonel the Lord Rowallan (Boy Scouts Association); Mr. Kenneth Grayston (Director, Religious Broadcasting, representing); Mr. H.W. Acomb (Catholic Truth Society); Reverend Prebendary P.T.R. Kirk (Industrial Christian Fellowship); Mr. E. Colgrove (Christian Action, Oxford); Mr. W.W. Kay (Independent Methodist Association); Reverend Gilbert Williams (Toc H.); Miss M. Wingate (Federal Union); Rt. Reverend the Bishop of St. Andrews; Mr. Conrad Bonacina (the People and Freedom Group); Very Reverend the Dean of Westminster; Mr. Gill (Church of England Youth Movement); Rt. Reverend the Bishop of Kingston; The Lord Layton (United Europe Movement); Reverend A.H. Gray (English Prebytarian Church); Mr. R.D. Rees (Council of Joint British Missionary Societies); Mr. Derek Holroyd (Christian Action); Reverend Bryan Green; Mr. P. Howard (Oxford Group)

⁶³ LPL, Collins papers, MSS3290, f.12– 13, ‘Plans for a Meeting to Get the Christians in Support of a Union of Western Europe,’ undated but March 1948

⁶⁴ UKNA, CAB 128/25/12 ‘The Threat to Western Civilisation. Memorandum by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 3 March, 1948

⁶⁵ LPL, Collins papers, MS3290, f. 14, F.K. Roberts to Richardson, 12 March, 1948

⁶⁶ Unfortunately no minutes exist from the meeting

primary responsibility for government policies pursuing appropriate action to engage the churches in the Western Union.⁶⁷ So, although Labour was not officially sponsoring the initiative, evidence suggests that it was largely a product of Bevin's ideas. This is underlined further by a letter from Cripps to the British Ambassador to Rome (1947-53) Victor Mallet where Cripps stressed that they were aiming at getting Italian European speakers to attend the Albert Hall meeting because 'H.M.G. have asked me to do this but not officially.'⁶⁸ Although the Albert Hall meeting did, in the end, only take place after the Italian elections, Collins had hoped that the meeting would be 'an immediate means of helping towards the defeat of political Communism in Italy and France; and (...) a step in the direction of getting a United Europe upon sound foundations.' It was suggested that it might assist anti-Communist forces in the Italian election on 18 April and redress the impression among Catholic-dominated Christian Democrat parties that Labour was snubbing them in favour of socialists. Cripps then persuaded Cardinal Griffin to attend, and asked British embassies abroad for speakers. He also arranged for the BBC to report the meeting, underlining again that he was preparing the meeting in his private, not official, capacity.⁶⁹

At the Albert Hall meeting the platform was filled with church leaders along with Pakenham and, representing Churchill's UEM, Lord Layton. A conservative, Lord Halifax, took the chair and Cripps gave the concluding address. Bevin himself was absent, but messages from both Attlee and Churchill were read by Halifax in his opening speech. Attlee offered a general affirmation of 'the absolute moral values on which our Christian civilization is based;' Churchill's message stressed that the 'new Europe' must be built on 'moral and spiritual foundations.' Among the speeches,

⁶⁷ LPL, Collins papers, MS3290, f. 16, McAlphine to Spicer, 15 March, 1948

⁶⁸ LPL, Collins papers, MS3290, f. 18, Cripps to Victor Mallet, 20 March, 1948

⁶⁹ LPL, Collins Papers, MSS3290, ff. 18-20, Cripps to Ambassador Erik Boheman, Ambassador Philip Nichols, Sir V. Mallet, 20 March 1948

references to the historical heritage of Christendom and to the necessity of a Christian, 'spiritual' basis, for social and political life, combined with support for European unity, constituted the major themes. At the meeting, Cripps stressed that the meeting was not an ordinary Christian gathering but 'an attempt to mobilize Christian effort and Christian faith in Europe behind the great political, social, and economic drive to turn our future towards the ways of peace.' Miss Florence stressed that the T.U.C. were 'firm in their support of a union of the western nations.'⁷⁰ Not surprisingly, talk about communism dominated the event.⁷¹ To the extent that the Albert Hall meeting was established to effectively signal Britain's linkage to the continent and the need for the West to be united against the threat of the East, it was a great success. The meeting was sold out in advance, two thousand persons were turned away, and it drew a 'young and attentive' audience of eight thousand. The meeting was reported at length on the BBC and widely in the press and on the day six hundred people committed themselves to the aims of Christian Action and most of the twelve hundred letters received afterward were adjudged to be sincere.⁷²

Not everyone within the church ranks was happy with the rapid development towards a divided Europe. Bishop George Bell attended the 1948 Albert Hall meeting, but was not willing to offer even lukewarm support for Bevin's Western Union. Bell was among the most radical voices in the Church of England when it came to visions of a united Europe. As we have already seen in previous chapters, Bell had been talking about the idea to establish the United States of Europe since 1939, and throughout the war he maintained that a federation of some form in Europe should be

⁷⁰ 'Union based on Christianity,' *The Times*, 26 April, 1948

⁷¹ Christian Action, *A Call to Action by Christians in the Present Crisis: A Report on the Meeting Held at the Albert Hall, on Sunday, April 25, at 7.30 pm*, Oxford: Christian Action, 1948, pp. 2, 12-37

⁷² LPL, Collins Papers, MSS3290, ff. 52-57, 'Christian Action, 'Follow Up' of the Albert Hall Meeting - a Second Memorandum. A Report Presented at the Second Meeting at the Caxton Hall, on July 21st, 1948'

one of Britain's peace aims.⁷³ In the years after 1945 Bell continued to press for a united Europe and Germany's role in it. During the War Bell had, as we saw in chapter 3, warned against the Soviet Union and the threat he felt it posed to Germany and Europe, and therefore urged the Allies to offer some positive peace aims for Germany.⁷⁴ In June 1947, after the failure of the Moscow Conference of foreign ministers to resolve the question of the future of Germany, and in anticipation of the next conference to be held in November in London, Bell spoke in the Lords against the division of Germany in the context of the state of Europe at large.⁷⁵ 'The future of Europe' was 'inescapably bound up with Germany;' 'If Germany is divided, Europe will be divided,' he declared. He continued:

*'British foreign policy should be against the further division of Europe. So far as we can arrange or promote it there must be no iron screen, either in imagination or reality ... Let Europe be envisaged as a whole; let the old national disruptions and the old national barriers come to an end ... Let the economic interdependence of all Europe, whether East or West be one of our foreign policy aims, and as part of that, the economic interdependence of the east and west of Germany.'*⁷⁶

In October 1947, before the London Conference, Bell put a resolution before the Convocation of Canterbury the Church's assembly of bishops. The intention was to rally the support of the church and the public for a particular solution for Germany. He urged Bevin to 'have a policy,' and not simply to wait and see 'what the others will propose.'⁷⁷ Bell had prepared his own policy, which suggested the 'progressive establishment of a United States of Europe with a common foreign, military, and

⁷³ Parliamentary Debates, Hansard, House of Lords debate, 19 December 1944, cols. 402-7, consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1944/dec/19/unifying-forces-of-europe>. See also Philip Coupland, 'George Bell, the question of Germany, and the Cause of European Unity,' in Andrew Chandler (ed.), *The Church and Humanity. The Life and Work of George Bell, 1883-1958*, Surrey: Ashgate 2012 (ebook), location 2844 of 6220. See also chapter 3

⁷⁴ See chapter 3

⁷⁵ House of Lords debate (Hansard), 27 November 1945, cols.52-56. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1945/nov/27/the-international-situation>

⁷⁶ House of Lords debate (Hansard), 27 November 1945, cols.52-56. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1945/nov/27/the-international-situation>

⁷⁷ Lambeth Palace Archive (LPL) The Chronicle of Convocation, October 1947, 244-62

economic policy.’ Bell’s urgings to Government were ignored and his resolution was passed by Convocation only after Fisher had redrafted and removed any suggestion of federalism.⁷⁸

So, when Bevin launched his idea of a Western Union, Bell was sceptical. He pointed to the deliberate vagueness of the concept and stated that a real union demanded ‘a common economic plan (...) some sort of common political structure, and (...) a real military alliance.’⁷⁹ Although Bell, by 1948, seemed alone with his federal views in Britain, he had an alliance with the Continental section of WCC. Secretary General of WCC in-formation, Visser t’Hooft, had opposed the Allied policy of unconditional surrender, which had made the actions of the German resistance irrelevant to the war at large. Visser t’Hooft believed that it could have been possible for the Allies to include the Soviets in an arrangement with the German opposition.⁸⁰ He was convinced that millions of lives could have been saved, and did not much trust the British and American governments. He was unwilling to support a new political conflict caused by balance of power politics, he believed that Europe should either cease to exist or be converted wholeheartedly to unity and Christianity.⁸¹ It is clear that George Bell’s ecumenical idealism was closer to the Continent than to Britain in the postwar years.

Archbishop Fisher, on the other hand, did not agree with George Bell and Visser t’Hooft about the need to establish a federal Europe. Although Fisher was a supporter of Churchill’s United Europe Movement he was, as mentioned, strongly opposed to any form of federal unity.⁸² So, to the extent that Bell, as chairman of

⁷⁸ LPL, The Chronicle of Convocation, October 1947, 244-62

⁷⁹ House of Lords Debates (Hansard), 3 March 1948, cols. 349-50. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

⁸⁰ Willem Visser t’Hooft, *Memoirs*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1987, 162

⁸¹ Willem Visser t’Hooft (1987), 162

⁸² Philip Coupland (2006), 94

CFR, was to be considered Fisher's advisor on international matters, Fisher did not agree with him, and he did not take his advice. Bell was becoming increasingly isolated with his views on Europe.

The Churches, European Unity and the Question of Germany

The question of Germany influenced the ecumenical unity project. First of all, the question of Germany's future was at the heart of the new international conflict, a conflict, which the churches became increasingly drawn into in spite of attempts to avoid this; second, the German Evangelical Church had been an important and influential member of the ecumenical movement since its beginning, and churchmen inside and outside of Germany were eager to see the German church re-join the movement, but the Allies' policy of no fraternisation made this difficult; third, Germany had become the object of conflict within the ecumenical movement itself. By 1945, the overall objective of the ecumenical movement was to avoid the national divisions of the immediate past and acknowledge no 'distinction between victor nations, vanquished nations and neutral nations.'⁸³ Much of the church regarded ecumenism as the dominant and most important Christian concern in the post-war world, and it provided Christians with a narrative for the future, which placed its emphasis not on German difference but on the commonality between Christian nations. But, as explained earlier, during the War, a division had begun to develop between the British-American and the Continental sections of the movement. It was felt by the continental section, led by Visser t'Hooft, that British and American churchmen were aligning themselves too much with British and American foreign policy interests. The division was strengthened by the separation of the movement's

⁸³ LPL, Church Assembly Report of Proceedings, Spring 1946, Vol. XXVI, p. 75

key personnel during the War. After the War, many churchmen hoped to solve the differences between the sections of the movement. The question of Germany - the role of the German church during the war, questions of German guilt, and the question of how the movement should handle the question of the increasing fear of communism, especially within the churches themselves, were, however, difficult to detach from national loyalties, and these questions severely obstructed the progress of the movement. We shall therefore now turn to look briefly at the question of Germany and the views held, primarily by Geoffrey Fisher who, as Archbishop had decision-making power, and supported the position of the British government; and George Bell, who represented a voice of dissent within the church, was supported by the continental leg of WCC, and who was personally a strong voice in the formation of public opinion in the UK and abroad.

In 1939 the British Government articulated an understanding of Nazism as imposed on an innocent German population – an interpretation that the Church of England supported. The ecumenical movement had made this distinction at the 1937 Oxford Conference, where the German Evangelical Church had been prevented from participation by Hitler.⁸⁴ It was at this point declared that war would be ‘a war for the liberation of the German people’ and a distinction was made between the German people and the Nazi regime.⁸⁵ After the invasion of France, however, the portrayal of the German nation was transformed.⁸⁶ The idea of the population as victims of Nazism was abandoned, and portrayals of the savage German took over. Lord Vansittart’s radio broadcasts, which were subsequently available in print, were the most extreme of these accounts of Germany and his arguments won acceptance in the

⁸⁴ See chapter 2

⁸⁵ Halifax quoted in Kurt Jürgensen, ‘British Occupation Policy after 1945 and the Problem of ‘Re-educating Germany,’ *History*, 68, 223, 1985, 226

⁸⁶ Jill Jones, ‘Eradicating Nazism from the British Zone of Germany: Early Policy and Practice,’ *German History*, 8, 2, 1990, 146

British public. Vansittart sought to relate the Nazi devil to its alleged Prussian forebears, and portrayed the previous century as a continuous battle against various forms of German aggression.⁸⁷ The British policy of interning German refugees, the notion of unconditional surrender, and the Allied bombing policies during WWII which directly targeted German civilians as enemies, were all events which fitted into this characterization of the German.⁸⁸ Although a more nuanced view was present in the FO at the time, at the War's end, the perception of collective guilt shared by all Germans for Nazi atrocities, was strong in the British public. But there was still an intense debate, even in the Labour Party on whether Hitler was a bad man leading decent people astray, or a product of a bad society.⁸⁹

The Church of England, and most specifically George Bell, advocated the idea of the 'other Germany.' Although some, such as the Archbishop of York, Cyril Garbett, were suspicious of their true repentance, the majority of the Church of England clergy generally saw Germans, and in particular German Christians, as victims of the Nazi regime. In May 1944 German Protestantism had been highlighted by the Foreign Office as a 'constructive element in social and political life in Germany.'⁹⁰ The Ministry of Information had, also in wartime, similarly instructed that the Protestant Churches in Germany were potentially important to any future occupation because they would 'help people find their bearings again and devote themselves to constructive effort.'⁹¹

⁸⁷ Lord Vansittart, *Lessons of my Life*, London, 1943, 208

⁸⁸ Tom Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust. Christianity, Memory and Nazism*, The Boudell Press, 2006, 116

⁸⁹ See Gordon, Michael, *Conflict and Consensus in Labour's Foreign Policy 1914-1965*, Stanford University Press, 1969; see also Fitzsimons, M.A., *The Foreign Policy of the British Labour Government 1945-1951*, Notre Dame: Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1953

⁹⁰ Tom Lawson (2006), chapter 4

⁹¹ Tom Lawson, (2006), chapter 4

On the question concerning how to confront the expanding Soviet Union, the Labour Party had its own internal divisions, which had not vanished by the end of the war. Left-wing factions within Labour had since 1941 favoured the idea that Britain should seek to befriend the Soviet Union, rather than the US, which would require a different take on the ‘German problem’ than what was proposed within the Anglo-American framework. Others (the so-called *Keep Left* authors) had favoured a socialist third force via European integration. By 1945 the British desire to hanging on to as much as possible of the rest of the Empire-Commonwealth had strengthened, as this was seen as a symbol of Britain’s great power status, and as a tool in building a new world order alongside the US. To some within Labour, this looked like a very big mouthful for a country which was bankrupt after the war. They pointed out as early as in May 1947 that it committed Britain to forward defences all over the globe, under American leadership. This view, however, largely disappeared when the Marshall Plan was launched.⁹² So, the question of Germany was, in the immediate post-war period, mostly marked with conflict between demands of the British public to punish Germans collectively, on one hand, and the – strategic – quest for some form of a united Europe on the other.

The same picture was reported to the FO by British Ambassador Lord Halifax in Washington who wrote that ‘public anxiety has undoubtedly been growing over the failure to eradicate Nazi influences.’⁹³ To the extent that the American public in 1945 took interest in Europe at all, it was pictures of human suffering caused by Hitler, which, as we saw in chapter 3, Britain had itself planted in the American press during the war years in order to win support for American engagement, which dominated the

⁹² John Callaghan, ‘The Foreign Policy of the Attlee Government, 1945-50,’ in Paul Cothorn and Jonathan Davis, *British Labour Party and the Wider World: Domestic Politics, Internationalism and Foreign Policy*, I.B. Tauris 2007

⁹³ UKNA, FO 371/44538, ‘General Distribution from Washington to Foreign Office,’ Earl of Halifax, 30 September 1945

American public mood towards post-war Germany. And this image was not to be changed overnight.

The increased post-war collaboration between the US and Britain, as we have seen, meant that the post-war planning concerning Germany began to change. The FO realised that too harsh a treatment of Germany either might push the country into the arms of the Soviet Union or fail to be a helpful bulwark against the Soviet Army, or the economic centre of a revived European and German economy. The focus on Germany, then, gradually changed from questions of guilt and punishment to strategic questions of how to secure Germany as a part of the Western bloc, which brought the British government and the churches closer in perspective.

The BCC too was concerned about the treatment of Germany in the immediate post-war situation. In July 1945 a group was formed to consider how to influence the British public towards a more positive attitude towards Germany, and to counter the ‘false elements in Vansittartism.’⁹⁴ The BCC recognised the need for German repentance in order to change the public mood, but, as the Dean of St Paul’s noted, ‘sitting on a man’s head is perhaps not the best position from which to recommend penitence.’⁹⁵ Realising how complex the situation was, the initial primary aim of the BCC was to attempt to counter the Vansittart thesis of ‘a thousand years of aggression.’⁹⁶ There was at this point still a strong belief that the ecumenical movement was to fulfil ‘God’s will for unity,’ and that WCC was ‘destined to do a great work in the world,’ a task for which a united Europe was of paramount importance.⁹⁷ But it also followed British political developments closely and generally supported the political calls for unity, although this form of unity was not

⁹⁴ BCC 2/2/2/1, Minutes from meeting in Executive Committee, 23 July, 1945

⁹⁵ BCC Council Minutes, September 1942 - April, 1952, minutes of meeting held 4 October 1945

⁹⁶ BCC Council Minutes, September 1942 - April, 1952, minutes of meeting held 4 October 1945

⁹⁷ BCC Council Minutes, September 1942 - April, 1952, minutes of meeting held 31 October 1946

the transcending form of Christian community envisaged by the ecumenical movement.

The denazification program was a particular thorn in the eye for the churches. Denazification was one of the pillars in the Allies' post-war policies in Germany; but was seen by the churches as an obstacle to their work. The ecumenical movement was trying, and had been trying during the war, to establish the belief that the German people in general were different from the Nazi state. The denazification policy did not fit into this picture. There was, for Anglicans, no one to denazify apart from the leading criminals who were being dealt with by the International Military Tribunal and war-crime trials.⁹⁸ The suggestion that the wider population needed to be denazified was 'contrary to all Christian principles' and, it was argued, would give rise to feelings of injustice on the part of the German population.⁹⁹

After the war, many churchmen in Britain saw the role of the Evangelical churches in Germany, with whom they had had very positive relations before the war, as central to the re-integration of Germany into the international community, or at least Western Europe. In spite of Fisher's support for the unconditional surrender policy, and his backing for the Allies' general post-war policies in Germany, he supported the inclusion of the German churches in German post-war reconstruction. In the summer of 1945 Fisher therefore corresponded personally with Field Marshal Bernhard Law Montgomery (1887-1976), Commander in Chief of the British Army of the Rhine (BOAR), and then Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) from 1946 to 1948, and urged him to consider a constructive role for the German churches. Montgomery responded positively to Fisher's request, and followed Fisher's suggestion to appoint a staff chaplain to help form recommendations for an official

⁹⁸ Parliamentary Debates, Hansard, House Of Lords Debate, 5 May, 1949, cols. 376-85, consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1949/may/05/german-war-crimes-trials>

⁹⁹ Tom Lawson (2006), chapter 4

policy concerning the role of the German churches.¹⁰⁰ Montgomery was positive towards the idea of strengthened Christianity in Germany, particularly as a bulwark against the spread of Communism, and that the German churches direct their attention towards youth, and organisations such as trade unions and boy scouts. ‘The best antidote to bad ideas,’ he wrote, ‘is to possess good ones.’¹⁰¹

Fisher was aware that support from the British government was essential if relations with the German church were to be re-established, and independent manoeuvre room given to the German pastors. Fisher, then, wrote to the Secretary of State for War, presenting the Chaplain’s report and submitting five proposals of his own designed to help the German churches in their own life and to facilitate contacts between them and other churches.¹⁰² Although the Secretary of State for War promised to examine the proposal carefully, Fisher did not receive any encouraging news.¹⁰³

Particularly at the beginning of the occupation, Fisher and Bell, along with BCC and WCC, felt frustration over the British authorities’ lack of clear policies for Germany in the religious area. Soon, however, they began to see this as an opportunity to influence the British government with their own visions and an active effort was made to communicate these. In June 1945 Archbishop Fisher wrote to Archie Craig of BCC that ‘the Chaplain-General and others have been talking to me about the position in Germany. Chaplains want to know what is to be their immediate

¹⁰⁰ Edward Carpenter (1991), 155

¹⁰¹ Field Marshall Montgomery to Geoffrey Fisher, 1945. Quoted in Carpenter (1991), 156

¹⁰² Fisher suggested that 1) representatives of the BCC and the Christian Reconstruction in Europe Committee be sent out to Germany for discussion with its Church leaders; 2) personnel from the German churches be authorised to accept invitations to attend conferences abroad and facilities provided for them to do so; 3) the British Control Commission be encouraged to press for arrangements to enable German churchmen in different zones to meet one another; 4) a church leader of high standing be nominated immediately as adviser to a separate Church Affairs Section on policy matters affecting the German Evangelical Churches. Source: BCC Council Minutes, September 1942- April, 1952, minutes of meeting held 4 October 1945

¹⁰³ Edward Carpenter (1991), 157

policy in dealing with German pastors and the long-term policy. The Archbishop of York has been talking confidentially to people in the Foreign Office and finds that they haven't even begun to think of a policy.'¹⁰⁴ After this message, Fisher arranged an informal BCC meeting to discuss the matter, and in May 1946 BCC's International Department agreed on a list of recommendations regarding Germany. It was stated that: 'The absence of any sign of a national policy in regard to Germany makes it doubly important that the churches, through the BCC or other appropriate avenue, should give guidance to the Christian conscience.' Christianity should be fostered within small groups independent of the state such as the family. George Bell, in his usual position as watchdog wrote letters to the Control Office to inquire about numbers of German people subject to denazification, voicing his general opposition to the programme.¹⁰⁵

Fisher's efforts show that as a new Archbishop he was not purely relying on the British government's policies towards Germany; he was also prepared to listen to those forces within his church who had been preparing for the peace during war time, with efforts to formulate Christian peace aims. But he was not a free agent. He was under pressure from Bell, who had remained in close contact with the German church during the war and who was one of the fiercest opponents to the post-war punishment of Germany; and from the BCC to whom a strong and functioning Germany was still seen as a prerequisite to the ecumenical project and the establishment of a WCC, as well as the best defence against Communism.

Another perspective on Fisher's efforts follows Tom Lawson's argument concerning the 'politics of memory.' The churches were, collectively, attempting to

¹⁰⁴ LPL, BCC/DIA/7/2/4/15/1, f. 37, Fisher to Craig, 21 June 1945

¹⁰⁵ See, e.g., UKNA FO 945/781, Bell to permanent secretary, the Allied Control Commission for Germany, Gilmour Jenkins, 1 February, 1947; M.J. Dean, Deputy Secretary, Control Office for Germany and Austria, to Bell, 25 February, 1947

find a ‘usable past’ – a collective sense of meaning of the events of recent history, which would allow them to move forward. The ecumenical movement wished to find a way of understanding the past which allowed German Christians to be welcomed back into the international community of churches. The conclusions of the 1937 Oxford Conference were helpful here emphasising that totalitarian regimes emerged from a general denial of Christianity. Nazism was then comparable to other regimes of the same sort, most specifically the Soviet Union. This perspective, as concluded in chapter 2, did not only emerge after the diplomatic breakdown with the Soviet Union after the war but was the most significant element in the ecumenical response to the totalitarian state during the 1930s. It was this perspective, which ‘cleared’ German Christians from guilt in 1937 and motivated the Oxford Conference delegates to send a message of sympathy, which ‘mourned the absence’ of their ‘brethren in the German Evangelical Church.’¹⁰⁶ It was, once again, this perspective, which was to ‘save’ the German Christians from the guilt question in 1945.

So, when the German Confessing Church in 1945 with ‘the Stuttgarter Schuldbekentnis,’ known in English as the Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt, apologized for ‘not standing to our beliefs more courageously, for not praying more faithfully, for not believing more joyously, and for not loving more ardently,’ they were referring to the ecumenical idea that totalitarianism was a consequence of the denial of Christianity. This, however, was largely regarded, by populations and politicians alike, as a genuine repentance by the German church of the Nazi atrocities, an impression, which gave rise to some frustration in Germany.

There was, however, also a strong political side to this. The Church of England was, as noted by Lawson, given plenty of room to articulate its interpretation

¹⁰⁶ Joseph Oldham et al, *The Churches Survey their Task: The Report of the Conference at Oxford on Church, Community, and State*, George Allen 1937, Appendix A. See also chapter 2

of German history and its faith in the ‘other Germany,’ during the war and after. As the Cold War emerged Germany had to be recast in a new light – as part of the European cultural community, and re-education then became part of the policy to transform Germany into a potential bulwark against the Soviet Union. Signs of genuine German repentance were important in order to change public conceptions of Germany, and the Stuttgart Declaration was regarded as helpful to this aim. Both Bell and Fisher were, presumably, aware of this double meaning of the declaration.

Archival material does not suggest that Fisher, in 1945, was well informed about government policies towards Germany, presumably because they were only in the process of taking shape. In this moment of uncertainty Fisher chose to support the idea that Germany needed to get back on track as soon as possible in order to become a useful player in Europe. Presumably Fisher held the belief, which was held by the majority of the ecumenical movement, that Europe would be rebuilt as a regional power in the battle against Communism, in which Britain would play its part.

Fisher was consistent in attempting to influence the British Government to do more to awaken a public and Christian conscience concerning Germany and Europe. In November 1945 he made a broadcast to the German people, stressing that Britain was anxious to hasten the ‘time when in the comity of nations Germany can again have its place.’¹⁰⁷ He urged the German people to make their own contribution to a national revival and appealed particularly to the youth to return to Christian faith and allegiance in order that they might, in collaboration with churches of other countries, rebuild a Christian order of society. Fisher was speaking as an ecumenist, but he also, as urged by Montgomery, made an effort to address the youth, which was considered particularly vulnerable to Communist ideas. Later, Lord Pakenham spoke along the

¹⁰⁷ Edward Carpenter (1991), 159

same lines during his 1947 visit to Germany where he stressed that he was particularly concerned about the German youth.¹⁰⁸

So, in general it might be concluded that although the Church of England and BCC did not get a chance to coordinate efforts with regard to the German churches with those of Whitehall immediately after the war, evidence suggests that Church and government in Britain now instinctively worked along the same lines. It might also be indicated, although more research would be necessary to establish this, that Whitehall adopted the Church of England's and BCC's ideas to use the German churches as constructive elements in the reconstruction process, an opportunity, which became increasingly attractive with the establishment of the Anglo-American bizon; the plan of speeding up the German recovery process, which became clear after the Moscow Conference; and the increasing focus on religion as a strategic tool in the Anglo-American anti-Soviet policy.

Conclusion

In this chapter the churches' drive for European unity was looked at. The claim is made that there were two dimensions of the Christian idea of unity: the transnational community between all Christian countries globally embodied in WCC and the unity between specific countries with a common Christian legacy, the 'bearers of western civilization,' that is, the countries of western Europe, the UK, and the US. As new tensions arose internationally, with increasing western resistance against the Soviet Union and a new security debate about the Western countries beginning, the two ideas of unity began to conflict. The political divisions, which started to appear within the ecumenical movement, jeopardised the ecumenical idea of a world council, which

¹⁰⁸ 'New Phase of Policy in the British Zone,' *The Times*, 28 April, 1947

transcended international conflict, and risked excluding the Eastern Orthodox Churches from WCC.

In Britain, the UEM was established by Churchill, followed by Bevin's Western Union. Although the two initiatives had similar aims, Geoffrey Fisher primarily gave his support to Churchill. George Bell, who was by now chairman of CFR, and in this capacity, an advisor to Fisher on international affairs, rejected both UEM and Western Union as being too vague. Bell's call for a federal union in Europe, which was supported by the Continental members of WCC, was rejected by Fisher. Fisher, who was conservative by nature, believed that Britain would be best served in alliance with the US in order to regain her pre-war strength and wanted to stay close to mainstream political thinking in the UK and to the government in power. Although Fisher was against strong British engagements in Europe he advocated an anti-Vansittart attitude towards Germany and took initiatives to secure more freedom and influence for the German church.

In the next chapter we will examine the 1948 Lambeth Conference to see how the early Cold War tensions and rising anti-Communism were articulated within the Anglican community.

Chapter 6: The Church of England and the 1948 Lambeth Conference

In the previous chapter we looked at church reactions to events affecting the ideas of European unity after WWII. The primary areas investigated were, first, the United Europe Movement as brought forward by Winston Churchill and his team; and second the idea of a Western Union as brought forward by Ernest Bevin, with emphasis on the cultural and spiritual aspects of the union. Finally, it was discussed how the question of Germany shaped church opinion on the future of Europe. It was claimed that there were two dimensions to the Christian idea of unity: the transnational community between all Christian countries globally embodied in WCC, and the unity between specific countries with a common Christian legacy, the ‘bearers of western civilization,’ that is, the countries of Western Europe, the UK, and the US. As new tensions arose internationally, with increasing Western resistance against the Soviet Union and a new security debate about the Western countries beginning, these two ideas of unity began to conflict. The political divisions which started to appear within the ecumenical movement challenged the ecumenical idea of a ‘transcending’ world council, and risked excluding the Eastern Orthodox Churches from WCC.

In this chapter we will turn to the 1948 Lambeth Conference to see how the Cold War tensions and rising anti-Communism were articulated in the Anglican community. By the 1940s, the Lambeth conference, as we have seen, was primarily a forum for debate on contemporary matters of concern to the church. Although the outcome of the Lambeth Conferences was not binding for the membership churches, it carried great weight as an expression of opinion by the Anglican churches

collectively.¹ When Fisher took over the See of Canterbury in 1945 he decided that a Lambeth Conference had to be held in 1948 to bring the Anglican Community together and ‘rediscover themselves as an Anglican family.’ He was particularly interested in re-establishing strong ties with the American bishops.²

Before looking at Fisher’s efforts towards the Lambeth Conference, it is necessary to review the context in which the Conference took place, to see if Christian attitudes were altered by key events in the turbulent year of 1948.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the British Cold War strategy emerged before World War II ended: the perception of the Soviet Union as a threat to future European security had been present in the British Foreign Office at least since 1943.³ First of all, Britain had to protect its national interests in the post-war world; a part of which was to ensure that Communism did not advance further in Western Europe, hence, anti-Soviet policies were on the rise in Britain in the mid-1940s, and in Church circles, it is argued in this thesis, they had been there for decades.⁴

Although an anti-Communist agenda became the core of British post-war foreign policy soon after WWII, it was not until 1948 that this fact became publicly known. As we saw in the previous chapters the Church of England, particularly through the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), and the British Council of Churches (BCC), was engaged in its own planning for peace from 1939 onwards. Although the British churches stayed close to the British government’s foreign policy objectives they also developed their own post-war agenda. The post-war agenda of the churches was twofold: on one hand they aimed to develop their position as leaders of

¹ See chapter 1

² Edward Carpenter, *Cantuar. The Archbishops in their Office*, London: Mowbray, third edition 1997, 453

³ Anne Deighton, ‘Britain and the Cold War,’ Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010, 112 - 132

⁴ See chapter 2

transnational Christianity through the establishment of WCC, work in which George Bell had a leading role, on the other hand they made a great effort to strengthen the ties to the churches in the US. This work was done partly through the private initiative of the Peace Aims Group, but also by strengthening the official ties between the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church. The strengthening of ties with the US was in the interest of the churches themselves, partly because the American Churches were part of the ecumenical movement, and partly because the Church of England was hoping to establish a partnership with the American churches in leading the transnational community.⁵ But the relationship was also, as we have seen, of great importance to the British Government. The British and American churches had a shared ambition of keeping the US engaged in Western Europe and to prevent a new era of American isolationism. Their efforts to this end, as we have seen, proved valuable to the British government. The strengthening of ties between the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church became, as we shall see, an important objective at the 1948 Lambeth Conference.

The Church of England and the ecumenical movement, embodied in BCC and WCC, were highly connected, but still distinctly different bodies.⁶ The years 1945-48, however, saw an increasing number of committees serving the purpose of coordinating their efforts, and coordinating policy with each other, particularly in the area of foreign relations. The web of Christian organisation became increasingly complex and sometimes difficult to disentangle, even to the individuals involved. This was further emphasised by a tremendous overlap in personnel serving on the various committees. This chapter is about the Anglican Communion, which was distinctly different from the ecumenical movement. Attention will therefore primarily be paid to

⁵ See chapters 3 and 5

⁶ See chapter 1

Archbishop Fisher and his advisors in the Church of England. Although there are many areas of overlap, significant developments in the ecumenical sphere will be dealt with in more detail in chapters 8 and 9.

To understand the events which took place in the Anglican Communion at the Lambeth Conference in 1948, and thus in order to assess the extent to which the Church of England was influenced by the perspective of the British government on this occasion, it is necessary to look at the context in which the Lambeth Conference took place. We will therefore look briefly at developments in British foreign policy objectives as they unfolded in 1946-48. This will be done by an examination of the Foreign Office and the Russia Committee and the way in which their attitude towards the Soviet Union unfolded in the period.

The Foreign Office and the Russia Committee

In early 1946 the Foreign Office and the British Embassy in Moscow were, quite naturally, keeping a close eye on Soviet behaviour. In a number of telegrams in March, Frank Roberts, the *chargé d'affaires* in Moscow, gave an account of Anglo-Soviet relations which contributed to the FO forming opinions about the basis of Soviet opposition to Britain. Assessing Soviet foreign policy, Roberts described the Soviet government as seeking to profit from the chaotic state of post-war Europe, and questioned whether the Soviet government remained an important player in the continued allied cooperation. 'We are faced with a Soviet policy designed to advance Soviet interests at every possible opportunity, regardless of those of its allies, and it now seems regardless even of treaty obligations,' Roberts wrote.⁷ He questioned whether there was in fact a limit to Soviet expansionism and recommended that more

⁷ The British National Archives (UKNA) FO 371/56763, Frank Roberts to FO, 14 March, 1946

firmness was necessary when dealing with the Soviet Union. He suggested that Britain 'should act as the champions of a dynamic and progressive faith and a way of life with an appeal to the world at least as great as that of the Communist system of the Kremlin.'⁸ Roberts then went on to suggest that a body should be set up to coordinate the study of Soviet activities to act as a resource for all those responsible for formulating British policy. The first essential, Roberts stated, was to treat the problem of Anglo-Soviet relations in the same way as major military problems were treated during the war. And that would call for the closest coordination of political strategy, for a very thorough staff study embracing every aspect of Soviet policy.⁹ In line with Roberts' suggestions a Russia Committee was established in the Foreign Office in April 1946 to coordinate, and to lead Britain's policy. It was now a Cold War mind-set that dominated Whitehall. As well as being a challenge to territorial defence, the Cold War was also perceived as a war of ideas; the shift in Whitehall towards a Cold War mind-set was, as Deighton notes, momentous.¹⁰

The Russia Committee was created as an inter-departmental body, constituted with deputy and assistant under-secretaries and councillors of the Foreign Office. In 1948 Gladwyn Jebb was chairman of the Committee. In 1946 and 1947 senior Foreign Office officials such as Assistant Under-Secretaries Sir Oliver Harvey and Sir Nigel Ronald served on the Committee, as well as Christopher Warner, head of the FO Northern department, and Robin Hankey.¹¹

⁸ UKNA FO 371/56763 Frank Roberts to FO Office, 17 March 1946; FO 371/56763 Frank Roberts to Foreign Office, 18 March, 1946

⁹ UKNA FO 371/56763, Frank Roberts to Foreign Office, 18 March, 1946

¹⁰ Anne Deighton (2010), 120

¹¹ UKNA FO 371/56885, 'The terms of reference of the Russia Committee,' Christopher Warner and Sir Nigel Ronald, 12 April 1946

In 1946 Geoffrey Fisher was invited to participate in the Russia Committee.¹² Although the archives do not offer insight into the extent to which he participated, the fact that he was invited to join suggests that he was kept well informed about the line adopted by the Committee. The Russia Committee also had tremendous importance to the understanding of the Soviet Union adopted by Foreign Office at large. As the policies of the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in many respects worked in tandem with those of Foreign Office it is therefore appropriate to mention the highlights of developments in the Russia Committee as they were clearly reflected in the Church. The assumption that Geoffrey Fisher was well informed about official British policy at this point is well made by Kirby.¹³ The object of the Russia Committee was to coordinate all policy towards the Soviet Union. It was to review developments of all aspects of Soviet policy, propaganda, and Soviet activities worldwide on a weekly basis. Special emphasis should be placed on what was perceived as the Soviet campaign against Britain and a unified interpretation of these matters should be ensured throughout the political and economic departments of the Foreign Office. On this basis, appropriate action from Britain's side would be made with particular reference to 'the probable degree of support to be looked for from the United States of America and to a lesser degree from France and others; and to ensure that the necessary recommendations as to policy are made either by the departments of the Office concerned or by the committee to Sir Orme Sargent (Permanent Under Secretary) as may be appropriate.' The committee should maintain close contact with

¹² Anne Deighton (2010), 119

¹³ Dianne Kirby, 'Harry S. Truman's International Religious Anti-Communist Front, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the 1948 Inaugural Assembly of the World Council of Churches,' *Contemporary British History*, 2001,15:4, 35-70, 49

the Joint Intelligence Committee with a view to co-ordinating intelligence and policy at every stage.¹⁴

The Russia Committee was agreed on the need to withstand the spread of Communism, and to mobilise world opinion to this end by publicity. But the Foreign Office was aware that Britain would be unable to stand alone against Soviet policy; the closest possible cooperation with the US was necessary. In 1946, however, the post-war situation was still highly unsettled and the Foreign Office could only attempt to expose to the world, and most specifically the US, what Soviet objectives really were; the US was not yet ready to commit to openly oppose Communism.¹⁵ In May 1946 the Committee discussed a memorandum by Warner entitled 'The Soviet Campaign against this country and our response to it.' In the memorandum, Warner claimed that the Soviet Union was practising the 'most vicious power politics, in the political, economical, and propaganda spheres.' Warner noted that there was a lack of Soviet cooperation in the international spheres of reconstruction; but that the Soviet government was actively imposing the Soviet system in its zone of occupation.¹⁶ He further pointed out that Britain now needed to protect itself efficiently against the Soviet Union.¹⁷ By May, the approach suggested in Warner's memorandum had

¹⁴ UKNA FO 371/56885, 'The terms of reference of the Russia Committee,' Christopher Warner and Sir Nigel Ronald, 12 April 1946

¹⁵ UKNA FO 371/56832, minutes of interdepartmental Foreign Office meeting to brief Sir Maurice Peterson before his appointment as British Ambassador in Moscow, 18 March 1946

¹⁶ UKNA FO 371/56832, Memorandum by Christopher Warner, 2 April 1946

¹⁷ Warner specifically emphasized the following points: '...a) the establishment of communist governments in countries where a hostile influence threatens our vital interests; b) the weakening of the influence of elements friendly to us in such countries; c) the creating of troubled conditions where we are responsible for, or interested in, peace and prosperity (including of course our own colonies and India); d) Soviet blocking of schemes for restoring settled conditions in countries outside her own sphere; e) Soviet attempts to divide us from those who share our basic political conceptions; f) Soviet attempts to discredit us as weak and reactionary.' Warner then suggested how Britain should respond: 'The interests of this country and the true democratic principles for which we stand are directly threatened. The Soviet government makes coordinated use of military, economic, propaganda and political weapons and also of the communist 'religion.' It is submitted, therefore, that we must at once organise and coordinate our defences against all these and that we should not stop short of a defensive-offensive policy.'

received the support of the Prime Minister.¹⁸ Foreign Secretary Bevin accepted Warner's analysis, but he insisted on a softer approach. Although the Foreign Office, like the churches, was impatient to strike a harsher tone towards the Soviet Union, Bevin was aware in mid-1946 of the American dislike of Anglo-Soviet antagonism. Britain still needed to prove to the US that collaboration with the Soviet Union in implementing the Potsdam Protocol was possible in order to maintain American support.¹⁹ It was not until the establishment of the Anglo-American bizonia in Germany in January 1947, when it was acknowledged that Germany was now likely to be permanently divided between East and West, that Bevin felt sufficiently sure about American support to enter a more active line to contain the spread of Communism, a line, which came fully into action from early 1948.

A detailed account of the Bevin Plan and the creation of the British-American bizonia has been established elsewhere.²⁰ Here it is sufficient to note, that the British strategy was to deliberately obstruct relations with the Soviet Union, but to ensure that the Soviet Union, and not Britain, was the antagonising power. As Deighton has shown, the Bevin Plan was basically a rewrite of the Potsdam Protocol, which attempted to maintain the façade of four-power control in Germany, but in reality established stringent conditions for the future economic and political unity of Germany, conditions that it was anticipated that the Soviets would not be able to fulfil.²¹

The defensive-offensive policy should involve a propaganda campaign against Communism, exposing it as totalitarianism. Source: UKNA, FO 371/56832, Memorandum by Christopher Warner, 2 April 1946

¹⁸ UKNA FO 371/56784, minute by Orme Sargent 20 May 1946 There is at least one recent article on the Russia committee...I will try and track it down before next week

¹⁹ Anne Deighton, *The Impossible Peace: Britain, the Division of Germany, and the Origins of the Cold War*, Oxford 1990, 101

²⁰ Anne Deighton (1990), passim

²¹ Anne Deighton (1990), 120

By the end of 1947 the Labour Party was ready to publicly denounce Communism. From this point, the Cold War was fought as what Kenneth Osgood has labelled ‘an ideological, psychological, and cultural contest for hearts and minds.’²² British and American policy makers increasingly realised that the Cold War ‘would be won or lost on the plane of public opinion, rather than by bloodshed on the battlefield.’²³ In Bevin’s Cabinet paper ‘The First Aim of British Foreign Policy’ he explained that the Soviet government had formed a political and economic block behind a line ‘running from the Baltic along the Oder, through Trieste to the Black Sea’ and that it would be impossible to establish normal relations with European countries behind that line. ‘It is not’ Bevin claimed, ‘enough to reinforce the physical barriers, which still guard our Western civilisation. We must also organise and consolidate the ethical and spiritual forces inherent in this Western civilisation of which we are the chief protagonists.’ This, in Bevin’s view could only be done by creating some form of union in Western Europe, whether of a formal or informal character, backed by the Americas and the Dominions.²⁴ Since the Russians were ‘exerting a constantly increasing pressure which threatens the whole fabric of the West’ and were likely to ‘place every possible obstacle in the path of American aid and of Western European recovery’ economic, as well as political and spiritual forces had to be mobilised.²⁵ To meet this challenge, Bevin was, as explained in the previous chapter, suggesting a Western Union with backing of the Americans and the Dominions and possibly Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, Portugal, Italy and Greece, and, as soon as circumstances would permit it, Spain and Germany. The moment, Bevin claimed, was ripe for a consolidation of Western Europe. Bevin’s

²² Kenneth A. Osgood, ‘Hearts and Minds. The Unconventional Cold War,’ *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4, 2, 2002, 85-107, 86

²³ Kenneth A. Osgood (2002), 86

²⁴ UKNA, CAB 129/23/6, ‘The First Aim of British Foreign Policy’, 4 January 1948

²⁵ UKNA, CAB 129/23/6, 4 January 1948 ‘The First Aim of British Foreign Policy’

policy would require strong British leadership in order to secure its acceptance in Europe on one hand and in the Dominions and the Americas on the other. Material aid would come principally from the United States, but the countries of Western Europe which ‘despise the spiritual values of America will look to us for political and moral guidance and for assistance in building up a counter attraction to the baleful tenets of Communism.’²⁶ After the early January Cabinet meetings, Bevin, assisted by Gladwyn Jebb, launched his social democratic crusade in the House of Commons.²⁷

There is no evidence to suggest that coordination between church and state on a common approach to the Soviet Union was very outspoken between 1945-47; the archives rather suggest that the Church of England on several occasions had to ask Foreign Office for information on Soviet related issues, and that this information was shared on an informal basis, for example through CFR members close to the Foreign Office such as Herbert Waddams. By the beginning of 1948, however, Bevin started to deliberately involve the churches in the new British policy.²⁸ Apart from archival documents showing this, as presented in chapter 5, the sudden change in official church behaviour and attitude towards the Soviet Union and Communism can easily be detected, particularly in the behaviour of the Archbishops of York and Canterbury.

Fisher and Garbett now spoke out publicly about the threat of Communism. In his presidential address to the Convocation of York in the autumn 1948, Garbett warned about the danger of another war. He urged Christians to support the government in taking all necessary precautions against attack:

²⁶ UKNA, CAB 129/23/6, 4 January 1948 ‘The First Aim of British Foreign Policy’

²⁷ Gladwyn Jebb, *The Memoirs of Gladwyn Jebb*, London: Weybright and Talley, 1972, 209; Anne Deighton (2010), 2010, 123

²⁸ UKNA FO 371/173053, Bevin to Rev. Steward, and Rev. Richardson, Moderators of Church of Scotland and the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, 12 March 1948

'[I]f the Allies withdraw now from Berlin they will betray the people who have trusted them, their solemn promises in future will be regarded as of less value than scraps of paper and their retreat will lead to further demands and surrenders until all Europe is under the power of militant Communism, and then the hour of our own doom cannot be long postponed. That is why a peace-loving Labour Government is now calling upon the nation to prepare to resist aggression, and that is why it is the duty of Christians to take their place with their fellow citizens in defending their heritage of Western civilization'.²⁹

The Church of England leadership was, unsurprisingly, now ready to stand behind Whitehall. The debate in the House of Lords in March 1948 on the situation in Europe confirmed not only that the discourse had changed to an open anti-Communist line, but also that this change had been absorbed in the Upper House. 'The problem of Russia' declared Lord Salisbury, now 'overshadowed all others in the international field.' '(...) [J]ust as Germany snapped up Austria and Czechoslovakia, so Russia has snapped up Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, Poland and Hungary. The same technique was applied in the two cases. Under Russian pressure, and with the aid of Russian agents, democratic Governments, representing the overwhelming majority of the people, have been overthrown; and puppet régimes, obeying orders from Moscow, have been set up. Liberal leaders have been imprisoned and executed, after trials that can be called only a mockery, and a police state has been set up.' The only bright spot, Lord Salisbury stated, was the Government's decision to press on with a Western pact. The Communist technique was not one of invasion but of 'sapping from within.' There was, therefore, an urgent necessity for a closer association of the nations of Western Europe.³⁰ He then went on to criticise the United Nations, which provided 'no remedy:' 'before the threatened democracy can appeal to the world

²⁹ Cyril Foster Garbett on Attitude to War, *The Manchester Guardian*, 15 October, 1948

³⁰ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Lords, 3 March 1948, cols. 298-299. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

organisation it is snuffed out of existence.³¹ Lord Perth went on to state that he felt it reasonable to assume that the spread of Communism was Russia's principal aim, and since it was not realistic that Russia should fear attack from the Western Powers, a form of Western European Union was urgent particularly from a defence point of view.³² Lord Halifax, who, as we saw in chapter 5, was involved in Christian Action, the platform from which the 1948 Albert Hall rally in support of Western Union was launched to engage the churches, flagged up a possibly pacifistic point of view, often heard in WCC circles. The worst of all would be, he felt, through failure to appreciate what was happening, to fall short in any action that might assist Western Europe to recover its stature and independence. But although agreement was lacking it need not mean that East and West could not find a means of living together 'once it was clear that Western Europe was able to re-establish something of its old position.' But it had to be acknowledged, Halifax stated, that conditions of 'quite naked power politics' prevailed.³³ Lord Pakenham stressed that Communism was 'a germ systematically disseminated by the agents of a Great Power.' But he did not say that the problem of dealing with Communism was entirely one of relations with the Soviet Union. There was also the task of removing the spiritual conditions that gave Communism its chance; it thrived on starved bodies and starved minds. Therefore, Pakenham stated, Communism had to be combatted with the West European traditions. 'If we succeed with the Marshall Plan we should win Western Europe and ultimately Eastern Europe. We cannot rest until we have brought Europe back to the position where she can fend

³¹ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Lords, 3 March 1948, cols. 299-300. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

³² Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Lords, 3 March 1948, cols. 304-311. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

³³ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Lords, 3 March 1948, cols. 311-316. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

economically for herself.’³⁴ It will be noted that the statements by Halifax and Pakenham reveal their engagement in Christian affairs after the war. Whereas the tone in the debate generally reflected the perceived clash between East and West in power political terms, Halifax and Pakenham stressed ‘spiritual conditions of Communism,’ indicating that Communism was becoming a problem outside of the Soviet sphere, which could not be dealt with in military terms. This argument, as we have seen, was often applied in ecumenical circles.³⁵

George Bell who, as we have seen, had been one of the most consistent voices against a divided Europe, was now changing his mind. He stated that it was now no use thinking that the Soviet Union would agree to a European unity of any other than the Communist type. Contrary to his former speeches on a united, and possibly federal, Europe, Bell now felt that ‘the only way to avoid a quarrel of a disastrous kind is to accept the fact that Europe is divided, that the largest part of Eastern Europe and some part of central Europe are united under Communist control, and then to take immediate steps to unify the Western nations.’ But Bell still voiced his critique of the British Government claiming that the prolonged uncertainty of British policy was one cause of the crisis. As we saw in the last chapter, Bell also rejected the vague formulation of Bevin’s proposed Western Union, and urged the government to clarify the foundation of a future western union.³⁶ Bell’s contribution was, however, largely ignored by the press.³⁷

The debate in the Lords clearly demonstrated that the atmosphere from the Russia Committee was now openly embraced by the Church of England as well. This

³⁴ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Lords, 3 March 1948, cols. 316-335. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

³⁵ See, e.g., chapter 2

³⁶ Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Lords, 3 March 1948, cols. 347-353. Consulted online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1948/mar/03/foreign-affairs>

³⁷ The Threat to the Peace of Europe: Plain Speaking in the Lords, *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 March, 1948

was not surprising, of course, as many of its members had been forced to contain their anti-Communist feelings due to consideration for British foreign policy.

On May 21 1948 Sir Stafford Cripps, who, as we saw in the previous chapter, was now in charge of the religious aspects of Britain's policy, spoke to the Church Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The message was that a strengthened Christian faith needed to be translated into political and economic action. Supporters of materialist economic power had been able to make great inroads into the Christian democratic civilization because they had not been met with opposition. Spiritual control of human forces was now necessary, a task which could not be left to the realms of philosophy or theology. Cripps made yet another call for 'practical Christianity.'³⁸

Although the link between the agencies was indirect, it should now be clear that the Russia Committee's objectives concerning the Soviet Union in the post-war period were largely shared by the Church of England. The Russia Committee urged Whitehall to recognize the post-war security threat posed by the Soviets, and to adjust its policies accordingly. The Church of England was becoming increasingly concerned about pro-Soviet sentiments in Britain at large and, fearing the advance of Communism, was impatient to correct this perception. Both agencies, however, had to wait for Bevin to have his plan put into effect through Western diplomacy. By 1948 this was, as we have seen, largely accomplished. The Church of England was now able to voice clearly its standpoint towards Communism within its own circles and beyond. The 1948 Lambeth Conference provided an effective opportunity for addressing Communism from an Anglican perspective; it is to this that we will turn next.

³⁸ 'Christian Answer to Materialism: Sir Stafford's Call,' *The Manchester Guardian*, 22 May, 1948

Preparing for the Lambeth Conference

Fisher was well aware of the importance of winning the sympathy and support of the US. From his position as Archbishop he was able to ensure that the relationship between the transatlantic Anglican Churches was strong, and the 1948 Lambeth Conference was an excellent opportunity to strengthen the ties; it was also an efficient platform from which to send a message to the public, in Britain and abroad, about what the Anglican Communion stood for in 1948.³⁹ Although the authority of the Conference did not rest upon a statutory or legal platform which would give binding force to its decisions, it rested on the fact that decisions reached represented the considered judgment of Anglican bishops and it carried much weight in that respect.⁴⁰

One of the first affairs Geoffrey Fisher tended to as Archbishop of Canterbury was to start preparations for a Lambeth Conference. Due to the interruption caused by WWII, a Lambeth Conference had not been held since 1930. As we have seen, the period 1930 - 1948 had been a turbulent and rather transformative period for the Church of England. Apart from its battles during the 1930s with the British government over what was felt to be an increasing lack of spiritual freedom and inefficient government by Parliament, its relationship to the wider world had also expanded significantly over the course of the war and the years that followed; the Church of England had in this period moved from a position with ecclesiastical ties to selected churches around the world to become a significant transnational actor largely embedded in the complex post-war international setting. This development was a

³⁹ The American Episcopal Church became the first Anglican Church abroad at the end of the eighteenth century. Although the British Parliament in 1787 removed the requirement of an oath of allegiance to the Crown as a prerequisite for episcopal consecration, and although in 1789 the American Episcopalians adopted a policy that embodied a synthesis of episcopacy, presbyterianism and republicanism, legally subject to no external authority, sacred or secular, the ties to the Church of England remained in place. See Paul Valiere, *A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 177

⁴⁰ The Bishops at Lambeth, Northcott, Cecil, *The Observer*, 27 June, 1948. For more detail on the Anglican Communion see chapter 1

consequence of its ecumenical aspirations; but also, as we have seen, of its close ties to Whitehall. Both factors meant that the ties to the US had grown in significance for the Church. The process initiated with the 1937 Oxford Conference, where the alliance between the churches in the English speaking world had been established efficiently, had only grown deeper during WWII where, as we have seen, the American Protestants and the British churches became increasingly integrated in their perspectives on peace aims and post-war planning.⁴¹ But although the ecumenical ties between Britain and the US were strong by 1948, their mutual relationship within the framework of the Anglican Community had not been addressed since 1930. And whereas the American Churches were increasingly setting the agenda in the ecumenical movement, the Anglican Communion was still a forum where the Church of England was the unquestioned leader. By 1946 Fisher then set out to address the Anglo-American relations within the Anglican framework.

Although the 1930 Conference will not be examined here, it should be noted that at it, American discontent had been grounded in a feeling that the Conference was managed too exclusively by the English bishops.⁴² Fisher, then, needed to offer the American bishops a sense of ownership within the Anglican framework in order to motivate their engagement.

Fisher's first overseas visit as an Archbishop was to Canada and the US in September 1946. His primary purpose was to encourage Canadian and American bishops to attend the 1948 Lambeth Conference. During the visit, however, and due to the character of his program, which included both church and lay activities at the highest level, he was mostly welcomed, as well as pictured in the press, as an

⁴¹ See chapter 3

⁴² Edward Carpenter (1997), 453; Andrew Chandler and David Hein, *Archbishop Fisher 1945-61. Church, State and World*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012 (ebook), location 1923 of 6068

ambassador for Britain more generally.⁴³ Of the more significant events, in which Fisher took part, was the General Convention of the American Episcopal Church, which took place in Philadelphia on 10 – 20 September 1946.⁴⁴ In his speech to the Convention he spoke of the great importance of the Anglican Communion and claimed that the highest priority was to rapidly fashion its own internal organs of self-government which could give it greater authority; he then carefully pointed out that it was ‘a watchdog’ which brought a special element of ‘sobriety and moderation of judgement, of moral earnestness.’⁴⁵ During the Convention Fisher also debated the international situation on which subject John Foster Dulles voiced his strong opinions about the Soviet Union and Communism. In line with Whitehall’s foreign policy line in 1946, Fisher emphasised friendly relations and cooperation with the Soviet Union, but also gave a warning to the Soviets not to meddle with Western ideology. The Soviet Union had to be convinced that based on the principles of the western democracies, the churches did not want to ‘impede her [Russia’s] living in her own ideology’ but that the Soviet Union had to be convinced that the west ‘did not want another ideology imposed where it had no welcome.’⁴⁶ Dulles, however, stressed that the Soviet Communist Party ‘challenged the supremacy of the Christian world’ and that the ‘Western democracies’ risked ‘being surrounded and isolated, if not overrun, but by an alien faith because they no longer inspire confidence in the mankind.’ The latter part of the sentence refers to the belief, so often repeated during the 1937 Oxford Conference, that the Western nations would be targets for Communism if they

⁴³ Although Fisher’s visit included both Canada and the US, only selected events from his two-week tour in the US will be looked at here

⁴⁴ The Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas, *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 1946* (printed in 1947)

⁴⁵ *General Convention* (1946); Edward Carpenter (1997), 449

⁴⁶ ‘Primate’s Visit to the US,’ *The Times*, 9 September, 1946

failed to re-establish their roots in Christian faith.⁴⁷ Fisher, whose address was carried by BBC and American radio networks, said that the Western democracies had to ‘persuade Russia to play the game in accordance with democratic principles.’⁴⁸ Fisher, it will be noted, was cautious about saying anything which might be interpreted as a British anti-Soviet attitude, but he was, during his US tour, generally more clear in his anti-Communist statements than he had been in Britain in 1946.

During his tour, Fisher also participated in the Lutheran Convention in Cleveland attended by some 560 delegates from 32 synods and 4056 congregations from the US, Canada, Alaska and Hawaii.⁴⁹ On this occasion, as well as in his 19 September sermon in Washington Cathedral, he once again stressed that Britain and the United States shared ‘common literature, a common law, common political ideals, and common religious and moral values.’ ‘Unless we stand together,’ he concluded, ‘the vision of one world can become a delusion and a snare to entrap civilization itself.’⁵⁰

The significance of Fisher’s visit to Canada and the US was well indicated by John McLeod Campbell in a letter to *The Times*.⁵¹ ‘The scale and scope of the Archbishop’s reception in both countries’, he wrote, ‘betokened a national as well as an ecclesiastical welcome and the visit affected for good, at a significant moment, relations between the nations as well as the churches.’⁵² With Fisher’s almost 50 public utterances, often on the radio, and often addressed to large assemblies of

⁴⁷ See chapter 2

⁴⁸ ‘Canterbury Asks World Fair Play,’ *New York Times*, 9 September, 1946

⁴⁹ ‘British Prelate, Dulles to Speak,’ *New York Times*, 24 August, 1946

⁵⁰ Edward Carpenter (1997), 450

⁵¹ Rev. John McLeod Campbell (1884-1961): Ordained deacon, 1909, priest, 1910. Late Fellow and Chaplain of Hertford College, Oxford, and formerly Senior Chaplain, Fourth Division, BEF; Principal of Trinity College, Kandy, 1924–35; General Secretary, Overseas Council of Church Assembly, Church House, Westminster. DD (Lambeth); Hon. DD Glasgow. Source: *Who’s Who* 2015, A & C Black, Oxford University Press, 2014, consulted online: <http://www.ukwhoswho.com/view/article/oupww/whowaswho/U53374>

⁵² ‘The Archbishop in America,’ by J. McLeod Campbell, *The Times*, 12 November, 1946

prominent individuals in public and industrial life, this claim is likely to hold some truth; Fisher's journey to the US was considered a great success. As the Rector of Trinity, New York, said: 'It is certain that no one else in so brief a time could have so strengthened all our ties with the Anglican Communion.' Hence, at the 1948 Lambeth Conference 66 Anglican bishops from the US were present.⁵³ According to Chandler and Hein it was also Fisher's achievement that Bishop Sherrill (Presiding bishop of the American Episcopal Church from January 1947) was converted into an ally and friend. They had first met in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1945 and then became very devoted to each other.⁵⁴

With Fisher's 1946 visit to the US he had made an effort to strengthen Anglo-American understanding within the Anglican framework, which was an ecumenical network in its own right and distinct from WCC. At the same time, Fisher made an effort to clarify this distinction to BCC. The British Council of Churches was, it should be remembered, a British ecumenical body and was not as such involved in the planning of the Lambeth Conference, which was, essentially, an Anglican affair for those denominations in full communion with the Church of England. Fisher made efforts at the BCC meetings to moderate the more idealistic tendencies of the ecumenical movement, especially those hinting at a federal 'supra-church' structure. This is important because it tells us how he envisaged the dividing line between the Anglican Communion and the World Council of Churches. At one of the two general biyearly BCC meetings in 1946 Fisher's reluctance was clearly traceable. On a debate regarding the shape of WCC and BCC's role towards it he noted: 'There is a move in Geneva (...) that the World Council is there to speak for and above the name of all its

⁵³ Edward Carpenter (1997), 451

⁵⁴ Andrew Chandler and David Hein (2012), (e-book), location 1931 of 6068

constituent churches, and there are some of us who stoutly resist it.’⁵⁵ Fisher was not in favour of submitting any church authority to a supra-national world council. He kept his focus on Britain and the Anglican Communion and was not willing to risk losing control over parts of the Church of England’s policies to a world council whose basic principles he did not fully support.

The 1948 Lambeth Conference

The eighth Lambeth Conference took place in London in July and August, 1948. It was presided over by Archbishop Fisher. Considering that the Lambeth Conference was a gathering of churchmen, and that traditionally areas such as inter-communion and other ecclesiastical affairs were debated in this forum, the general occupation with international conflict and the perceived rivalry between the ‘claims of Christ and of Communism’ was significant.⁵⁶ This focus can largely be attributed to the American bishops, who, in addition to being present in large number, played a weighty role in the session debates. They often drew in references to the role of human rights in transnational Christianity, and pointed to the dichotomy between Western democracies and the Soviet Union. ‘The Churches were faced with demonic new unities in the world,’ the Bishop of Washington remarked, but the Church had also become a decisive influence in human community and the world was ‘looking to this conference with expectancy and anxiety in regard to this point above all.’ He therefore urged the Church not to draw back now that so much responsiveness to their leadership had revealed itself.⁵⁷ It should be noted, however, that the Church of England bishops, such as Garbett, had a focus on these themes as well.

⁵⁵ Church of England Record Centre (CERC), BCC 2/2/2/4 minutes of meeting in BCC, 1946

⁵⁶ Lambeth Palace Archive (LPL), LC 173, The Lambeth Conference 1948, minutes

⁵⁷ LPL, LC Lambeth Conference 1948, minutes. Statement by the Bishop of Albany, USA on ‘the Church and the Modern World’ 6 July 1948

Although, as the Bishop of Albany noted the Cold War was ‘all too likely to develop into a shooting war,’ a military confrontation between East and West was not advocated.⁵⁸ It was rather hoped that an approach on a wider scale by representatives of the Anglican Communion to representatives of the Orthodox Church in Russia would be successful. Re-stating that the Anglican Communion should ‘certainly not follow the Roman Catholics in encouraging a holy war,’ the emphasis on good relations with the Orthodox Church remained important; in line with ecumenical thinking stressed at the 1937 Oxford Conference, the Churches remained hopeful that the Orthodox Church could be won over by WCC to work efficiently against Communism. Few, apart from the Archbishop of York, Garbett, dared voice the opinion that the Russian Church presumably did not have much influence politically on the Soviet government.⁵⁹

Along with the American bishops, Garbett stressed the need for the Churches to voice ‘a clear and uncompromising claim for the recognition of human rights.’ Human rights, he stressed, were in danger from two positions: first, from Marxian Communism; and second by ‘the claim of some states to unbridled sovereignty.’ By ‘some states’, Garbett specifically referred to Russia. It was therefore the task of the Conference to voice support for human rights, and to challenge the claim by modern states to absolute sovereignty.⁶⁰ The Bishop of Quebec followed up and stressed the need for respect of international law.⁶¹

The Conference was concluded with a so-called Encyclical letter and 118 resolutions. The ‘Encyclical Letter to the Faithful in Jesus Christ’ was the key

⁵⁸ LPL, LC Lambeth Conference 1948, minutes. Statement by the Bishop of Albany, USA on ‘the Church and the Modern World’ 6 July 1948

⁵⁹ The relationship to the Orthodox Church will be addressed in more detail in chapter 7

⁶⁰ LPL, LC Lambeth Conference 1948, minutes. Statement by the Archbishop of York, on ‘the Unity of the Church,’ 7 July 1946’ 6 July 1948

⁶¹ LPL, LC Lambeth Conference 1948, minutes. Statement by the Bishop of Quebec, on ‘the Unity of the Church,’ 7 July 1946’ 6 July 1948

outcome of the Lambeth Conference. The Letter addressed the hard conditions under which many Christians had to practise their faith ‘in face of contempt and ridicule.’ It stressed that in the present world there were two ways of living, one, which followed the faith in God and one, which followed the creeds of materialism, and the ‘will to power, by which he is enslaved.’ Facing this division, the supreme task of the Church, then, was to win the nations of Christendom back to the knowledge of God.⁶² Although the language is similar to that of the 1937 Oxford Conference where capitalism, Communism, and Nazism were all rejected due to their nationalist focus and models of ‘false communities,’ by 1948 Communism was singled out as the greatest menace to world peace, and the language applied was both strong and clear. Christianity, the Letter stated, now found itself threatened by the new menace of Marxian Communism, ‘which exalts atheism, puts supreme confidence in material progress, and proclaims its Gospel with a militant enthusiasm, which expects to conquer the world.’ The Letter encouraged Christians to repudiate Communism, and ‘condemn the cruelties, injustice, and lying propaganda, which are inherent in it.’⁶³

The 118 concluding resolutions of the Conference cannot be addressed in their entirety here; it is sufficient to draw out the main points relevant to this thesis. First of all, the resistance towards the expanding state, which, at the 1937 Oxford Conference was one of the most important areas for the ecumenical movement, was addressed in the Lambeth Conference resolutions, but, in line with the promotion of human rights, which had been so evident throughout the Conference, the focus on the *free individual* over the *community* was now becoming clear. The Conference, then, ‘shared man’s aspiration for fellowship in an ordered society and for *freedom of individual achievement*’; it recognised that the responsibility of the *individual* to God was

⁶² *Lambeth Conference 1948. Encyclical Letter from the Bishops together with Resolutions and Reports*, London: SPCK, 1948, 17

⁶³ *Lambeth Conference (1948)*, 19

‘gravely imperilled by any claim made either by the State or by any group within the State to control the whole of human life’ and finally that ‘community must be one of *free persons*.’⁶⁴ The role of the Christian, then, was to judge every social system by its effect on human personality.

A final significant outcome of the Lambeth Conference was the adoption of two additional resolutions addressing Communism specifically. Judging from the Conference minutes the amendment of these resolutions was adopted without conflict.⁶⁵ Due to their relevance to the thesis topic they will be quoted at full length:

‘a) ‘The Conference, while recognising that in many lands there are Communists who are practising Christians, nevertheless declares that Marxian Communism is contrary to Christian faith and practice, for it denies the existence of God, Revelation, and a future life; it treats the individual man as a means and not an end; it encourages class warfare; it regards the moral law not as absolute but as relative to the needs of the state. The Conference holds that while a State must take the precautions it regards as necessary to protect good order and peace from all subversive movements, it is the special duty of the Church to oppose the challenge of the Marxian theory of Communism by sound teaching and the example of a better way, and that the Church, at all times and in all places, should be a fearless witness against political, social, and economic injustice.’

b) ‘The Conference believes that Communism is presenting a challenge to Christian people to study and understand its theory and practice, so that they may be well instructed as to which elements in it are in conflict with the Christian view of man and must therefore be resisted, and which elements are a true judgement on the existing social and economic order.’⁶⁶

The 1948 Lambeth Conference might thus be interpreted as the public statement of an anti-Communist enterprise.⁶⁷ Although opposition was clearly stated to war as a solution to international problems and to the division of the world into two

⁶⁴ *Lambeth Conference (1948)*, 29

⁶⁵ LPL, LC Lambeth Conference 1948, minutes on the session held 28 July, 1948

⁶⁶ *Lambeth Conference (1948)*, resolutions 25 and 26, London: SPCK, 1948

⁶⁷ This is also noted by Dianne Kirby in ‘The Church of England and the Cold War,’ in Stephen G. Parker and Tom Lawson, *God and War. The Church of England and Armed Conflict in the Twentieth Century*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012, (e-book) location 3509 of 6408

mutually hostile camps, and although voice was given to the need to distinguish between Christian concerns about Communism and state opposition to it, the Encyclical Letter and the resolutions that emerged from the Conference and were presented to the public as the collective voice of the Church of England, and for which Fisher was notably responsible, spoke only of the menace of Marxist Communism. The concluding remarks in the Encyclical Letter indeed come very close to suggesting a Christian crusade against this principal foe: ‘we invite all men and women to join with us under Christ’s banner in the war against the evils which wreck man’s life and against the false creeds which debase it. In that war there can be no neutrality. To those that stand aloof Christ says, ‘He that is not with me is against me.’⁶⁸ Cyril Garbett’s speech at the closing service of the Lambeth Conference in Westminster Abbey continued in the same vein:

‘The civilization of which we were so proud and thought so permanent is now threatened with the fate which has overwhelmed twenty civilisations which once were strong and flourishing. The hearts of millions are fainting for fear from expectation of the dread things, which may come upon the earth. The demons of hate and suspicion are at large. The air is full of rumours of war, and over mankind there hangs the menace of the atomic bomb (...). The modern growth of the power of the state is a threat to the spiritual freedom of the Church, whether established or disestablished, though an established Church is exposed to special dangers (...). Only a united Church can hope to stand firm against the united front of (...) an aggressive and atheistic Communism.’⁶⁹The establishment of WCC was also recognised by the Conference as ‘one of the principal facts in the Christian life of our times,’ and the

⁶⁸ *Lambeth Conference (1948)*, 18. This phrase has been echoed by those seeking to garner support for some kind of crusade, ever since, notably with Bush’s War on Terror

⁶⁹ ‘Dr. Garbett on the New Age: ‘Demons at Large,’ *The Manchester Guardian* 9 August, 1948

formation of a world council was welcomed. But in line with Fisher's earlier efforts, a clear line was drawn to ensure that the Anglican Communion was distinctly different from the WCC. Hence, the Bishops pronounced that '[i]t is our duty to make the life and witness of our own Communion strong and effective for its own work. To that end we are bound to preserve our unity in the tradition which we have received.'⁷⁰

The almost overwhelming enthusiasm for the ecumenical project, which Temple had ensured at the 1930 Lambeth Conference and which had been carried forward by Joseph Oldham and his team of intellectuals was now, by 1948, in the intense Cold War atmosphere, modified. The united Church, which to Temple had been one of transcendence and which acknowledged that the 'post-war front' 'ran diagonally through the nations at war' and involved a new enemy which 'was not fighting along territorial lines; but was potentially a part of all modern nations' had now been split into several parts.⁷¹ There was now an Anglo-American section, which dominated the Anglican Communion, and which included the Anglicans on the continent as well. But there was, as we shall see, also a split within WCC itself, largely carried by the Anglo-American turn away from the original ideas of the 1937 Oxford Conference.

By ensuring a strong presence for the American Church, drawing a circle around the Anglican Communion as its own distinct master, and toning down the Anglican Communion's European ecumenical engagements, Fisher was positioning the Church of England firmly alongside the British Government. The British Cold War 'dual policy' had successfully extended into the church. While still pleading spiritual unity with Europe by stressing historical ties within the Anglican Communion, Fisher had efficiently engaged the American churches in the European

⁷⁰ *Lambeth Conference (1948)*

⁷¹ LPL, Temple 58, f. 372, Thoughts on the European Situation (Temple), Fall 1943

Cold War by giving the American churches a lead in allowing human rights and anti-Communism to become integral to what the Anglican Communion stood for. This was largely, as we have seen, a parallel to what Bevin had achieved politically with Western Union in 1948.

The Lambeth Conference received generous coverage by the press, which was, it seemed, content with the anti-Communist message of the Conference. The *Manchester Guardian* wrote: 'It would be a mistake to belittle the resolutions now published. They represent Anglican thought at its best and they reveal the line of action individual bishops are likely to take in their administrative discretion. They might even make the higher claim that they reflect contemporary English religious opinion at its best.'⁷² The impression that the Church of England was withdrawing from its ecumenical commitments was picked up by the press after the Lambeth Conference as well. The *Manchester Guardian* wrote: 'The Lambeth fathers exercise considerable caution towards Protestant reunion schemes. Leaning rather towards such bodies as the Old Catholics and showing a strong desire for a closer fellowship of episcopal churches. Many Anglicans will be glad to see this indication of the direction in which their Church is moving. It may be said that the Lambeth Conference of 1948 has planted Anglican footsteps more firmly in the ancient Catholic path and has dispersed any illusion that the Anglican Church was tending towards a loosely constructed federal Christian community. This change of direction may, in future years, be hailed as a landmark in English religion.'⁷³

⁷² 'Bishops' Attack on Marxian Communism: 'Militant Enthusiasm Which Expects to Conquer the World,' Anglican Correspondent, *The Manchester Guardian*, 18 August, 1948

⁷³ Bishops' Attack on Marxian Communism: 'Militant Enthusiasm Which Expects to Conquer the World,' Anglican Correspondent, *The Manchester Guardian* (1901-1959); Aug 18, 1948

Conclusion

In the period from 1946-1948 there was a shift in British foreign policy in regard to the Soviet Union. Based on increasing suspicions regarding Soviet intentions in the post-war period, the Russia Committee was established under the British Foreign Office in 1946 to coordinate all policy towards the Soviet Union. The Russia Committee contributed significantly to a shift in mind-set in Whitehall itself, and also, it is argued, to agencies, such as the Church of England working close to the government. Based on the outcome of the 1948 Lambeth Conference it is fair to conclude, that the change towards a Cold War mind-set embraced the Church of England which was, after all, an institutional part of the state fabric.

Anti-Communism and suspicion towards the Soviet Union is traceable in church circles at least since the 1920s. But although the 1937 Oxford Conference clearly marked the Communist state as totalitarian, and as a sign of a mal-development caused by industrialisation and modernity, the Church of England had held back on the implications of this position during World War II, when the Church supported Britain's alliance with the Soviet Union. In the post-war years this trimming of the Church's own strategies for an ecumenical response that drew in the religious realm – despite the national context in which churches found themselves – had to continue, as we have seen. Yet, instead of engaging in an open confrontation with Communism and the Soviet Union, the Church of England, and the ecumenical movement, sought to keep informed about conditions concerning religious freedom in the Soviet Union. As part of a larger ecumenical strategy, the churches also sought to strengthen relations with the Russian Orthodox Church, primarily, as it was felt both by the Church of England and by the ecumenical movement, that the Orthodox

Church had the potential to work against the Communist regime in the East.⁷⁴ With the shift of mindset by 1948, however, a large part of the Church of England clergy was ready to support the British government.

Fisher had not taken part in ecumenical advancements during the 1920s and 1930s. When he, as a new Archbishop of Canterbury, convened the 1948 Lambeth Conference he did not feel bound by the ideology or actions of his predecessor, William Temple. By ensuring a strong representation of American bishops at the Lambeth Conference, and drawing a distinct line between WCC and the Anglican Communion, Fisher ensured a Conference set-up where he could nurture good relations with the US, and produce an outcome which supported the line of the British and American governments.

The 1948 Lambeth Conference produced an Encyclical Letter and 118 resolutions. They expressed the collective voice of the Communion, and would, as has traditionally been the case in the Anglican Communion, serve as guidance for member churches as the official opinion of the Anglican Church to the outside world. The outcome of Lambeth Conferences has therefore traditionally carried some weight. At the 1948 Lambeth Conference, ecumenical perspectives, well known from the 1937 Oxford Conference, were voiced. These perspectives maintained that war should be avoided by all means, and that capitalism was also a damaging and materialistic system from which the Church should distance itself. In the official Conference material controlled by Fisher, however, Communism was claimed to be the greater menace of the time. It was ruled at the Conference that the Church should not implicate itself in the political opposition to Communism but adhere to that dictated by Christian considerations alone. The Christian considerations which dominated at

⁷⁴ See chapters 2 and 7

the Conference, however, and which can be read out of the concluding resolutions, were that Communism was the greatest foe of the time. The Anglican Christian perspective was, in fact, melting into a political one, difficult to distinguish from that of the Western bloc. With Fisher at Canterbury, the Church of England and the Anglican Communion now stood behind the British Government.

We have seen in this chapter that the strengthening of the Anglican Communion, most notably with strong ties to the US was an important enterprise for Fisher. The next two chapters we will turn to look at the inaugural assembly of WCC, which took place only two weeks after the Lambeth Conference.

Chapter 7: The Church of England and the Establishment of WCC

In the previous chapter the 1948 Lambeth Conference was examined. Archbishop Fisher had significant influence over the Conference, which was dominated by English and American bishops. The Conference concluded with two resolutions which condemned Communism from a Christian viewpoint. A human rights argument was also used as a tool through which to criticise Communism. The chapter also explained how the Russia Committee, established under the British Foreign Office in 1946, appears to have contributed significantly to a shift in the mindset in Whitehall itself, and in agencies working close to the government. Based on the outcome of the 1948 Lambeth Conference, and on development in the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) which, as we saw in chapters 3 and 4, as a church agency worked in tandem with the Foreign Office, it was clear that the change towards a Cold War mindset now embraced the Church as well as Whitehall. However, at the Lambeth Conference it also seemed appropriate that the Anglican Church should not identify itself with political opposition to Communism, but adhere to positions dictated by Christian considerations alone, although these Christian considerations, were that Communism was the greatest menace of the time. With Geoffrey Fisher at Canterbury, the Church of England and the Anglican Communion now appeared to stand behind the British Government.

In this chapter and the next we turn to look at the 1948 inaugural assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC); the establishment of which had been agreed upon at the 1937 Oxford Conference.¹ In this chapter, the establishment of the Churches Commission on International Affairs (CCIA) in 1946 will be examined, followed by the preparations for the inaugural assembly as they took place in CCIA,

¹ For details on the 1937 Oxford Conference see chapter 2

BCC and CFR. The establishment of CCIA was, as we shall see, largely an initiative taken by the American churches. It is significant here because it led to a further integration of American perspectives into the WCC; perspectives which were primarily shaped by the rising Cold War conflict, and which specifically related to the role of human rights within a Christian framework. The chapter will then examine how the relationship between the Church of England and the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches developed in the run up to the assembly. This is important as it will show the extent to which the bilateral relationship between The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church respectively, as well as the transnational relationship between WCC and these denominations, was highly influenced by Cold War tensions.

The Churches Commission on International Affairs (CCIA)

Prior to, and in the aftermath of WWII, the ecumenical movement's search for a common Christian approach to the problems of modern society inevitably meant that it was concerned with post-war reconstruction, as well as the responsibility of the churches to promote international peace. A direct initiative came from the American Commission on a Just and Durable Peace (CJDP), as we have seen, a wartime agency of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, under the leadership of John Foster Dulles. The parallel organisation in Britain was, as we saw in chapter chapter 3, the Peace Aims Group, which included lay individuals such as Sir Alfred Zimmern, who worked in the foreign research and press service of Chatham House during the war and in this capacity did much work for the Foreign Office; Geoffrey Wilson, who during the war held a post as third secretary in the Russian department

of the Foreign Office; and the Reverend Herbert Waddams from the Religions Division of the Ministry of Information.²

American influence on WCC ‘in-formation,’ was, significant. From 1937 on, the New York office carried the financial burdens of the WCC, particularly as the number of countries that could support the Council diminished. Multimillionaire John D. Rockefeller gave financial support. He had been impressed in May 1945 by Visser ‘t Hooft’s and George Bell’s outline of the task they envisaged for the churches in the post-war world which was presented to him at a dinner in New York in May 1945. He subsequently donated over one million dollars to establish a research institute under WCC.³ It should be noted that both John Foster Dulles and Pit Van Dusen were Trustees of the Rockefeller Trust.⁴

The Churches Commission on International Affairs was established in 1946 as a joint agency of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, to explore, educate and express the minds of the Churches on international problems.⁵ Selection of the commissioners for CCIA in August 1946 was made on the basis of competence in the political and diplomatic spheres, and individuals who had access to the ‘corridors of power’ and could thus facilitate direct representation at the highest level. This principle was reflected in the choice of Director, Kenneth Grubb, wartime Controller of Overseas Propaganda for the British Ministry of Information,

² Alfred Zimmern: D. J. Markwell, ‘Zimmern, Sir Alfred Eckhard (1879–1957),’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/37088> consulted online: <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/94084>

³ Lambeth Palace Library (LPL), Bell 105, Bell to Rockefeller, 23 December, 1945; LPL, Bell 105, Rockefeller to Bell, 29 Januar, 1946; Visser ‘t Hooft (ed.), *The Ten Formative Years*, Geneva: WCC, 1949, 49; Jill Edwards, ‘The president, the archbishop and the envoy: Religion and diplomacy in the cold war,’ *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 6,2, 1995, 490-511, 509; Dianne Kirby, ‘Harry S. Truman’s International Religious Anti-Communist Front, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the 1948 Inaugural Assembly of the World Council of Churches,’ *Contemporary British History*, 15,4, 2001, 35-70, 45

⁴ Church of England Record Center (CERC), BCC/DIA/7/4/1/1/5, minutes of meeting of the British Advisory Committee of CCIA, 22 July 1948

⁵ LPL, CFR G 39/1, Kenneth Grubb, ‘Memorandum on the CCIA’, 20 November 1946

and Associate Director, Frederic Nolde, a consultant at the United Nations San Francisco Conference and a key member of the American Commission on a Just and Durable Peace. Engagement of political minds in CCIA was highly important for the Churches. After all, as theologian Emil Brunner at one point noted ‘political experience is not given by the holy spirit.’ The majority of the clergy alone simply did not have the insights into politics necessary to give CCIA sufficient weight. Interaction in the ‘corridors of power’ proved to be a two-way process. It allowed also secular policy-making élites to exert influence on WCC officers. This was not an insignificant consideration when the leeway given Grubb and Nolde, who played important roles in preparing for the inaugural assembly, ‘was such that it was they who chose the direction followed, and their judgements that determined the priorities set and the topics concentrated upon.’⁶

The 1946 Cambridge Conference

The August 1946 conference, held in Girton College, Cambridge, to establish CCIA, was arranged by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace.⁷ The event was considered important by both clergy and laymen, and Pan American Airways provided a special plane to bring the prominent American churchmen to the four-day conference, which was chaired by Dulles. Weighty individuals took part in discussions at the Cambridge meeting, many of whom had been at the core of the Anglo-American leg of the ecumenical movement since, and even before, the 1937 Oxford Conference: Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr, Joseph Oldham, Dennis Routh,

⁶ Darril Hudson, *The WCC in International Affairs*, London, the Royal Institute for International Affairs, 1977, 18–19

⁷ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

Van Dusen, Van Kirk, and Alfred Zimmern.⁸ As had become a custom in the movement, the meeting showed a good mix of clergy and laity. In all, the conference was attended by 75 delegates from 15 different countries: Britain, the US, Holland, Sweden, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Norway, Canada, Hungary, China, New Zealand.

CCIA was initially set up to handle two sets of issues. The first was to decide on the 'right form of relationship to the UN,' which, as this work was only developing in the post-war years, was seen as an on-going process; the second was to secure a platform from which to educate the Christian Churches about Christians' responsibility for action in the field of international affairs.⁹ This second purpose was, of course, an area potentially full of tensions. There was the question of the extent to which the Christian Churches should get involved in international affairs at all, or if the WCC was to adhere to a purely Christian perspective on international affairs which was the backbone of ecumenical strategy. So if the churches decided to raise a voice in international affairs, how should this be managed and who should decide on the standpoint of WCC?

At the meeting in Cambridge in 1946, the convenors argued that the setting up of CCIA was a natural continuation of ecumenical developments which had begun with the 1937 Oxford Conference. Due to the reality of increasing international tensions it was now felt to be paramount to continue the process of strengthening the Christian approach to international affairs. If the Church was to rise to this emergency, 'the hearts and minds of individual Christians' had to be 'penetrated by a

⁸ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, WCC Conference on International Affairs, Commission on International Affairs, List of Participants, August 1946

⁹ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, press release by Mabel Small, Press Officer, BCC, 15 July 1946

new sense of mission' and an 'awakening of the senses of political and economic responsibility.' The CCIA was set up specifically to perform these tasks.¹⁰

Minutes from the conference reveal that the delegates of the conference disagreed about how to approach international affairs. The continental representatives continuously emphasized the necessity of spiritual freedom, and requested caution: a too aggressive approach by CCIA might lead the WCC to be regarded as 'a power among the powers.'¹¹ Becoming simply another agent in the political game between East and West was regarded by Continental churches as potentially counter-productive for the WCC itself. American delegates, however, responded with 'dismay' to 'a spirit of scepticism.'¹² Although they did not support any Christian move towards a new 'war', they strongly favoured a Christian approach, which inevitably meant confronting Communism. Communism was, after all, anti-religious and in opposition to the Christian churches, so strong resistance against it was a natural reaction by the churches; but a strong approach by the WCC could also have political advantages.

Bishop Bromley Oxnam, president of the American Federal Council of Churches stressed that in the US, the Commission on Just and Durable Peace had worked in such a way that 'Washington politicians knew they were not dealing with a paper organisation' and that people in the little towns were reading church literature on internationalism. 'We are thinking in terms like that ... is it possible to have at the world level something as effective as that?'¹³ Along the same lines, Van Kirk,

¹⁰ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, WCC Conference on International Affairs, Commission on International Affairs, Preamble to Statement of Functions, August 1946

¹¹ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, WCC Conference on International Affairs, Commission on International Affairs, minutes of discussion, comments by Dr. Boegner (France), and Professor Alivisatos (Greece) 5 August, 1946

¹² CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, WCC Conference on International Affairs, Commission on International Affairs, minutes of discussion, comment by Dr. Van Kirk (USA), 5 August 1946

¹³ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

secretary of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, warned that the churches faced ‘a critical moment in the world. Power politics is seeking to expand its influence and the Churches must act to counterbalance.’¹⁴ Not only was Van Kirk ready to engage in a strong anti-Communist approach, he also seemed to support the idea that WCC should be a player in power politics. Although the American delegates, naturally led by Dulles, argued against too much caution, the support for an open anti-Communist line was not universal. The most outspoken word of caution came from Joseph Oldham, who, as we have seen earlier, had drafted much of the material for the foundation of the WCC in the 1930s and at this point acted as vice chairman of the BCC. Although Oldham claimed to be ‘dubious but mostly in favour of the establishment of CCIA,’ he was frightened off by all the ‘big vague words.’¹⁵ In the end, it was decided at the conference that the differences of opinion concerning the tensions between Soviet Russia and the West pointed to the need for setting up the Commission to ‘make a deeper study of the church position on this question.’¹⁶ Hence, CCIA was from the onset primarily concerned about the Soviet Union.

Kenneth Grubb, CCIA and the preparations for the first Assembly of WCC

Kenneth Grubb, who was now chairman for CCIA, and also of the International Department of BCC, became the key figure in establishing WCC’s approach to international affairs, and more specifically, to the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church, and Communism. It was Grubb who coordinated the research in the field.¹⁷

Grubb was himself a man who wore many hats, and he was, not surprisingly a strong supporter of the churches’ use of ‘lay experts’ and influential individuals. In

¹⁴ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

¹⁵ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

¹⁶ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

¹⁷ For biographical info on Kenneth Grubb see chapter 1

1946 he noted that ‘the problem raised for the Christian conscience by the state, and the tendency of relations between the USSR and the rest of the world’ made it ‘important that on many points full account be taken of the views of qualified judges who may have no explicit confessional connection with the churches.’¹⁸ Aware that the subject of the WCC’s stand towards the Soviet Union and Communism was due to give rise to internal disagreement, Grubb was looking to establish an intellectual basis for the WCC’s position, but one which could not be attacked for being partial. This, however, turned out to be an almost impossible task.

Grubb stressed the need for a proper foundation from which to decide on a common standpoint. He wanted research on what was judged to be the religious situation in the Soviet Union, and an analysis of the tensions between belief held by Christians in the Soviet Union, and ‘those apparently held by the makers of Soviet policy.’ This was, of course, in itself a task of many potential tensions between the continental part of the WCC and the Americans. The decision to use the ‘Statement on Soviet-American relations’ made by of the Federal Council of Churches and CJD as a starting point, indicates the line that was to be adopted in this study, and as we shall see, the study became a source of hefty disagreement within CCIA itself.¹⁹

Grubb had initially asked a Russia expert, Jan Slavik, to prepare a report for CCIA containing facts about Russian history and the development of the Communist regime. Slavik’s report stressed that Russia had in fact not been transfixed by Communism but had used the principles of Communism to overcome the obsolescence of the country, which had been, Slavik concluded, returning more and more to the old Russian tradition in form of government, family life, administration,

¹⁸ CERC, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

¹⁹ LPL, CFR G 39/1, Kenneth Grubb, ‘Memorandum on the CCIA’, 20 November 1946

and foreign policy.²⁰ Grubb was not content with the conclusions of the report and asked Waddams to put together another one, as Grubb felt that Waddams had a better ‘instinct for what was essential.’²¹ It was also important for Grubb that the study was done by someone ‘of Anglican vintage.’²² What Grubb wanted was essentially to bring out Christian opinion about international relations and to ‘show which of our convictions are in practice important; on which we can compromise without danger; and which, on the other hand, are destroyed by compromise. We ought to try and get the churches to see not what are the apparent political points of interest in the USSR and our relations with it, but what are the points on which, so far as can be judged, the clash with the Christian conscience has already occurred or is likely to occur in the future.’²³

Grubb was clearly antagonistic in his attitude, and was seeking to highlight points of conflict. The full report, which was eventually to be named ‘Antagonisms and Alignments in a Changing World’ and which several members of the CCIA contributed to, was then to form the basis for the WCC Assembly’s Commission IV, tasked with examining ‘the Churches and International Affairs,’ which, unsurprisingly, turned out to be the most controversial topic of the Assembly. Grubb was not seeking a conciliatory approach to the Russian Church; he was rather, it can be argued, lining up a Cold War front, which would align with Western policies, but from an ecumenical perspective.

Waddams’ draft report focussed almost solely on the tensions between Soviet Russia and the West, and on the general subject of Communism. The danger of Communism in Soviet Russia, the report stated, resided chiefly in its ideological

²⁰ LPL, CFR G 39/1, Stages of the Russian Revolution by Jan Slavik, January 1946

²¹ LPL, CFR G 39/1, Grubb to Waddams, 23 January 1947

²² LPL, CFR 39/1, Grubb to Waddams, 30 January 1947

²³ LPL, CFR G 39/1, Grubb to Waddams, 4 February 1947

appeal. Communism could be seen as an ideology of its own with direct appeal that drew men out ‘of the Christian fold into an hostile atmosphere.’²⁴ In that way, Waddams added, it resembled Nazism in its nature. The equating of Communism and Nazism was in itself a highly debated topic, as we shall see below. In highlighting the resemblance between the two political systems, Waddams followed the line of the American Christians in WCC, particularly Reinhold Niebuhr.²⁵ Waddams then continued his characterisation of the East:

‘In Central Europe, many Christians believe that the future of European civilisation is at stake in the struggle between Communism and the Christian tradition (...) in the East stands a wholly different tradition, which denies many of these [Christian] traditions and substitutes for them a materialist pseudo scientific civilisation which threatens to swallow up all the elements of Western tradition which most clearly enshrine Christian principles. Such are the conception of justice, the value of men as persons, the tradition of political freedom, and freedom of thought and culture. Soviet Russia denies all these in their Western sense. (...) In Germany the Protestant and Catholic clergymen see in Communism the great enemy, and Communism is identified with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has made great efforts to foster Communism in the Eastern zone of occupation, and has attained very limited success. No doubt the object of their attempts was to create political conditions in which the Soviet Union would be able to control the area through its obedient instrument the Communist Party.’ ‘If the Soviet Union can exercise control over the whole of Europe without war, of course it will do so. The Soviet Union is an expanding power if one is to judge by facts. That is to say, whatever the motives of the Soviet rulers may be, and they usually hotly deny an expansionist outlook, in fact since the beginning of the war the Soviet Union has vastly expanded.’²⁶

As a solution to the expansionist tendencies of the Soviet Union, but also of the US, Waddams then also stressed the role of the UN.²⁷

²⁴ LPL, CFR 39/1 G, Report by Waddams ‘The Christian in International Affairs’ February 1947

²⁵ On Niebuhr see, e.g., Svend Andersen, ‘Kant, Kissinger and Other Lutherans. On Ethics and International Relations,’ in Stefan Heuser (ed.), *Political Practices and International Order: Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Societas Ethica*, Oxford 2006, Lit Verlag, 2007, 68

²⁶ LPL, CFR 39/1 G, Report by Waddams ‘The Christian in International Affairs’ February 1947

²⁷ LPL, CFR 39/1 G, Report by Waddams ‘The Christian in International Affairs’ February 1947

As Waddams' paper was circulated, several members of CCIA expressed discomfort, feeling unprepared to handle these large questions. They pointed out that the WCC was not equipped to deal with it either. Waddams' report received lukewarm reviews from the Nordic and Continental sections of the WCC, but also from Joseph Oldham who found the paper to be 'unnecessarily provocative' and 'likely to stir up opposition in all sorts of quarters'²⁸

The Swede, the Rev. Ehrenstrom, co-president of the Provisional Council of WCC, claimed that the paper would single out the Orthodox Church negatively from the beginning.²⁹ He also pointed out that CCIA had agreed that Russia and the West should be analysed only from a Christian point of view, and, of great importance, that both Communism and capitalism should under critical review. Referring to the spirit of Oxford 1937, Ehrenstrom stressed the question of Christian guilt and Western responsibility for the deadlock in international affairs. He therefore wanted the WCC to refuse to identify itself with the fight against either system.³⁰ Grubb, however, did not succumb to 'ecumenical' pressure. 'Nothing is so contentious,' he wrote to Ehrenstrom, 'as the problem of the USSR ... [and] for what purpose is this meeting in Geneva being called except to raise this kind of criticism?' The tendency to concentrate attention on the issues between the USSR and 'the rest,' was seen as mistaken by a number of clergy who advised instead a general study of the relations between the Great Powers.³¹ Grubb did not agree and he was not alone. On the whole, many of the WCC officers were naturally inclined to a Western perspective that meant blaming the Soviet Union for the deteriorating East–West relationship.

²⁸ LPL, CFR 39/1 G, Letter from Grubb to Waddams quoting sections of letter from Joseph Oldham, 22 May 1947

²⁹ LPL, CFR 39/1 G, Ehrenstrom to Visser t'hoof, 28 May, 1947

³⁰ LPL, CFR 39/1 G, Ehrenstrom to Visser t'hoof, 28 May, 1947

³¹ LPL, CFR G 39/1, Kenneth Grubb, 'Memorandum on the CCIA', 20 November 1946

The profound impact of the international tensions and the polarisation of the world into two competing blocs were clearly reflected in the preparation process and the study papers prepared by CCIA for the Amsterdam Assembly. Although a considerable number of high profile clergy argued that the WCC should stick to the Christian perspective on world conflict and stay out of the Cold War division, they failed to understand that for many religious leaders in Britain and the US, the distinction between church and government perspectives on the Cold War divide was becoming increasingly difficult to detect and sustain. Regardless, therefore, of which approach the WCC would officially take on the world conflict, the East-West divide was already a major preoccupation in the Council, and the option to stay outside the conflict was, in either way, no longer a choice which could meaningfully be made.

The establishment with the CCIA, then, had initiated a process within the WCC which increased the division between those who insisted that the lines of the 1937 Oxford Conference should be respected, and those who wished to take a new standpoint particularly by singling out Communism and the Soviet Union as the main threat to Christianity. The WCC was now witnessing a split between a Christian Anglo-American alliance against the Nordic countries and the European Continent, which resembled the now very outspoken political East-West divide.

We will now turn to look at how development between the Orthodox Churches and the WCC fared under these conditions.

The Church of England and the Eastern Orthodox Churches

The good relationship between WCC and the Eastern Orthodox Churches, particularly the Russian Orthodox Church, was highly valued by the Church of England and American Protestants alike. In the Church of England it was felt that the one good

thing that had come out of Britain's alliance with the Soviet Union during WWII was that ties between the Church of England and the Russian Patriarch had been strengthened.³² The WCC leadership treasured this relationship as well, as collaboration with the Orthodox Church was one of the cornerstones of the ecumenical mission. If good relations could be upheld it would also be a sound proof that the WCC stood above secular politics. So worried was the WCC leadership that this relationship could be damaged that members of the Provisional Council had expressed doubts that Fisher would even be a wise choice for the chair of the WCC because he might damage the relationship between it and the Orthodox Church. So, already in 1945 it was noted that the hostilities between Britain and the Soviet Union might damage the attempt to bring the Eastern Orthodox into the World Council.³³ So, the WCC was genuinely concerned about how best to protect relations with the Orthodox Church, which had been so effectively established during the war. The extent to which this critique of Fisher was based on his rather conservative and state-loyal character is unclear, but in all cases, immediately after the war the WCC was reluctant to give too much obvious power to churchmen belonging to the Great Powers. Bell would have been considered to be the first choice for the chairmanship of the Department of International Relations had he not been British.³⁴

In light of the rapidly declining relationship between the Soviet leadership and the West after the war, efforts to ensure Orthodox participation in the WCC, and to keep in good standing with the Russian Patriarch, was a high priority of the WCC, the

³² See chapter 3

³³ LPL, Bell 105, f. 120, Letter from Van Dusen (USA) to Visser t' Hooft and Samuel McCrea Cavert with comments by Niebuhr and Bennett, 27 December 1945. This view coincides with those who argue that the UK's Cold War started very early, and that the Soviet Union focused on the UK before the US. See Henry Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America. The US-UK alliance and the emerging Cold War, 1943-1946*, Cambridge University Press, 2004

³⁴ LPL, Bell 105, f. 120, Letter from Van Dusen (USA) to Visser t' Hooft and Samuel McCrea Cavert with comments by Niebuhr and Bennett, 27 December 1945

Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCC) and the BCC. In May 1946 the presidents of the Provisional Council wrote to the Patriarch of Russia, Moscow. The WCC was here carefully presented as ‘a fellowship in which Eastern and Western churches have an equal share,’ and it was stressed that leaders of the Eastern Orthodox national churches and Eastern Orthodox theologians had already taken part in meetings and preparations. It was stressed that the Provisional Council of the WCC was prepared to make special arrangements to include the Orthodox Church in the WCC, which was underlined with the adoption of a resolution which promised that WCC would ‘take steps to ensure that a special approach be made to the Orthodox Churches in the hope that the Orthodox Churches will be able to take their full and rightful place in the Council.’³⁵ A similar letter was sent to the Patriarch in Athens, and arrangements were made to have an Orthodox priest permanently stationed at the WCC headquarters in Geneva.³⁶ The Patriarch of Moscow subsequently agreed to meet a delegation of the WCC in Prague to discuss a future association between the WCC and the Orthodox Church. The general attitude was, as George Bell expressed it, that the WCC would ‘have to take advantage of this opening.’³⁷ To the WCC’s regret, however, the meeting was then postponed by the Orthodox Church as it needed time to gather more information. The relationship with the Orthodox Church after the war was generally fragile and there was a justifiable concern that even a minor mistake could shut the door to the East.

Meanwhile, on the international scene, the line up of the ideological conflict between East and West was hardening, and the issue of religious liberty was moving

³⁵ LPL, Bell 105, f. 155, Letter from the WCC Provisional Committee to the Patriarch of Russia, 4 April 1946

³⁶ LPL, Bell 105, f. Letter to the Presidents of the WCC Provisional Council from Visser t’hoof, 5 June, 1946

³⁷ LPL, Bell 105, Bell to Waddams, 6 August, 1946; LPL, Bell 105, Letter from Visser t’Hooft to possible members of delegation to Prague, 9 August, 1946

to the front line in the battle. In November 1947 the Moscow Journal of the Patriarchate stated that

*'the Church with us rules herself independently and freely according to her dogmatic and canonical constitution; not interfering in the affairs of the state and guaranteed against interference of the state power in its inner life, the Church blesses everything which leads our native land to peace, glory and prosperity ...' and '[m]any expected that, when the struggle with Fascism came, the Church would side with the enemy. But the Russian Church has always been on the side of the faithful (believing) people for the defence of the political, economic, cultural and religious independence of the native land.'*³⁸

It seemed clear to Western Church leaders that the Orthodox Church was increasingly being used as a tool by the Soviet government.

In July 1948 George Bell was approached by American Bishops of Delaware and Albany, who were in Britain for the Lambeth Conference. They wanted to make a final push to use British political interference to soften the Russian Orthodox Church. The bishops suggested that the Church of England should send a delegation to the Russian Orthodox Church to pay respects on its upcoming anniversary celebration of 500 years of autocephalicity, 8-18 July 1948. The church officials, it was suggested, could perhaps then inform the Russian embassy that they wished to see Stalin. The Bishop of Delaware claimed to have spoken to 'one close to the British Government' who had felt it 'might do good.'³⁹ As requests coming from the US at this time were not ignored, Fisher brought the matter before Prime Minister Attlee – a decisive example of the now important inter-connectedness of Church and state. He responded that 'the suggested action would not be useful at this juncture. I doubt if Stalin would be impressed by the opinions of a body of Christians' and

³⁸ LPL CFR DOC 1/311-478, Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate, November 1947, extracts summarised by a correspondent of CFR

³⁹ LPL, Fisher 49, Letter to George Bell from the Bishop of Delaware, 16 July 1948

*'this kind of appeal to Caesar would have the effect of reinforcing the position of Stalin as the man on a pedestal, the arbitrator of the world. An appeal to Stalin, Truman and myself would, I think, be used by Russian propaganda to show, that in the view of the Anglican Church there was not much to choose between the UK, USSR, and USA in regard to their responsibility for world unrest, which would be unfortunate.'*⁴⁰

Attlee was not prepared to risk giving the Soviet Union a propaganda advantage and had, anyway, no incentive to support collaboration between the Church of England and the Orthodox Church. Attlee's attitude was no doubt similar to that of Truman in 1948; now that so much had been invested to turn the public against the Soviet Union it could easily become counter-productive to support any softer approach by the Church.

In July 1948 the Patriarchate of Moscow held a conference of Orthodox Hierarchs in Moscow to discuss relations with the Vatican as well as the inaugural assembly of WCC. It concluded that the Orthodox Church condemned the active role of the Vatican 'in incitement to a new war and in the political struggle against world democracy generally.' The resolution adopted stated that the popes of Rome 'have always been on the side of the powers that be against the weak and exploited. The Vatican is a centre of international intrigue against the interests of the peoples, the Slav peoples in particular. It is a centre of international Fascism.'⁴¹ Concerning relations with the Ecumenical movement it was concluded that the conference of Orthodox Hierarchs had now decided against participation in the first general assembly of the WCC, 'since this movement pursues in the main political, anti-democratic and not ecclesiastical purposes.' In addition, the conference adopted a message to Christians of the whole world, calling upon them to struggle for peace

⁴⁰ LPL, Fisher 49, Attlee to Fisher, 26 July 1948

⁴¹ LPL, CFR DOC 1/311-478, Patriarchate of Moscow Conference of Orthodox Hierarchs July 1948, Statement issued by Tass Agency, 22 July, 1948

against the warmongers.⁴² The Orthodox Church had now lined up a front next to the Soviet government condemning the West, almost at the same time as the Lambeth Conference decided publicly to denounce Communism. In the end, Eastern clergy were in some instances prohibited from participation in the assembly for political reasons; such was, i.e., the case with Bishop Ordas, Lutheran Bishop of Budapest, a popular Lutheran leader in Europe and a member of the central committee of the World Council of Churches who was refused a visa to attend the first assembly of WCC by the Hungarian government. This led George Bell to write an open letter to the Hungarian Government in *The Times* pleading the non-political standpoint of the ecumenical movement. It has, unfortunately, not been possible to access relevant archives or publications from the archives from the former Soviet Union to determine in more detail this demarche. To most, however it was by now obvious that the Amsterdam Assembly had been enrolled into the Cold War.⁴³

The withdrawal of the Orthodox Church from the WCC was a great disappointment to the ecumenical movement, but by August 1948 hardly a surprise. The battle, however, to get the Orthodox Church on board, and to ensure that WCC remained above the Cold War politics, which split the world, had been lost. The reason for the withdrawal of the Orthodox Church can largely be attributed to the antagonistic relationship between the Soviet Union and the West in 1948, and, presumably also to the rising hostility towards the Soviet Union, as we have seen, within WCC itself, particularly through the attitude of CCIA, and the anti-Communist

⁴² All decisions adopted by the conference were signed by: the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Alexius; the Catholicos Patriarch of all Georgia, Calistratus; the Serb Patriarch, Gabriol; the Rumanian Patriarch, Justinian; the Bulgarian Exarch Metropolitan of Sofia, Stephan; On behalf of the Alexandria and Antioch Orthodox Churches, the decisions were signed by the Metropolitan of Homs, Alexander; on behalf of the Albanian Orthodox Church by the bishop of Korea Paisi; on behalf of the Polish Orthodox Church by the Archbishop of Byolystock and Bielsk, Timothy; on behalf of the Orthodox Church in Czechoslovakia, by the Archbishop of Prague and Bohemia, Eleutherius. LPL, CFR DOC 1/311-478, Patriarchate of Moscow Conference of Orthodox Hierarchs July 1948, Statement issued by Tass Agency, 22 July, 1948

⁴³ 'Hungary and Freedom,' letter to the editor from George Bell, *The Times*, Friday 29 October, 1948

outcome of the 1948 Lambeth Conference. The final factor, however, is likely to have been caused by another major player on the religious scene in Europe at the time, whose opposition to the Soviet Union had been clear for some time; the Roman Catholic Church. It is to this we shall now turn.

The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church

As we saw in chapter 5, in the post-war period Truman made religion an integral part of his campaign to persuade the American people to abandon isolationism and embrace globalism and world leadership. Hence, after the War religion became a very important component in Anglo-American efforts to construct a Western doctrine with which to counter the growing appeal of Communism.⁴⁴ To make the religious appeal more authentic it was naturally felt to be important to gain the support of moral and religious leaders. By 1948 anti-Communism had already been endorsed by the Vatican, which was considered a valuable ally for Truman.⁴⁵ After the defeat of the Italian Communist Party in the 1948 Italian election, which saw the monarchy deposed and a republican government established under the Christian Democrats, Truman's personal representative to the Vatican, Myron C. Taylor suggested to the President that this success in Italy might be replicated on a wider scale.⁴⁶ It was

⁴⁴ Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith. Religion in American War and Diplomacy*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012, 417-439

⁴⁵ For literature on the Roman Catholic Church in the early Cold War see, e.g., Frank J. Coppa, 'Pope Pius XII and the Cold War: Confrontation between Catholicism and Communism' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003; and John Pollard, 'The Vatican, Italy and the Cold War' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003. For literature on US-Vatican relations see, e.g., Charles Gallagher, 'Pro Patria, Pro Deo: The United States and the Vatican in Cold War Yugoslavia, 1945-1950' in Dianne Kirby, (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War*, Palgrave, 2003; William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960. The Soul of Containment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, and Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy*, Anchor, 2012

⁴⁶ Myron C. Taylor (1874-1959) was an American banker and businessman. After a career in the steel industry he became in 1939 the president's personal representative to Pope Pius XII as a way to gain information from Vatican contacts in occupied Europe. Taylor knew Italy well, and he also knew the pope, who as Vatican secretary of state had stayed at Taylor's New York residence. Between 1940 and

Taylor's impression that the Roman Catholic Church had been instrumental in pushing back the Communist Party, a belief held in Britain as well, and this reinforced the feeling that religion could be used as an effective counter force to Communism on a larger scale.⁴⁷

The relationship between the US and the Vatican has been covered in detail elsewhere.⁴⁸ It is sufficient here to focus on the ways in which Archbishop Fisher and the Church of England became involved in the diplomatic implications of the Church of England's hostile relationship to the Vatican and Britain's important alliance with the US. Truman was seeking an alliance with the leadership of the WCC, but it was not interested in joining the Pope in his anti-Soviet campaign. Protestant leaders were particularly nervous that it would involve them in a war with Russia, which was, essentially, against everything the WCC stood for, so British and American Protestants alike knew that the WCC should not 'join the Vatican in a holy war on Russia.'⁴⁹ The implications were not only that the WCC would then become a *political* council of churches, but also that Protestant churches would in a sense become subservient to Rome, which, building on a long history of antagonistic relations, to some, would be an even more horrifying scenario than aligning with the West. Despite forces within the WCC that favoured an openly Christian anti-

1945 Taylor made five long trips to Rome. When Benito Mussolini excluded him from Rome, from September 1942 to June 1944, Taylor served on several State Department advisory boards on postwar foreign and economic policy. He remained President Harry Truman's personal representative to the Vatican until 1949, then carried out special diplomatic missions through 1953. Source: American National Biography, consulted online: <http://ezproxyprd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2168/articles/06/0600871.html?a=1&n=Myron%20Taylor&d=10&ss=0&q=1>

⁴⁷ See chapter 7 for further details on how Ernest Bevin, Lord Pakenham and Stafford Cripps thought along the same lines with the spiritual aspects of the Western Union as revealed in Christian Action

⁴⁸ See footnote 45

⁴⁹ Church of England Record Centre, BCC/DCA/7/4/1/1/8, Press release by Robert Root, Public Relations, WCC, August 1946

Communist line, this had to be on the churches' own terms, not dictated by Truman or the Vatican.

A further consideration at this point was the already fragile relationship with the Orthodox Church. Although the 1946 Cambridge Conference to establish CCIA (see above) had stressed the importance of cooperation between the non-Roman Catholic churches and the Roman Communion, the conference decided to take no formal steps towards rapprochement with Rome. This was precisely due to a fear that some would think that the non-Roman churches were prepared to join the Roman Catholic crusade against Russia, and, of importance, to support its hostile attitude towards the Orthodox Communion.⁵⁰

It should be noted here, that the Roman Catholic Church had of course never been part of the ecumenical movement, but did, nevertheless, show considerable interest in the Amsterdam Assembly, and the Provisional Council of the WCC had decided in 1947 that a few individual Roman Catholics should be invited to attend the Assembly as 'unofficial observers.' Subsequently, during the winter of 1947-48 the WCC's General Secretariat received a considerable number of letters from Roman Catholic priests and laymen asking to be invited. In April 1948, however, Visser t'Hooft revealed that word was received indirectly that the Archbishop of Utrecht, Cardinal de Jong, felt that the choice of observers would have to be approved by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of the Netherlands. Geoffrey Fisher however, preferred that the Vatican appoint the observers, as officially appointed observers would be an outward and visible gesture of recognition.⁵¹ Fisher presumably knew that Rome would be unwilling to let a competing Christian

⁵⁰ William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960. The Soul of Containment*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 38

⁵¹ Edward Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher – His Life and Times*, Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1991, 171

community take a lead in a matter which was considered important to the Vatican's own political engagements at the time. The event, however, clearly demonstrates the competitive atmosphere between Canterbury and Rome, and indicates that the Roman Catholic Church perhaps felt threatened by the establishment of the WCC.

At the same time, Myron Taylor also made an attempt to awaken Fisher to the idea of a broad religious front against Communism. Taylor might have felt encouraged to approach the head of the Church of England by Winston Churchill who, in 1946, had confided to Taylor that he would join the Pope in combatting Communism.⁵²

It was not, as we have seen, until early 1948, and after Bevin's public denunciation of Communism, that Fisher was willing to actively support anti-Communist initiatives; but it remained important to him that the Church of England initiated its own campaign. To simply stand behind Rome was entirely out of the question. But by 1948 he was considering a public statement which would support the line of the US administration and the Vatican, but appear as a Church of England initiative. This statement would call upon Christians to unite to meet the Communist threat and should be signed by leaders of the Christian churches throughout the world, and would include the Roman Catholic countries. This plan coincided with Christian Action's Albert Hall meeting, where, as we saw in chapter 5, individuals such as Cripps and Halifax sought to gain support for Western Union.⁵³ As a supportive measure, Fisher and Grubb thought about gathering a number of Christian leaders from the Western Union under World Council auspices to discuss the international crisis.⁵⁴ In this way, Fisher would both support Western Union and provide a Church of England led initiative, which would please the US. Bevin supported the idea.

⁵² Preston (2012), *passim*

⁵³ LPL, Fisher 40, Fisher to Grubb, 22 March 1948

⁵⁴ LPL, Fisher 40, f. 309, Fisher to Visser t'Hooft,

According to Grubb, ‘Mr. Bevin had heard of the possibility of this idea and thought well of it. I have since heard through a Foreign Office official that Mr. Bevin has expressed a much more active interest, in the sense of saying that he would like to stir up the appropriate church authorities to take a lead in the matter.’⁵⁵ Visser t’Hooft, however, was strongly opposed to the idea as it would likely,

‘increase the already too widespread impression that the World Council is linked up with the Western powers (...) we still have a fair chance that at Amsterdam we may have a good many churchmen from behind the iron curtain (...) if we identify ourselves publicly and visibly with one group of nations, [the] churches of Eastern Europe would in fact be cut off from us.’⁵⁶

In the end, then, Fisher dropped the idea. He did, however, still wish to show his support for the Americans and the FO. Hence, when he was requested by the latter to raise a question in the House of Lords, which would give the government an opportunity to explain to the Americans Britain’s lack of support for the UN Genocide Convention, he did so.⁵⁷ On 10 February 1948 Fisher posed the following question in House of Lords:

‘To ask His Majesty’s Government the reasons which have led them to withdraw the support for a Genocide Convention which they had previously given at the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 11, 1946, and to inquire whether the Government consider these reasons sufficient to prevent their joining with the United States and thirty-eight member nations in supporting the Convention at the meeting of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in February.’⁵⁸

The Lord Chancellor (Viscount Jowitt) then had the opportunity to explain that there had been no fundamental change of attitude on the part of the British government, who regarded the crime of genocide with as much detestation as ever. The controversies over the UN Genocide Convention have been dealt with in detail

⁵⁵ LPL, Fisher 40, Grubb to Fisher, 17 March 1948

⁵⁶ LPL, Fisher 40, Visser t’Hooft to Grubb, 13 March 1948

⁵⁷ LPL, Fisher 45, Fisher to Reading, 31 January 1948

⁵⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Lords, 10 February 1948, cols. 909-911

elsewhere.⁵⁹ Here it is sufficient to note that the political use of the genocide term was marked by the rising Cold War; the West could use it to criticize Soviet limitations on political freedom in the Baltic and Eastern Europe, while the East could use the term to characterize European repression of Communist and anti-colonialists in Southeast Asia.⁶⁰ That Fisher was asked to lead on this for the government is more evidence of his political support, but a support that had to be qualified and modulated through the institutions of the Church of England itself.

In April 1948, Myron Taylor now made renewed efforts to win over the WCC. He paid visits to several officers of the World Council, and said that the purpose of his visits was ‘to make the Amsterdam meeting inclusive of all Christianity’ and to unite all the Christian forces against Bolshevism.’⁶¹ The WCC leadership was, as we have seen, awake to the Soviet threat but their loyalty remained with their non-political cause. Taylor urged once again that the Roman Catholic Church should be invited to send observers. He felt, noted t’Hooft, that there was reason to believe that the Vatican would accept such an invitation. According to t’Hooft, Taylor was then informed of the steps already taken and it was made clear that ‘the World Council desired to accomplish its task in complete independence from governmental

⁵⁹ See, e.g., Mark Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919-1950*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, 217 ff. Lewis argues that the Genocide Convention was subject to Cold War politics primarily between Britain and the US on the one side, and the Soviet Union on the other. The main problem was whether the international authority to prevent and punish genocide would be held by an international legal authority (an international criminal court), an international political authority (the Security Council), or some combination. The Soviets insisted that the national courts and national penal codes should exclusively be used to prosecute perpetrators; an international criminal court was a violation of state sovereignty. This was connected to their strong opposition to including political groups in the convention. They did, e.g., not want an international criminal court to prosecute their leaders for forced transfer of national groups, such as the 1944 deportation of 500.000 Chechens and Ingush from the Caucasus to Kazakhstan and Kirghizia.

⁶⁰ Lewis (2014), 217

⁶¹ Quoted in Kirby (2001), 51

authorities.’⁶² T’Hooft was, as Carpenter notes, ‘appalled at Myron Taylor’s ‘monumental ignorance.’⁶³ Hence, Taylor was not successful in his attempt to win over the majority of the WCC leadership. But, although t’Hooft rejected Taylor’s attempts, Fisher confirmed his earlier invitation for the Pope to send observers, but, based on the historical hostility of the Vatican towards the ecumenical movement, still anticipated a negative papal response.⁶⁴ On 18 June 1948 it was, as Fisher had expected, communicated in a note from the Holy Office to Cardinal de Jong that permission for Roman Catholics to attend the Assembly ‘would be granted to nobody.’⁶⁵ A further, direct ban, for Catholics to participate in Ecumenical meetings was published in Latin in ‘Osservatore Romano’ of June 6, 1948.⁶⁶ According to Kirby, who has examined the affair through the Truman Archive, Taylor held the WCC responsible for this development, and was ‘shocked by the WCC stance.’⁶⁷ The heart of the matter is that neither Truman nor Taylor possessed knowledge of the development of the ecumenical movement nor understanding of the tensions between the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox Churches. They saw in the WCC’s reluctance only a deliberate attempt to obstruct Truman’s strategy. This is underlined by the fact that Taylor did not understand why the WCC wished to include the Russian Patriarchate in the assembly; to him the Orthodox Church was merely an agency of Soviet propaganda. The fact that Visser t’Hooft expressed hope that the Russian Patriarch would send a strong delegation to the Amsterdam Assembly led

⁶² LPL, Bell 105, document on the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches prepared for publication in the Ecumenical Review, ‘The Roman Catholic Church and the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches’ by Visser t’Hooft, 2 November 1948

⁶³ Edward Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher – His Life and Times*, Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1991, 172

⁶⁴ Kirby (2001), 51

⁶⁵ LPL, Bell 105, document on the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches prepared for publication in the Ecumenical Review, ‘The Roman Catholic Church and the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches’ by Visser t’Hooft, 2 November 1948

⁶⁶ LPL, CFR RC 113, translation of the ‘warning’ made by the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, published in ‘Osservatore Romano’ on 6 June 1948

⁶⁷ Kirby (2001), 54

Taylor to warn of 'sabotage and obstructionism similar to the Russian tactics at the UN.'⁶⁸ To this t'Hooft responded that the iron curtain did not exist within the WCC.

After Taylor's tour of Europe, the *New York Times* in May 1948 reported that he was returning to Rome after 'a tour of Western Europe in the interests of Christian unity upon the question of war and peace,' indicating that the tour had not been particularly successful. The purpose of his mission was described as 'to make the Amsterdam meeting inclusive of all Christianity and to turn the influence of all Christian sentiment in the world toward the preservation of peace'. It was understood that 'an invitation to attend the Amsterdam meeting' had been 'extended to the Orthodox Patriarchate in Moscow, with every prospect of its acceptance. A meeting has yet to be arranged with the Patriarch in Istanbul who is in a position to control part of the Orthodox churches throughout Western Europe that have not recognized the authority of the church of Moscow.'⁶⁹ The article was not well received by WCC, and complaints were made to both President Truman and *New York Times*, particularly that the article had made it look as if the WCC was a purely Protestant gathering. Taylor refused to be responsible for the press report, and the White House did not respond to the complaint in any way.⁷⁰

Although the WCC leadership had managed to steer clear of American attempts to co-opt it, and also managed to ensure that there were no official entanglements with the Vatican, the whole affair had left a messy impression. In spite of its attempt to announce publicly that the organisation was 'transcendent,' purely Christian, and non-political, it was too late: The WCC had already gained too much political attention to be able to claim to stand outside the Cold War conflict, and was

⁶⁸ Taylor reports, 'WCC Memorandum,' 27 April 1948, quoted in Dianne Kirby, 'Harry S. Truman's International Religious Anti-Communist Front, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the 1948 Inaugural Assembly of the World Council of Churches,' *Contemporary British History*, 15, 4, 2001, 35-70

⁶⁹ 'Taylor to End Tour on Christian Unity,' *New York Times*, 11 May 1948

⁷⁰ Kirby (2001), 54ff.

in the general discourse too attached to the West to gain the support of the Orthodox Church.

In this chapter significant areas of relevance to the August 1948 inaugural assembly of WCC have been looked at. First, the establishment of the Churches Commission on International Affairs (CCIA) was examined. It was noted that the American clergy insisted that human rights were to be an integral part of WCC's approach to international affairs. Then, the relationship between the Church of England and the Orthodox Church was investigated, and, finally, the chapter examined the relationship between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church in the period leading up to the Amsterdam Assembly. It was stressed that American President Truman and his personal representative to the Vatican, Myron Taylor, saw opportunities in a broad Protestant-Roman Catholic front against Communism, and hoped to use the Amsterdam Assembly as a platform to voice the alliance. The chapter also explained how Archbishop Fisher attempted to navigate in the complex diplomatic field between American requests for support, Britain's, at this point covert, dual policy, and the WCC's official non-political line. He did not come out of it particularly successfully for the Americans were now accusing the WCC of showing Soviet sympathy, while the Orthodox Church was accusing the WCC of aligning with the West. This was, then, the scenario in which the WCC convened its 1948 inaugural assembly. It is to this that the thesis will turn next.

Chapter 8: The Church of England and the Establishment of the World Council of Churches, part II

In the previous chapter three significant areas of relevance to the August 1948 Amsterdam inaugural assembly of WCC were examined. First, the establishment of the Churches Commission on International Affairs (CCIA) was looked at. It was noted that the agency was largely an American initiative intended to investigate the conflict between East and West from a Christian perspective. Second, the relationship between the Church of England and the Orthodox Churches was examined. British and American clergy hoped for Orthodox participation in the WCC. Based, however, on the anti-communist message of the 1948 Lambeth Conference, the CCIA's emphasis on human rights, and on the confusion about possible WCC-Roman Catholic collaboration, the Orthodox Churches withdrew from the ecumenical framework claiming that it was too aligned with Western politics. Third, the chapter examined the relationship between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church in the period leading up to the Amsterdam Assembly. It was stressed that American President Truman and his personal representative to the Vatican, Myron Taylor, saw opportunities in a broad Protestant-Roman Catholic front against communism, and hoped to use the Amsterdam Assembly as a platform to voice the alliance. This was rejected by the Church of England and the majority of the WCC, which did not want to join the Vatican's 'holy war on Russia.' It was also stressed that Fisher's deference to British foreign policy, which until early 1948 was still based on an alliance with the Soviet Union, was a decisive factor in the Church's reluctance to support the US-Vatican anti-Soviet campaign. The chapter explained how Fisher attempted to navigate in the complex diplomatic field between American requests for support; Britain's, at this point covert, dual policy; and the WCC's

officially non-political line which spurred the Americans to accuse the WCC of showing Soviet sympathy; and on the other, led the Orthodox Churches to accuse the WCC of aligning with the West. This was, then, the platform from which WCC faced its 1948 inaugural assembly.

In the first section of this chapter the inaugural assembly of WCC, which took place 22 August – 4 September 1948 in Amsterdam will be examined with a particular focus on the assembly session IV: The Church and International Disorder. In the second section of the chapter focus will then move to the Church of England and the British Council of Churches more specifically. Based primarily on an unpublished document prepared by BCC's Social Responsibility Department for the assembly's session III: The Church and the Disorder of Society on the specific character of the British churches, the section will reveal how the British Churches perceived themselves as bridge-builders between the US and Europe.

At the Amsterdam assembly

The inaugural assembly of the WCC met in Amsterdam on 22 August and remained in session until 4 September 1948. 147 Churches from 44 nations were represented, including 17 Churches from the British Isles.¹ The assembly was dominated by the US and the UK, and regionally, by 'the West.'² It was a significant

¹ Baptist Union of Gt. Britain & Ireland; Baptist Union of Scotland; Churches of Christ in Gt. Britain & Ireland; Church of England; Church of Ireland; Church of Scotland; Church in Wales; Congregational Union of England & Wales; Congregational Union of Scotland; Episcopal Church in Scotland; Methodist Church; Methodist Church in Ireland; Presbyterian Church of England; Presbyterian Church of Ireland; Presbyterian Church of Wales; United Free Church of Scotland; Salvation Army. Source: Church of England Record Centre (CERC), BCC 7/1/1/7/2, Thirteenth meeting of the BCC, The World Council of Churches, 1948

² Best represented were the US and the UK, followed by the Netherlands. The US was represented by 26 denominations, including the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate in America and the Polish National Catholic Church of America. In total 76 of the participants came from the US. Of the countries, belonging to the emerging Western block, 20 were represented. From the eastern sphere, Czechoslovakia was represented with the Evangelical Church in Slovakia, Augsburgian Confession; the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren; and the Reformed Church in

event, perhaps even, as *The Times* noted in 1948, perhaps one of the most influential events in the history of the Church.³

The overall sources of tension between the parties to the Assembly have been examined in the previous chapters; in this section we shall, therefore, focus mainly on conflicts as they arose during the conference itself. As the main area of contention during the assembly played out in the sessions related to the assembly theme 'The Church and International Disorder', in which it became clear that the Assembly was, as Hudson has noted, 'obsessed with the Cold War,' focus here will be restricted to these sessions.⁴ First the published study material, and the official report of section IV: The Church and International Disorder will be examined; then the debate between American John Foster Dulles and Czechoslovakian theologian J.L. Hromadka will be looked at in detail to throw light on the lines along which the assembly was divided. This is important, as it was almost exclusively the battle between Dulles and Hromadka, which was reported by the press. Hence, although the official report of the assembly as a whole claimed that the WCC did not operate with iron curtains, to many, the first assembly of the WCC was seen as a clash between East and West; between Eastern and Western Christians.

The assembly was divided into four sections, which during the almost three years of preparation had been broken down into specific study committees; one for

Slovakia. Estonia was represented with the Evangelical Church in Estonia; Hungary was represented with the Lutheran Church of Hungary and the Reformed Church of Hungary; Lithuania was represented with the Reformed Church of Lithuania; and finally Poland was represented by the Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession.

From Asia, Africa, and South America 43 churches were present from 19 countries.

The delegation from the British Churches consisted of 60 delegates, 49 alternates, 10 youth delegates and 15 consultants. In addition to this there were 30 accredited visitors. In comparison, clerics from the Western Zone of Germany participated with 5 churches and 24 participants; the Netherlands participated with 8 churches and 14 participants. The remaining countries all participated with less than five churches and on average 2 participants. Source: Visser t'hoof (ed.), *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, London: SCM Press 1949, 230-235 (Churches represented at the assembly) and 236-255 (List of participants)

³ 'Christian Unity,' *The Times*, 23 August, 1948

⁴ Darril Hudson, *The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs*, London: LSE, 1969, 213

each section. As it is not possible to investigate the conclusions of all the committees here, we shall only have a closer look at the outcome of section IV, which dealt with issues of the greatest relevance to this thesis.⁵ The preparatory studies for the assembly's section IV had been carried out by Roswell Barnes, Emil Brunner, John Foster Dulles, Kenneth Grubb (chairman), Joseph L. Hromadka, Frederic Nolde, and F.M. Van Asbeck.⁶ The result of the section's studies was published separately in volume IV of the Amsterdam Assembly Series 'Man's Disorder and God's Design.' The volume comprises six chapters highlighting different aspects of Christianity and international affairs; here, however, only chapters IV 'Christian Responsibility in our Divided World,' by John Foster Dulles and Joseph L. Hromadka, and V 'Freedom of Religion and Related Human Rights,' by Frederic Nolde will be looked at in detail. This choice is made partly on the basis that a detailed investigation of the entire volume would be impossible to fit into this thesis, and partly because these chapters represent the main points of conflict in relevant areas. Press coverage and other relevant primary sources will, however, be drawn on as fit.

In Dulles' contribution to the chapter 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World,' and in his oral contribution at the assembly, emphasis was placed on two points: first, Christianity and violence; second, the significance of 'free societies' to the achievement of world peace. Advocating a strong role for the United Nations

⁵ The four sections of the conference were: I: The Universal Church in God's Design; II: The Church's Witness to God's Design; III: The Church and the Disorder of Society; IV: The Church and the International Disorder.

⁶ Roswell Barnes was Associate General Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, USA; Emil Brunner was at this point professor of Systematic Theology in Zurich; John Foster Dulles was at this point Chairman of Committee on Policy, Department of International Justice and Goodwill of American Federal Council of Churches, and member of United States Delegation to the United Nations Assembly. In August 1948 he was also advisor to the United States Republican Presidential candidate, Governor Dewey; Joseph L. Hromadka was professor of Systematic Theology, John Huss Faculty, Prague; Frederic Nolde was professor at the Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia, and Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs; Baron Van Asbeck was professor of International Law, Leiden, and formerly Government Secretary Netherlands Indies. Source: WCC, *The Church and International Disorder. An Ecumenical study prepared under the auspices of the World Council of Churches*, London: SCM Press, 1948, 12

(UN), the first premise necessary to achieve peaceful conditions in international affairs was to accept change in itself (not the status quo,) and specifically change that was not 'evil and un-Christian in character.' This change had to be institutionalized in a representative way. For an institution to be representative, Dulles stressed, it had to be governed through a process which citizens could control democratically, as was the custom in 'free societies,' as opposed to the dictatorship practised in totalitarian states.⁷ Fortunately, Dulles stressed, Christians tended 'to favour the free society of self-discipline,' reflecting civil and moral law. Although the Christian label could not be attached to any particular political or economic organization or system, it was, he felt, possible to condemn some societies as un-Christian if they were organized in disregard of the Christian view of the nature of man. The Soviet Union was not only an un-Christian society, it also insisted that violent revolution was the only means to bring about change.⁸ It was the Soviet Union's rejection of peaceful change, which had caused difficulties in the United Nations, and the reason why the Soviets had refused to sit on the Trusteeship Council, which was charged with promoting the peaceful evolution of dependent people toward independence or self-government.⁹ The Soviets, he claimed, preferred to seek revolutionary alliance with the liberation movements of the colonies and dependent countries; they were also encouraging local groups to use methods of strikes, sabotage, terrorism, and guerrilla warfare, and techniques of secret penetration by trained personnel which had already been detected in countries such as China, Korea, the Baltic States, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, France, Italy, and 'elsewhere.'

⁷ John Foster Dulles, 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, part a) The Christian Citizen in a Changing World,' in WCC, *The Church and International Disorder. An Ecumenical study prepared under the auspices of the World Council of Churches*, London: SCM Press, 1948, 75-80

⁸ John Foster Dulles, 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, part a) The Christian Citizen in a Changing World,' 90

⁹ 'Text of Dulles' Address to Assembly of Council of Churches,' *New York Times*, 25 August 1948; 'Upholding Moral Law,' *The Times*, 25 Aug. 1948, 4

Whenever the processes of the UN stood in the way of Soviet efforts to promote ‘violent effort’ the Soviet Union then stood aloof, and had boycotted most of the specialized agencies of the UN designed to promote peacefully the economic, social, and cultural wellbeing of its members.¹⁰

This contribution was hugely significant, and warrants close attention. With his contributions, Dulles managed to effectively uproot the foundations of ecumenical thought, which had been planted at the 1937 Oxford Conference, and to which he made only selective references. Whereas Joseph Oldham in 1937 had been cautious not to address any issues which might lead to disagreement among participating denominations, such as the significance of diverse national loyalties, Dulles at once simplified and politicised the whole foundation of united Christianity, steering towards direct confrontation, not between denominations but between nations and ideologies. The primacy of the Christian community over secular affairs, which, in 1937, had been agreed to be the only sound foundation of united Christianity was now replaced by the primacy of the freedom of the individual, which was now regarded as the primary entity on which a relationship with God was based.¹¹ As this shift had not happened overnight, but had been supported by the WCC’s own think tank on international affairs, the CCIA, as well as gaining the support of the Anglican Community at the 1948 Lambeth Conference only shortly before the WCC assembly, Dulles could make his claims with confidence.

¹⁰ John Foster Dulles, ‘Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World,’ (1948), 94

¹¹ According to Dulles, ‘God, it seems, is not concerned with nations, races, and classes (...) it is only individuals who have souls to be saved.’ John Foster Dulles, ‘Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World,’ (1948), 80

Joseph L. Hromadka's contribution stood in contrast to Dulles' conclusions.¹² Hromadka was not a declared communist, and did not explicitly support the Soviet government in his argumentation. Rather, he supported many of the conclusions from the 1937 Oxford Conference, stressing the need for genuine understanding, and claiming that Christianity needed to detach itself materially and temporally from political and economic conflicts on the world scene, as only then would the church serve its Christian purpose. Development had shown, Hromadka stressed, that the world had failed to overcome the consequences of WWI, and to establish a better order on the ruins of the old. The basic issue was therefore beyond concepts such as freedom and democracy. It also, Hromadka stressed, went beyond the categories of capitalism and socialism, liberalism and communism, and even beyond the choice between a 'free society' and a 'totalitarian system.' Returning to the same point that Oldham had stressed during the Oxford Conference in 1937, Hromadka emphasized that the 'whole of the civilized human race' was 'sick,' and the 'ultimate principles of truth, justice, human personality, love, and the organic moral fellowship of men were at stake.'¹³ To address this, it was the role of the united Church to stay firmly out of politics and to not be tempted to align itself with any one political or economic system.

Addressing the conflict between USA and the Soviet Union, Hromadka stressed that both countries were reacting against the 'old ways' of the European powers. Although many felt tempted to accept the USA as the epitome of the Western Christian tradition and of humanism, with its emphasis on the dignity of man, the sacredness of conscience, freedom of human personality, civil rights, tolerance and

¹² Joseph L. Hromadka (1889-1969) was professor in systematic Theology at the University of Prague

¹³ Joseph L. Hromadka, 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, part b) Our Responsibility in the Postwar World' in WCC, *The Church and International Disorder. An Ecumenical study prepared under the auspices of the World Council of Churches*, London: SCM Press, 1948, 116

political self-determination, it should not be ignored that the USA had also become the wealthiest nation in the world and a symbol of the power of money. Many, therefore, had become frightened of America and its 'demonic' temptations of money, capital and wealth.¹⁴ Further, the failure of the 'democratic West' to organise and maintain peace after 1919, where western authority in Central Europe and the Balkans was 'enormous' could be regarded as a major reason for the current international conflict. A 'courageous' policy in that post-war world after World War I might have been able to cope with the situation better. If, Hromadka stressed, the Western nations had attempted to understand the situation of the downtrodden peasants and workers of the Central and South-Eastern areas of Europe, then the social and moral aspirations of the Russian revolution of 1917 might have been guided into more 'normal channels of human progress.'¹⁵ Instead, the western democratic nations had lost their moral prestige as well as their political influence to fascist and national-socialist movements, which were able to fill a moral and political vacuum.¹⁶ The Central and Eastern European countries, then, had no historical reason, or incentive to trust the western democracies after WWII. Thus, Hromadka asked,

'[i]s not a material, economic interest on the part of 'big' industries and financial concerns looming behind all the efforts to protect all the high-sounding slogans of a 'free democracy,' behind all the efforts to protect 'individual freedom,' 'free enterprise' against any control by government, society, and state?'

The historical background of the countries which were undergoing the process of a total social and political transformation was important to keep in mind, Hromadka stressed, and although the Soviets had taken advantage of 'the failure of the past for their own ends' the easy simplification with which many people in the west had been

¹⁴ Hromadka, 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, 120

¹⁵ Hromadka, 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, 122

¹⁶ Hromadka, 'Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, 122

trying to interpret the events in the Balkans of Central Europe as a sinister Soviet expansion risked distorting the actual situation in those areas.¹⁷ What would really matter, Hromadka stressed, was ‘to help the people, to disarm wrongdoers, to organize reconstruction, not to thrive on individual freedom or on freedom of reporting. In certain circumstances discipline, service, responsibility, self-control, self-dedication’ were ‘superior to freedom and human rights.’¹⁸

In conclusion Hromadka emphasized that the situation in the ‘Eastern orbit’ should not be reduced to an issue of totalitarianism and dictatorship. The west should concentrate its creative ambition on preserving, revitalizing and handing over the great heritage of Western civilization to non-Western man, not on insisting on the old capitalistic emphasis on ‘free enterprise,’ ‘profit motives,’ and ‘private property.’¹⁹

The Western press, however, mostly did not grasp, or was unwilling to grasp, Hromadka’s argument. During the conference sessions, a limited number of reporters were permitted to be present, provided that they did not report in detail on debates or discussions. It was, however, widely reported that the major interest of the assembly focused on the East-West ‘cleavage in politics and religion.’²⁰ Interestingly, Kenneth Grubb had during a press conference informed the press that Joseph Hromadka, labelled by New York Times as a ‘Soviet apologist’ had claimed that the West lacked imagination regarding international problems, and that the West was deceiving itself when it claimed to be the sole possessor of freedom.²¹ It was further reported that delegates at a ‘secret session’ heard a speaker report that ‘many persons preferred suicide to returning to the Soviet orbit.’²² At the same session, however, Hromadka

¹⁷ Hromadka, ‘Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, 123

¹⁸ Hromadka, ‘Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, 126

¹⁹ Hromadka, ‘Christian Responsibility in Our Divided World, 140

²⁰ ‘Churchmen Study East-West Split,’ *New York Times*, 27 August, 1948

²¹ ‘Churchmen Study East-West Split,’ *New York Times*, 27 August, 1948

²² ‘Fear of Soviet Stressed,’ *New York Times*, 27 August, 1948

was quoted in the press to have stressed that he was ‘amazed’ with the genuine cultural freedom enjoyed by younger people in the Soviet Union.²³ Hence, there was a tendency, particularly by the American press, to cast Hromadka in an untrustworthy light. Similarly it was reported that Dulles, presented as ‘a spokesman for Western democracy,’ had defended Western democracies, which were grounded on moral law and a belief in human dignity against Hromadka’s claims that Western supremacy in international affairs had come to an end.²⁴ In the *Manchester Guardian* Hromadka was again quoted as antagonizing the West by claiming that the Western Powers would be morally and politically unable to cope with the area now under Soviet control, should they conquer it.²⁵ More accurate reporting was found in *The Times*, which stated that ‘Dr. Hromadka’s belief in the decline of the West was a valuable criticism in an assembly where English seems to have become a new ecclesiastical language, and whose meeting was only possible through generous American giving.’ In contrast to the reporting of *New York Times*, *The Times* stressed that Hromadka had emphasized unity between the churches, and had said that ‘no kind of curtain (...) must separate us from another.’²⁶

To the Church of England and BCC, the conflict between Dulles and Hromadka, which dominated the assembly, did not come as a great surprise. Grubb had already reported to the BCC’s International Department that the Europeans and the Americans did not agree on the means of international collaboration. Whereas the Europeans wanted to support general principles and keep the door open for any form of international cooperation, the Americans were ‘very anxious to get support for the

²³ ‘Fear of Soviet Stressed,’ *New York Times*, 27 August, 1948

²⁴ ‘Dulles tells churchmen force won’t check reds,’ *New York Times*, 25 August, 1948; ‘Upholding Moral Law,’ *The Times*, 25 August, 1948

²⁵ ‘Victory for the West Must Not Be Taken For Granted,’ *The Manchester Guardian*, 25 August, 1948

²⁶ ‘Churches in Council,’ *The Times*, 4 September, 1948

UN.’²⁷ The BCC’s International Department, however, was generally keen to see ‘the issue between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world’ properly dealt with by Study Commission IV, and at the second biyearly meeting of BCC, at which all departments presented status reports, a number of participants expressed regret that ‘the specific issue between the U.S.S.R. and the rest of the world was not being squarely faced.’²⁸ The BCC was itself highly engaged in the formulation of a Human Rights agenda, an area, however, which is sadly far too extensive to include in this thesis.²⁹ It should be noted, though, that during the preparations for the assembly, the BCC had been highly supportive of the contribution made by Frederic Nolde: ‘Freedom of Religion and Related Human Rights,’ published in volume IV on ‘The Church and International Disorder.’ Britain itself had, of course, already signed the five-power pact at Brussels on 17 March, 1948 in which it, alongside Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, became committed to fundamental human rights as proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations.³⁰ Although this will not be addressed further in this thesis, it should be noted that the Brussels Treaty has much to add to our understanding of Bevin’s soft power approach to the early cold war.

²⁷ CERC, BCC/DIA/2/1/1/2, minutes of meeting of the International Department of BCC, 16 October, 1947

²⁸ E.g., Mr. Ernest Brown, the Dean of Chichester, Rev. E.C. Urwin, Rev. Marvyn Stockwood, Sir James Dunnett, Dr. Hugh Martin, Mr. Symons, Rev. Norman Goodall, the Provost of Porthmouth, Rev. E.W.T. Craske and Rev. E.A. Payne. See Church of England Record Centre, Minutes and papers, Council meetings 1942 – 1947, minutes of meeting held on 30 September, 1947; Church of England Record Center, BCC/DIA/2/1/1/2, minutes of meeting of the International Department of BCC, 16 October, 1947

²⁹ On human rights see, e.g., CERC, BCC/DIA/2/1/1/2, minutes of meeting of the International Department of BCC, 16 October, 1947. Regarding Oldham’s view, in his contribution ‘A Responsible Society,’ in volume III ‘The Church and the Disorder of Society,’ he stressed that ‘It cannot be too strongly emphasised (...) that the marxist movement (...) was in its origins a moral revolt against the injustices of a system in which man was exploited by man. (...) We cannot oppose to the totalitarian systems the conception of a ‘free society,’ without a (...) realisation of the term ‘freedom. It may be the freedom to indulge greed and lust (...).’ Source: Joseph Oldham, ‘A Responsible Society,’ in WCC, *The Church and the Disorder of Society. An Ecumenical study prepared under the auspices of the World Council of Churches*, London: SCM Press, 1948, 143

³⁰ See, e.g., John Nurser, ‘The “Ecumenical Movement,” the Churches, “Global Order,” and Human Rights: 1938-1948,’ *Human Rights Quarterly*, 25, 4, 2003, 841-881

Nolde's contribution, 'Freedom of Religion and Related Human Rights,' was a general account of Christian activities within the development of human rights, which will not be replicated in detail here. What is of relevance is rather Nolde's diagnosis, in the section of his chapter addressing 'religious liberty and the current scene' of the Soviet Union as a 'challenge.' Here, the Soviet Union was mentioned as a prime example of a situation 'where Christianity encounters political controls,' which meant that the religious situation was almost impossible to assess within the Soviet Union due to 'a relatively complete control over people by a totalitarian government.' It was stressed, however, that the Soviet government failed to 'provide adequate legal safeguards for religious freedom' within the union.³¹ Nolde's contribution added convincingly to Dulles' account emphasising that the Soviet communist regime stood in the way of progress.

Dulles had, then, via the CCIA and his relations with Fisher, managed to establish a discourse singling out communism not only as a belief system incompatible with Christianity, but also as the main obstacle to an efficient international organisation, which, as was argued by the majority of the assembly's study commissions, was, from a Christian viewpoint, the best solution to ensure world peace. The BCC strongly supported this view.³²

³¹ Frederic Nolde, 'Freedom of Religion and Related Human Rights,' in WCC, *The Church and International Disorder. An Ecumenical study prepared under the auspices of the World Council of Churches*, London: SCM Press, 1948, 163

³² CERC, BCC/DIA/2/1/1/2, minutes of meeting of the International Department of BCC, 16 October, 1947. See also Church of England Record Centre, Minutes and papers, Council meetings 1942 – 1947, minutes of meeting held on 30 September, 1947

The assembly reports

The final, written report of the conference, which was edited by Visser t’Hooft and published under the title *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches* in 1949, summarised the conclusions of the four assembly committees, which had been approved by the delegates. Not surprisingly, it was issues concerning war and peace, freedom and rights, and of course the Soviet Union, which dominated the concluding reports. The official report of section III, ‘The Church and the Disorder of Society’ singled out two chief factors, which contributed to international crisis. One of these was the vast concentration of power – which under capitalism was conceived of as primarily economic, and under communism as both economic and political. The Church could not resolve the debate between those who felt that the primary solution was to nationalise the means of production, and those who feared that such a course would lead to new and inordinate combinations of political and economic power, ‘culminating finally in an omnipotent state.’ The report, however, condemned any attempt to limit the freedom of the church.³³ Men, it was then concluded, supported radical systems such as the communist Soviet Union, because they had lost God; this conclusion largely echoed the line of the 1937 Oxford Conference although at Oxford it was primarily the totalitarian state which was singled out rather than communism specifically. Conflict between the Christian faith and capitalism was also addressed. In general, however, critique of capitalism was toned down. Whereas the 1937 Oxford Conference had labelled capitalism as a form of totalitarian framework parallel to that of Communism and Nazism, at Amsterdam this perspective was no longer dominant. Finally, in the report of section IV on ‘The Church and the International Disorder’ the main topics were, as mentioned, the Christian attitude to war and Human Rights. It

³³ Visser t’hooft (ed.), *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (the official report) London: SCM Press 1949, 78

was stressed that it was the role of the churches to attack the causes of war by promoting peaceful change and the pursuit of justice. One of the most serious causes of war of the time, it was felt, was the 'division of the world into mutually suspicious and antagonistic blocs (...) this threat is all the greater because national tensions are confused by the clash of economic and political systems. Christianity cannot be equated with any of these.'³⁴

The inaugural assembly of WCC was engaged in items reflecting the on-going globalisation of the ecumenical movement and as such the assembly was considered a success. On the other hand, the conflict between East and West that was so obviously tearing Europe apart, took much air out of the excitement of finally establishing a Christian council to unite the churches. The idea of comprehensive unity had, for the moment, lost its meaning. The optimism about Christianity's potential for influencing peace, reconstruction and unity was replaced by pessimism about the international situation. In spite of efforts to escape a one-sided approach, the ecumenical position was already biased, not least due to the Russia-phobia which had crept into Christian thinking on the western side of the iron curtain, and which was so greatly exposed in the media. So inevitably Cold War rhetoric played its part at the assembly. The report of section IV on 'The Church and International Disorder' was criticised for being too vague. Many had hoped that the Council would provide more firm spiritual guidance on the international conflict and help to form Christian public opinion on the matter.³⁵ From a European perspective, however, the report was criticised for reflecting too clearly what was considered naïve American opinion.

Although the outcome of the assembly generally stressed that Christianity should stand above all political systems, and that it was not the role of the WCC to

³⁴ Visser t'hoofst (ed.) (1949), 91

³⁵ Visser t'hoofst (ed.) (1949), 101

recommend one system over another, the focus on human rights, and particularly religious rights, was clearly an indirect critique of the Soviet Union. The report, in fact, concluded with a declaration on Religious Liberty emphasizing the personal right to express religious belief and to proclaim individual beliefs for relationships in a social or political community; to associate, and to organise people for religious purposes.³⁶ To some extent, then, the assembly came to play a part in American projections of the East-West conflict, although the WCC leadership claimed that it did not.

As Andrew Preston has pointed out, individual rights and freedoms played, along with support for the establishment of Christian Democracies in Europe, an integrated part in Truman's Cold War strategy. Hence, the two ideas that America could use to combat Communism - the idea of liberty and freedom; and humanitarianism and the idea of Christian Democracy - were issues which both placed the European churches in the centre.³⁷ Dulles' contribution to the assembly, awareness that the western construction of a rights-framework could serve as an Achilles heel of the Soviet Union, was a clear reflection of this and successfully dominated the agenda.

In the end, the overall message of the assembly was that the greatest threat to peace in present times was the division of the world in two competing blocs, but that 'Christianity cannot be equated with any of these. We denounce all forms of tyranny, economic or religious, which deny liberty to men. We utterly oppose totalitarianism, wherever found, in which the state arrogates itself to the right to determine men's thoughts and actions.'

³⁶ Visser t'hooft (ed.) (1949), 97-99

³⁷ Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith. Religion in American War and Diplomacy*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012, 435; David C. Engerman, 'Ideology and the origins of the Cold War, 1917-1962' in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I Origins*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010, 20-43

The message of the conference received lukewarm support, particularly its report on capitalism and Communism. American delegates expressed discontent that the committee lacked vitality and demonstrated an unrealistic approach to world problems. Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland, called it 'unimpressive, non-inspiring and without bite.' Visser t'Hooft, however, defended the message and stated that the formation of WCC in itself as a 'miraculous' achievement.³⁸ The WCC leadership considered the assembly a success. The WCC had been established, and the Council had managed to avoid officially choosing side in the East-West divide. It could not be denied, however, that the assembly revealed sharp internal divisions in WCC, to which an ecumenical solution had not been found.

The Church of England between Europe and the US: Dual Policy and Cold War

There was of course also a part of the Church of England, which did not primarily think along the lines increasingly of how to best serve its government, and which was more concerned with how the Church of England and the British Council of Churches perceived the character of Christianity in Britain in a comparative setting. This final section of the chapter therefore turns to the BCC's Department on Social Responsibility - which included two Church of England bishops, and some coopted Anglicans - and their conception of the British Churches as bridges or interpreters between the US and Europe in the emerging Cold War.³⁹ In the last part of the section the significance of the Church of England's changed standpoint to the WCC will then

³⁸ 'Church Body Eases Capitalism Clause,' *New York Times*, 5 September, 1948

³⁹ The members of BCC's Department on Social Responsibility were: Rev. E.C. Urwin, Mrs. Brayshaw, Rev. Henry Carter (Methodist), Rev. Dr. Dunning (Baptist), Mrs. Feeney, Rev. James Fraser, Rev P. McLaughlin, Bishop of Malmesbury (Ivor Watkins, Church of England), Rev. E.D.V. Narborough, Mr. T.R. Openshaw, Rev. G. Lloyd Phelps, Mr. Maurice Reckitt (Christian sociologist, Anglican, Church of England), Mr. P.M. Robinson, Bishop of Sheffield (Leslie Hunter, Church of England), Rev. Malcolm Spencer, Rev Matthew Stewart, Mr. W.G. Symons

be addressed. This will reveal yet another dimension of that process of adaptation to the Cold War by the Church of England.

As a contribution to the work of WCC's Study Commission III: The Church and the Disorder of Society, a statement titled 'Diagnosis of the Present Disorder' was prepared by the Social Responsibility Department (chaired by the Rev. E.C. Urwin) of the BCC. Although the paper did not make it to the published collection of study reports it was circulated to members in Study Commission III as input. As the paper reveals insight about the BCC Department on Social Responsibility's perspective on the role and character of the British churches in a transnational perspective, it is worth closer examination.

The study paper had been written because The Department on Social Responsibility had felt that a specifically British attitude to the issues raised in the outline of subjects for Study Commission III should be presented. There was a danger, it was felt, that a position which was neither European nor American in focus might be omitted. In accordance with this view, Mr. Maurice Reckitt had drafted a statement which Rev. Urwin had taken with him to submit to the 1947 Study Department meeting in New York.⁴⁰ It should be noted here that the WCC's Study Commission III: The Church and the Disorder of Society was also the committee in which Joseph Oldham was engaged, and he was not, as we have seen, in favour of the WCC's turn away from its 'Oxford roots.' Further, the author of the study paper, Maurice Reckitt, an Anglican and an anti-Communist, apparently had socialist leanings while also being against the politicisation of the Church as such. Reckitt was, then, along with Oldham, in favour of following a line in the WCC which had its roots in the English understanding of transnational ecumenism, of which the 1937

⁴⁰ CERC, Minutes and papers, Council meetings 1942 – 1947, minutes of meeting held on 22-23 April, 1947

Oxford Conference was a clear expression, not the politicised version, which was increasingly favoured by the American Protestants.⁴¹ The archives do not reveal the reason why the paper was omitted from the final report. The fact that the report was not mentioned at BCC meetings after the 1947 meeting of Study Commission III in New York, however, suggests that perhaps the paper was not approved by the American members of the Commission.

The study paper, representing a regional statement on the character of the Churches in Britain specifically, was written because the BCC suspected that the character of Britain's potential contribution to the Assembly would be overlaid by or confused with those which would be made by the 'massive forces of American Protestantism and Liberalism, and of the Continental Churches with their predominantly transcendentalist theology.'⁴² Hence the overall message of the statement was that there were distinct and definite features of the British situation, religious and secular, that marked it out from that of continental Europe and the US.⁴³ The statement, therefore, stressed that the regions in which Christianity had 'been rooted for the longest time (...) the most developed civilisations' were not two – the Western Hemisphere north of the Rio Grande, and Europe north of the Alps and West of the Iron Curtain – but three.' The statement then appears to have offered a specifically British perspective on the diagnosis of the disorder of society.

⁴¹ Maurice Reckitt (1888-1980) was a writer and Christian Sociologist, Anglican and member of the 'Church Socialist League.' Although a socialist he 'hated Soviet Communism,' and favoured Church social action above political engagement. He was a contributor and reviewer for *Orage's New Age*, a member of the editorial board of *G. K.'s Weekly*, and an editorial writer for the *New English Weekly*. Source: John S. Peart-Binns, 'Reckitt, Maurice Benington (1888-1980),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, accessed online: <http://ezproxyprd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/31590>

⁴² CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

⁴³ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

The report was a general outline of the character of the American and European churches, which clearly exposed how the British Churches saw themselves fitting into the landscape of Western churches. The outlook of the churches of the USA, which were united for the most part in the ‘influential Federal Council’, was, it was claimed, influenced by belonging to a power representing ‘almost the only secure and prosperous area remaining in the world.’ Their outlook, sense of responsibility and awareness of power was coloured by that fact. The Americans had encountered scarcely any of the hardships of war in their own country, but sensed that they were constantly called upon to come to the rescue of a continent in constant conflict. The Americans also suffered from a ‘guilt complex’ caused by the horror of the atomic bomb, which had caused a novel sense of insecurity in the US. Finally, it was noted, a large majority of Americans were suspicious of the collectivist trend in European economic development. It was anticipated by the BCC that these facts would make the American approach to the World Assembly highly complex, namely because religion in the US had begun to resemble ‘ethical humanitarianism:’

“Rotary religion’ competes with the ‘social gospel’ (...) and man’s ‘scientific and social achievements have been so impressive in America that his moral and cultural failures are the more difficult to discern. Of late years (...) largely as a result of the immigration of refugees from the persecuted churches of the continent the ‘theology of crisis’ has attained a strong hold over Christian intellectuals, and a notable prophet, Reinhold Niebuhr, has arisen to interpret the times to his fellow Americans.”⁴⁴

On the continent, on the other hand, Christians had had to deal with a very different reality, which shaped their perspective on a World Church in a way very different from the Americans. Continental Christians were therefore expected to come to the assembly with another sort of prestige from the heroic witness ‘borne by so many of

⁴⁴ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

its members against totalitarian tyranny.’ From the continent, delegates would come from countries in which the churches were often almost the only forces still surviving amid defeat, disillusion and despair. They would therefore more likely be conscious of the authenticity of faithfulness and ‘devotion to Christian fellowship, beside which the moods all too characteristic of religion in democratic countries may well appear disturbingly inadequate.’ To many Continental Christians, a ‘theology of crisis’ was not primarily an intellectual reevaluation but one driven by tragic experience. Moreover, the American intellectual habit of talking about ‘Christianizing the social order’ might be found ‘profoundly irritating’ and ‘totally unreal’ to those who either had had no experience of any sort of true order for two decades, and only had seen so-called democratic orders turn into corrupted and suppressing regimes denying moral duty and religion. The British analysis of the situation turned out to be highly accurate.

The BCC, interestingly, emphasized that it thought that the continental churches, had, through experience, moved closer to ‘authentic’ Christianity and were reasonable to question the American form of Christianity, which was not considered ‘sound’ Christian theology. Although the Council sided, for strategic reasons, with the Americans in most questions concerning the WCC, the BCC paper circulated for Study Commission III reveals that from a theological-cultural viewpoint, it felt it actually had a closer ‘belonging’ to the continental Churches than to the churches of the US, although different from both. It was important to make this distinction because the British Churches would not risk being accused of supporting either group, and also

‘because the British situation is one that should enable the British delegation in some measure (...) to interpret the other two parties to one another, and

*point the way to synthesis in a Christian understanding of the essence of the world situation and the Church's duty and opportunity in face of it.*⁴⁵

The apparent arrogance of the British attitudes almost speaks for itself. The BCC felt, as it had from the outset, that the British churches had a superior role to play in the WCC, and to lead the other churches to the 'right' interpretation of Christianity. But Britain and the BCC had to adjust to a new situation in which the US was the greater power. Furthermore, the WCC was involved in a conflict between the US and the Soviet Union in which Britain was not really now considered a key player. The British statement can therefore most likely be attributed to a feeling that the BCC's position as a leader was being threatened, but also a concern that the British Churches risked being sidelined by American theology, which it ultimately found naïve and superficial.

The statement was also defensive. After many years of leadership in the ecumenical movement the Church of England was now reduced to being some kind of 'bridge Church' between the US and Europe, and Britain itself was seen as a 'bridge nation' between the individualism of the West and the Communism of the East. The metaphor was not a very happy one, as a bridge is mostly used to pass from one side of a dividing line to another, and not as a place for meetings or reconciliation. Anglicans could therefore justly resent being regarded as having no essential position of their own, and no function other than that of serving as a temporary resting place for those who contemplated passing on to somewhere else! Britain, similarly, could not be regarded by most of her people as a sort of

⁴⁵ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

‘laboratory in which social experiments could be tried out for the benefits of other nations curious to see how the constituent elements of communism, individualism, monetary incentive, social compulsion, bureaucracy and functional responsibility could be most happily blended.’⁴⁶

It was stressed that Britain’s peculiar war experience – nicely put as ‘tribulation without occupation, the grant of victory without the promise of prosperity’ – should rather fit her to play a specific role in the attempted reconstruction of human order. This perspective is, interestingly, not far from Winston Churchill’s famous three interlinked circles, which pictured Britain at the centre of three overlapping areas; the British Commonwealth and Empire; the English speaking world including Canada, and the other British Dominions and the United States; and finally a united Europe. Britain’s position was strong because it was the only country, which had a great part in every one of them.⁴⁷

From the BCC’s perspective, the character of Britain’s secular and ecclesiastical history and tradition should enable it to make a specific contribution to a world assembly. Due to Britain’s early ‘revolutionary’ phase she had evolved a tradition of toleration. Respect for civic rights, and the notion of government not as an instrument of power for a triumphant faction, but as the upshot of a majority exercising initiative, had been present in Britain for a long time. This, it was claimed, was what British people understood by democracy, which was something distinct from what it meant in other lands.⁴⁸

Ecclesiastically Britain’s position was also claimed to be a singular one. There were few countries in the ‘post-Christian age’ where Christianity exhibited in Church

⁴⁶ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

⁴⁷ ‘Conservative Mass Meeting: A Speech at Llandudno, 9 October 1948.’ in Winston Churchill, *Europe Unite: Speeches 1947 & 1948*, London: Cassell, 1950, 416-418

⁴⁸ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

life so many varied yet still authentic aspects. It was also claimed that the Church of England's status as the established Church had not, in recent decades, involved dictation by the state. The Church of England, this unpublished report concluded, was older than the realm of England, and its resources independent of the state; its clergy had therefore never been paid by the government.⁴⁹ This was, of course, a truth with modifications. Some of the 'joint ventures' between the Church of England, the British Foreign Office, and the Ministry of Information during the war, particularly the campaign to win public support for the Anglo-Soviet alliance in the US were in fact sponsored by the Ministry of Information. As Archbishop of York, Cyril Garbett noted in his diary during his US tour in April 1944, while comfortable in his 'suite of rooms' at the Waldorf Astoria in New York: 'The Ministry of Information paid all expenses of every sort and kind, and the hospitality I was given was lavish. I would not have missed this visit for anything.'⁵⁰

The BCC statement concludes with an emphasis on Britain's special characteristics, which would enable her to give to the ecumenical movement contributions only she could give:

'She is certainly no Catholic country, but neither is she a Protestant country in the same sense that either North America or North Germany. She is traditional as America is not, and as the countries whose political origins spring from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution are not. She is Liberal in a sense peculiar to herself; and she is experimenting with a democratic socialism more boldly than any other nation. She is numbered among the victorious powers and is one of the 'Big Three;' but the war has abated her influence in many directions. She stands at the centre of world crisis without expectation of anything from it either triumph or disaster. She has been the greatest imperial power in history, yet is at present engaged in

⁴⁹ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

⁵⁰ From Garbett's travel diary 31 March – 9 May, 1943, quoted in Dianne Kirby, 'From Bridge to Divide: East–West Relations and Christianity during the Second World War and Early Cold War,' *The International History Review*, 2014, 13

*the difficult process of divesting herself of power on a scale of which history presents no comparable record.*⁵¹

As a consequence, Britain was ‘in a better position than any other people in the world to avoid both the hubris that waits on overwhelming power and the illusions of secular utopianism on the one hand, and the despair that is born of intolerable misery and the reaction into a purely other-worldly religion on the other. Such a nation should be uniquely able to keep alive a truly Christian hope in a world in danger of losing all understanding of it.’⁵²

The BCC statement, though not used, perhaps gives the best summary of the difficulties that the Church had experienced since the War, and the problems for it that the Amsterdam Assembly presented. Its national influence appeared to be ebbing away, in part because of its different wartime experience from its continental partners, and partly because the Americans appeared eager to exercise a new post-war leadership. It is not possible to trace this fascinating story of institutional accommodation by the Church of England to the British state beyond 1948, but the documents reveal that this was not a story with a comfortable or quick ending. But by mid-1948, the Church had very clearly shifted to a position that reflected not only its natural apprehension about Communism, but also the capacity of the Labour government to draw the established Church into its own strategy and early Cold War policy.

⁵¹ CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

⁵² CERC, BCC 7/1/1/7/2, the British Council of Churches Department of Social Responsibility: The British contribution to the World Assembly of Churches, Commission III, undated but 1948

Conclusion

The thesis began with an introduction which explained the rationale for choosing the time frame, the sources, the methodology and the research questions. Then the literature by which the thesis is informed was introduced with particular focus on the areas of Cold War history and Church-state relations.

Chapter one established that the Church of England is characterized as part of the state fabric. The chapter had a special focus on the church leadership and introduced the key individuals who play a significant role throughout the thesis. The chapter also introduced two key bodies, which also play a key role; first the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, which was established in 1931 as an advisory body on international affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury; and second, the ecumenical movement, which was a transnational movement established to increase church unity internationally via the establishment of the World Council of Churches (WCC, proposed 1937, inaugurated, 1948), in which the Church of England was an early leader. The chapter then examined how it addressed what was perceived as the challenges of modernity, secularization, and the expanding role of the state in society. It was stressed that this process was led by a number of key individuals from the church elite, as well as agents from other denominations with whom the Church of England became increasingly involved. In England, the main challenge of the churches was to deal with the expanding role of the state, the increasingly secularised working classes, and the idea that the Christian churches held responsibility for the crisis of modernity because of their general alignment with the upper classes of society. Although this was perceived as a problem for all denominations in the UK, except the Roman Catholic Church, it was felt to be particularly challenging to the Church of England due to its position as the established church.

Chapter two dealt with the 1937 Oxford Conference of the United Council of Life and Work. The conference, although planned as a global event, had an Anglo-American bias, promoting an activist Protestant role of the churches in world affairs. Joseph Oldham had a tremendous impact on the outcome of the conference: a ‘diagnosis’ of the crisis of modernity, which was agreed upon at the conference, emphasized that the root of secularization was actually religious, in that the churches had not managed to connect with the new classes in society. The rise of totalitarian regimes, it was stressed, was in part because Christianity had failed to embrace society more broadly. The solution to the rise of totalitarianism, including Communism, should be a strengthening of Christian communities worldwide. This led to the decision to establish a World Council of Churches (WCC) to assist the national churches in their struggle with secular authorities, and to set guidelines for a Christian approach to international affairs.

The remaining part of chapter two investigated the ecumenical developments which took place in the UK as a consequence of the 1937 Oxford Conference. The main event was the establishment of the British Council of Churches (BCC), which was intended to ensure a coherent British Christian front towards the British state, and also towards the WCC-in formation.

The second part of the thesis investigated the shift which took place in the Church of England during World War II. It showed that during the War, the Church of England began to alter its ecumenical policies as it increasingly aligned itself with the government, particularly in the field of foreign affairs.

Chapter three investigated the Church of England’s, and the BCC’s, reaction to the Anglo-Soviet alliance in 1941, and looked at the role which the churches played in supporting the alliance, which was primarily via renewed links to the Russian

Orthodox Church. It was stressed that the alliance proved a major challenge to the churches as it countered their ecumenical goals by forcing them to publicly support a totalitarian and atheist regime. It was stressed that the churches attempted to use the alliance as an opportunity to integrate the Orthodox Churches into the ecumenical movement as part of their long-term strategies to counter Communism. Members of the church elite in the UK, both from the Church of England and other Protestant denominations, also went a long way to lobby the American Protestant churches to help project a positive image of the UK in the United States with the primary aim to turn the public mood in the US to be more likely to accept future American involvement in the war.

The Church of England was also engaged, along with the BCC and the American Protestant churches, in initiatives intended to influence the post-war peace settlement. The envisaged peace settlement, which was primarily planned via the Peace Aims Group (PAG), established in 1943, and the informal inter-church agency the Russia Group, also established in 1943, was based on strong American involvement in Europe, ideas of a united Europe, and a plan to educate the British and American public about what was perceived as the true nature of the Soviet Union. Although strong voices within the Church of England and the continental part of the WCC in-formation spoke in favour of the idea of a federal Europe, and the possibility of peaceful co-existence of the Western powers and the Soviet Union, primary consideration was given to Anglo-American collaboration. Finally, the chapter noted that the Church of England and the BCC had by 1945 adopted a 'human rights' approach, which the American Federal Council of Churches and the Commission to Study the Just and Durable Bases of Peace had developed, not without influence from Washington. The BCC's support of the American human rights scheme proved an

early but major shift away from the conclusions drawn at the 1937 Oxford Conference; in 1937 a focus on the 'individual' as opposed to the Christian 'person,' which was meaningful due to its position within a Christian community, was considered harmful and vulnerable to extremist tendencies such as Communism; and further, the 1937 Oxford interpretation of the concept of freedom was not something provided by the state but an inner condition based on faith. By 1945, however, the American understanding of the individual as a free agent protected by rights provided by the state was supported by the Church of England and the BCC.

In chapter four the focus turned towards significant changes in the Church of England leadership in the immediate post-war period. The appointment of the more conservative Geoffrey Fisher as Archbishop of Canterbury to replace William Temple was a factor which reinforced the shift in church thinking. It was shown that Fisher's appointment of George Bell as chairman of the Church of England Council on Foreign Affairs helped transform CFR into a body resembling a Foreign Office of the Church of England, rather than a private advisory body to the Archbishop. The collaboration between CFR and FO, which had been established during the war, remained institutionalized with permanent representatives of FO serving in the Council.

This chapter then looked at how the Church of England approached the shifting international situation after 1945, and the transition from Nazism to Communism as the perceived main threat to peace. It was argued that while the continental churches in the ecumenical movement were becoming increasingly worried about a possible Soviet dominance in Europe, they insisted that the framework accepted at the 1937 Oxford Conference emphasizing that Nazism and Communism were different names for the same totalitarian enemy should be

respected. If Communism was to be singled out as the main problem to organized Christianity at this point it would, it was feared, cause a breakdown of the WCC, exclude the Orthodox Church from the movement, and possibly cause further restrictions to be imposed on the churches in the Soviet Union. The continental wing of WCC preferred a united Europe with a strong presence of the UK and the US. It was further shown that the churches in Britain, and the Church of England in particular, had by 1945 altered their perception of the international situation, which now increasingly emphasized security measures against the Soviet Union. This shift, it was stressed, had already started to happen during the War.

The third part of the thesis investigated how the Church of England brought the legacies of the 1937 Oxford Conference, and the shift towards a security perspective which took place during WWII, into the rising Cold War setting of the mid and late 1940s. The inaugural assembly of WCC in 1948 was chosen as the temporal endpoint of the thesis to see to what extent the ecumenical ideas, which were established as a religious solution to the challenges of modernity, including the rise and spread of Communism, had changed since 1937, and if so, how.

In chapter five the question of European unity was looked at from a Church of England perspective. This was important because it was on the question of Europe's future that the powers were becoming increasingly divided, and over this issue that the Cold War, in part, had started to emerge. It was stressed that there was an increasing cleavage between the ecumenical idea of unity, which transcended political and national boundaries; and the political idea of unity, which emphasized the spiritual and cultural ties between Western nations. The church leadership supported the idea of Winston Churchill's United Europe Movement, which was intended in part as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism. The Labour Party's idea of a Western

Union, which excluded the Eastern, Soviet dominated nations, was supported as well. The voices within the Church of England, led by George Bell and supported by WCC, which opposed the idea of European division, it was shown, were now generally overridden.

That the Church of England led by Archbishop Fisher, had now changed towards an anti-Communist line was made clear at the July 1948 Lambeth Conference, which formed the subject matter of chapter six. At this conference, which was attended by bishops from the global Anglican Community, two anti-Communist resolutions were produced, which aligned the Church of England and its community alongside the British state in its Cold War policies.

The final chapters of the thesis, chapters seven and eight, looked at the inaugural assembly of the WCC. Chapter seven showed that the relationship between the Church of England and the two other major denominations in Europe, the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, was now highly influenced by the Cold War. The chapter showed that Britain's post-war reluctance to publicly denounce the Soviet Union until an agreement with the US had been reached, caused Fisher to delay a public statement in support of US policies, support which had already been given by the Roman Catholic Church. This emphasized the complicated role in which the Church of England found itself between the ecumenical streams of the Continent and the now more Western oriented churches of the US. Chapter eight concluded the thesis with an assessment of the August 1948 inaugural assembly of WCC in Amsterdam with particular focus on the assembly sessions addressing the role of the Churches in international affairs. The chapter showed that although the official report of the assembly stressed that WCC was an organization with a strictly Christian and non-political purpose, the assembly was dominated by East-West tensions and debates

over political Cold War related issues, particularly over the standpoint of WCC in the ideological contest between USA and the Soviet Union.

It is clear from the above that this thesis initially set out to establish an empirical account addressing the early Cold War in Britain and the role of the church in this. However, this has raised many concluding issues of importance. The first is internationalism and transnationalism. The role of the Church was influenced by its own international engagements, as well as the international position of Britain itself. During the 1920s and 30s the Church of England leaders set out to change the perception of what an established Church was supposed to be; they wanted it to be *more* than just an established Church, and for this, as Rowan Williams accurately notes, it had to have a wider horizon than the national.¹ The question to Temple and Bell, however, was not necessarily that the Church had to have an international scope, but rather that the questions with which the Church was concerned, and the context in which the Church existed were becoming increasingly international. Their aim was also to transform the Church into a Christian and moral community which expressed the spiritual liberty of the Church, and which found an organic connection to similar communities world-wide. Although this was the original idea of churchmen such as Temple and Bell, which Grimley has illuminated so well in his work on the Anglican Church in the interwar period, this thesis has aimed to show that the challenges with which these ideas were confronted during one of the most turbulent and transformative periods in modern history, made the task very difficult.² The goal of building bridges transnationally, which crossed national boundaries, politics,

¹ Rowan Williams, 'A Church of the Nation, or a Church for the Nation? Bishop George Bell and the Church of England,' in Andrew Chandler (ed.), *The Church and Humanity, the Life and Work of George Bell, 1883-1958*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012 (e-book), location 5833 of 6220

² Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State between the Wars*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004, passim

territorial interests, and denominational characteristics, which were often rooted in national culture, was a herculean task during a time where state centrism was dominant and nationalism was the main identity marker for many, particularly in Europe. In Britain too, these challenges meant that once international crisis emerged, the Church of England was effectively bound to the state.

The thesis then emphasized the importance of a focus on subnational and transnational institutions within the Cold War framework. As it has hopefully become clear in this research, the informal and cross-institutional ties not only between agencies within the British government and among churches in Britain, but also between members of the American, British and European elites played a decisive role when agendas were established and public opinion was at stake. So, although further empirically founded research is called for to establish a sound understanding of church-state relations during the Cold War, there will clearly be basis for an institutionalist framework for this research in the future.

A major critical juncture for the Church was WWII. WWII re-emphasised the Church of England's cultural and practical embeddedness within the state. First of all the national loyalty of the clergy should not be overlooked; once the Blitz ravaged London many had forgotten that the Church had ever had other loyalties than to stand behind the government. Winston Churchill did much to awaken nationalist feelings even further, and the increased public interest in religion during the War, efficiently toned down the clergy's pre-war feelings of religious decline. To the majority within the Church leadership then, the wartime collaboration with government institutions was hardly questioned, and, after all, the Archbishop of Canterbury was himself a public supporter of British wartime efforts. There was a thin line, however, between the Church of England as the state church standing behind the government during

wartime on the one hand, and then actively seeking to pull strings politically on the other. It was during the War that this line was crossed; not as a conscious decision taken by any one in particular in the Church leadership, but by many small incremental steps taken by strategically placed individuals within the Church elite, who had strong agendas based not only on a Christian motive. Such was the role played in particular by William Paton and Kenneth Grubb. Although neither of them held positions within the Church of England, they were among the Church leadership's most trusted advisors in areas of international affairs. It was through Paton's and Grubb's interaction with the Federal Council of Churches in America, and Dulles' Commission on the Bases of a Just and Durable Peace, that the influential Peace Aims Group was established, which set in train the idea that the ecumenical framework could be used for political purposes. The ideas which Temple, Bell and Oldham had fostered to establish a transnational ecumenical foundation to address the basic issue of how to improve the conditions for the peoples of Europe (and beyond) in terms of peace, welfare and moral law, was now reinterpreted to fit a political aim of securing optimal outcomes in the game of power politics. The focus was then efficiently shifted from a framework emphasizing the Christian community bound together by Christian morality, faith, and the inner freedom found through life in Christian fellowship, which from a Christian viewpoint could also embrace the *collective* (as long as it was Christian), to a framework which largely honoured the individual and granted the role of protecting freedom to the state, a framework which efficiently ruled out Communism as practised in the Soviet Union. The role of Paton and Grubb, and certainly also that of William Temple, Geoffrey Fisher, Joseph Oldham, and George Bell show that the institutional structures within the Church of

England were so loose that individuals found they had great powers of manoeuvre. So, in an institutionalist sense - individuals mattered.

On a methodological note, and as noted in the introduction, this thesis has not attempted to make a contribution to political scientific accounts of church-state relations; for such a task, the empirical account presented in the thesis, based on one of the most complex decades in modern history, is too dense, and the potential number of variables and the causal relationship between them is too large. But two observations might, fairly, be made. First of all, the claim, which Minkelberg makes, that the role of tradition, culture, informal relations, and temporal context are highly significant when assessing church-state relations has clearly been confirmed in this research. If the church-state relationship in Britain had been understood on the basis of its legal relationship alone, the outcome of the research would be highly inaccurate. Further, Minkenberg argues that established churches are more likely to act as institutions and free churches are more likely to act as interest groups. This research tends to suggest that other factors might influence the behaviour of the church; firstly, the role of the Church leaders; and secondly the responsiveness of the government, although not theoretically tested, Temple's counter-state initiatives during the 1930s, and the Archbishop's 'unauthorised' support of the 1937 Oxford Conference underlines this point. This is however only an observation, as this thesis has not engaged in any theoretical testing. The second observation on church-state relations more generally relates to Jose Casanova's theoretical claims, as introduced briefly in the literature review. Casanova claims that the development in the post-war decades, and the question of whether or not the churches embraced liberalism, democracy and individual rights in this period, may be considered a decisive factor in the way in which the churches are categorized today. In this thesis, however, it is claimed that

first of all, a process of change was already underway within the Church from the mid-1930s, and the churches' articulation of authoritarianism, modernity and secularisation formed what might be called an early, religious Cold War in the cultural area; hence, this change was not sparked by WWII. Second, and most important, the fact that the Church of England embraced liberalism, democracy, and individual rights was not the logical conclusion of this internal process, which was in fact rejecting liberalism; it was rather the consequence of the Church of England's difficult position as a Cold Warrior: due to its position within the British state it had strong incentives to allow American religious agents to redefine its transnational Christian ideal. Hence, the acceptance of liberalism, democracy and human rights was not an outcome of WWII directly, but rather a consequence of the early Cold War. It seems fair to suggest, then, that the dynamism of change in early and mid-century church-state relations should be investigated from an earlier date.

When we turn to examine the contribution of this thesis to Cold War scholarship, two points arise. First, it indicates that the Church of England's Cold War really began with apprehension and hostility to state power and modernization, especially in its totalitarian fascist and Nazi forms in the 1930s. So, contrary to what other scholarly accounts in the field have suggested, this thesis questions if the starting point of the cultural side of the Cold War after WWII's conclusion is accurate. Second, it reveals the complication for the state of working with the Church in the Cold War, and the compromises that the state had to secure from a Church that was, after the War, deeply embedded in the state structure and its project. For the Church of England was reluctant to embrace the early Cold Warriors in the British government and hoped to retain its transnational ecumenical ties to peoples in

Christian Churches in Communist countries with ties that might have transcended their Communist state leaders after WWII.

Finally, this thesis leaves open a number of possible ways to carry on further research. First, accounts addressing the role of other Christian denominations in Britain in a Cold War context, including the ways in which they interacted with the British government are currently lacking but would be a valuable contribution to the field. This could potentially open the opportunity of making more comparative studies to assess the significance of formal church-state ties. Second, the influence of the Cold War on transnational institutional ties across Europe within the church-state framework still lacks coherent studies. Related to this, as indicated earlier, the general theoretical framework on church-state relations in a Western context is still in its infancy, yet it is clear that an accurate theoretical framework of church-state relations since the mid 1930s needs to take into account the profound influence of the Cold War.

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